

GOD'S GIFT YOU CAN GIVE!

Numbers 13:26-14:10

INTRODUCTION: We have a gift given to us by our Lord that we can give away and it will not cost us a penny! We can choose to give away the gift of encouragement! Just imagine the power of encouragement to those that are discouraged! Ephesians 4:29. The dictionary defines encouragement as the act of inspiring others with renewed courage, renewed spirit, or renewed hope. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to be our encourager: John 14:16-21.

I. DOES IT REALLY MATTER?

We often wonder: "Is my behavior really that important? Will my behavior really make any difference? Let's look back in God's Word to see: Numbers 13:26-14:10. Just a little discouragement can make a whole nation fall into a funk. Because of the discouragement of just ten spies, an entire nation spent forty years in the desert when they could have been in a land flowing with milk and honey! Discouragement is one of Satan's favorite tools against us: 2 Timothy 1:7. When God's people discourage one another our God is not pleased: Numbers 14:11-13. Discouragement is a powerful tool for the enemy of our souls: 1 Peter 5:8. Thirty-nine years later Moses is again trying to tell the children of those discouraged people it is time to go into the Promised Land: Deuteronomy 1:21; Deuteronomy 1:38. Moses' message to the people: "Don't be discouraged and don't be a discourager! Encourage Joshua!"

II. NEW TESTAMENT ENCOURAGEMENT!

We will look at just one book of the New Testament to see how very important encouragement can be to a local church. 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12. 1 Thessalonians 3:2-8; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11.

III. TIMES WHEN ENCOURAGEMENT MADE ALL THE DIFFERENCE!

So often in history, it has been the encouragement of friends that made all the difference turning certain defeat into the full flow of victory! Remember Aaron and Hur lifting Moses's hands toward heaven in Exodus 17:8-16. Remember Jonathan's impact on David as one called alongside to be an encourager in the Lord? 1 Samuel 23:13-18. In modern times think how powerful Winston Churchill's words to the nation of England were when all seem lost! Now we may not be Winston Churchill, but we are the Church of Jesus Christ, and we are called to encourage one another in the Lord!! Romans 15:13; Hebrews 10:22-25. We will accomplish nothing alone, but our Bibles tell us: Romans 14:7. Are you gifted with hope from our Lord? Can you be somebody's cheerleader? Do you have a faith that won't give up, and a can-do attitude? If we are filled with the joy of the Lord, then as we overflow with that hope, we can be used by our God to speak His words into the hearts of others for our God's glory! 2 Corinthians 1:3-4; Ephesians 4:29.