



Encourage Everyone Everywhere

Big Idea: Biblical encouragement is breathing life into someone else's life with Jesus. To encourage means to give support, confidence, or hope to someone and move them into action. Encouragement means coming alongside people and helping them grow and develop.

Connect: Speak words of encouragement to one another. Tell each family member 2 positive character qualities you see in them. Younger Children Option: Explain that a nickname is a special name given to people that describes something about them. Talk about any special nicknames given to your kids (or your nicknames you have and why you have them).

Instruct: We are going to look at someone who was so encouraging he was given the nickname that means "Son of Encouragement". Read his story here: **Acts 4:36-37** and **Acts 11:21-26**.

What qualities do you see in Barnabas? (generous, encouraged people to remain faithful to God, good, full of the Holy Spirit, full of faith, he reached out to Saul, a risky move because he was a former persecutor of the church). **What qualities do others see in you?**

Inspire: The story continues. Read **Acts 15:36-41**. Paul and Barnabas are going to go visit churches to encourage them, but they disagree about taking Mark with them. On a previous trip, Mark abruptly quit. Paul doesn't want to take Mark, and Barnabas does. They disagree so strongly, they decide to separate. Paul goes with Silas, and Barnabas goes with Mark. This is the last we read about Barnabas, but we read more about Mark. **Read Philemon 1:24 and 2 Timothy 4:1**. Mark is now working with Paul, and Paul says that Mark "is very useful for ministry."

Mark abandoned Barnabas and Paul. Mark's story could have ended right there. Paul gave up on Mark, but Barnabas didn't. Barnabas saw potential in Mark, and he would not let it go to waste. Barnabas was a man who invested in others, built them up, and helped them grow. His investment in Mark is still paying dividends today. Perhaps you've read his book, the Gospel of Mark.

Instill: Who has encouraged you? How? Who can you encourage this week? Who can you invest in to help them reach the full potential that God has placed in them? Maybe you can reach out to "your one" and ask how you can pray for them. Hold each other accountable to encourage someone in a tangible way this week.

Pray: Pray for the people you want to encourage this week. Pray for opportunities to encourage others. Pray specifically for each other to grow in Christlikeness.



Deuteronomy 6:6-7, “And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.”

When you walk by the way (Drive Time): In a real sense to encourage means to give courage. What are situations someone your age may have to face where they would need courage? What would help them most? How could we help them? What is the difference between encouragement and a compliment? (A compliment is saying something nice about someone. “You look nice today.” Encouragement takes requires much more effort. Encouragement is “stepping into the equation and causing change.”

When you lie down (Nighttime / Bedtime Blessing): One on one - point out positive character qualities you see in your child/teen (perhaps even that day). Help them to see how God can use them in the lives of others to help them grow in faith. **Matthew 5:14-16, “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”**

Pray for your child/teen to see the gifts and talents that God has given them, and that they would use them to encourage others and to bring glory to God.

When you rise (Morning): Joshua 1:8-9, “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

We are prosperous and successful when we know and live out the commands of the Bible. We can be strong and courageous because God is with us. God encourages us with His Word and His presence. We encourage others with God’s Word, and by giving them confidence in Him.