



Throughout the Bible we see instructions to encourage one another and verses that are meant to encourage each of us, personally. Why is encouragement emphasized in the Bible? It is primarily because “encouragement” is necessary in our walk of faith of the true and living God.

God wants to encourage each of us to experience and live in His true joy and peace every single day. Notice, that I said “joy and peace.” I did not use the term “happy” or “happiness.” That is because “happiness” is a state of mind that is affected by the things around it. True joy and true peace, however, is a state of being that has nothing to do with what is happening around you. Rather, it has all to do with who you now are in Jesus.

Oh, we can be happy, but we must remember that happiness is a fleeting experience. Happiness has to do with those things that are going on around us. True joy and true peace are a state of being which has nothing to do with what is going on around you but rather it is all about who you truly are now that you are a child of God. It is a state of being.

We have all read or heard the true accounts of the early believers being lined up to be killed because they were true believers in Jesus. In those accounts, we see that the true believers were not afraid to give up this life for their faith in the true and living God and their faith in Jesus, the Son of God. Many of them sang songs or gave glory to God as they were being killed for their faith in the Living God.

Yes, all of them had true courage but each of them were truly encouraged by their unrelenting faith in who their God really was. We see that the word “courage” is a part of the word “encourage.” That is essential for every true believer to be reminded of.

The term “courage” literally means “boldness and confidence.” It is to be totally persuaded that you are absolutely correct in your trust and belief in who your God truly is. It is being totally persuaded that what your God has told you is positively true and correct.

It means that every true believer is to be bold and have total confidence in who they now are in Jesus. They are totally confident that no matter what takes place to them here upon this earth, there is a greater destiny awaiting them with their God in His Kingdom.

That is why we see that Scripture is packed with encouraging verses!!! God's Word has been kept alive for centuries to speak directly to our heart now. We were always meant to have the confident assurance that we will one day be with the Father and with Jesus. Yes, we will live with them forever and ever in heaven and then, in the New Jerusalem for eternity.

The definition of the term “encouragement” literally means to inspire with courage, spirit, or hope; to be persuaded; to spur on; to give help. We must, as true believers in Jesus and as the children of the Father, have the courage to stand up for the truth of who our God is. We are to continually encourage our fellow true believers in that very truth, as well.

Jesus told His followers and all of us today, *“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”* (John 16:33). Jesus did not shy away from telling His followers about the troubles they would face. In fact, He told them the world would hate them (John 15:18-21)

However, Jesus’ grim forecast of that trouble was tempered with Him telling His believers to “take heart.” Why? It is because Jesus has overcome the world. Jesus, and who we are in Him, is greater than any trouble we may face. That is what we **MUST** totally believe today.

We must notice that Jesus prefaced that statement with telling His believers that in Him, they would have His true “peace.” The word “peace” in this scripture is the Greek word “*eirēnē*.” It literally means, the Messiah's peace which leads to the way of true salvation; a tranquil state of the soul assured of its salvation through Jesus and fearing nothing from God; to be content with your earthly fate no matter what it may be; it is the blessed state of having a devout and upright relationship with God during this life and in the life after physical death – our eternal life with our God.

God wants to encourage each us to live in His true joy and His true peace every single day of this life knowing that we will have His total joy and total peace one day when we are with Him in the heavenly realm. That is why the scriptures are packed with encouraging verses. God's Word has been translated and kept alive for centuries to speak directly to our heart right now. We were meant to find true encouragement in the Father and Jesus, in and through the power of the Holy Spirit, all the days of our natural lives and ultimately within our eternal life.

We must remember that discouragement does not only come when we are oppressed by the enemy because we are doing God's will or because we are doing some great work. No, it can come against you at any time, even when you are simply just sitting. All of a sudden this wave of discouragement can and will come at you and "hit" you. It is a tool and weapon of the enemy to keep you from being who you truly are and what you are truly called to do.

In times of discouragement, hardships become even more difficult. Our will to go on wanes and may even wither away. Many in the Bible, we see, had times of discouragement. But God... God was there to help them all. He sent His ministering angels to help and encourage those that struggled with discouragement. Today, God the Father has given us the Holy Spirit to encourage each of us when those times of discouragement come.

We read that the prophet Elijah struggled with discouragement (1 Kings 19:3-10). There he was, a great prophet of God, yet we see that even he got discouraged. He asked God that he would even die because he was so weary and afraid of what Jezebel would do to him. But God... Yes, God came with His angels to minister to Elijah in his time of discouragement.

Then God Himself came to Elijah in the cave. It tells us that, "the word of the Lord" came to Elijah. Could this have been Jesus, Himself, who is the Word of God? It tells us the Lord spoke to Elijah and ultimately told Elijah what to do. (1 Kings 19:11-18) He encouraged Elijah telling him that he was not alone. There were 7000 others who kept their faith in their God.

That is the encouragement of our God. He encouraged Elijah and many others in the Word of God that we read about. So to will He encourage each and every one of us. Will we have ears to hear? Hmmm...

In the New Testament we read of a man in the early church named "Joses." We all know him by the nickname given to him, "Barnabas." That nickname literally means "son of consolation/encouragement" (Acts 4:36). What a blessing Barnabas was to the believers of his day! Through the encouragement of Barnabas, the apostle Paul, who was persecuting the believers before he had that "road to Damascus" experience, was first accepted by the church in Jerusalem (Acts 9:27).

This Barnabas then encouraged Paul to go forth and teach others about Jesus. He traveled with Paul on Paul's first missionary journey. We see that through the encouragement of Barnabas, Mark was given a second chance after he ran away and failed when he was with Paul (Acts 13:13; 15:39). Because of that second chance, Mark was able to write the Gospel account that we now have in all our Bibles.

It is important for us to remember that "our struggle" is not against "flesh and blood" but against the forces and the powers of darkness that are in this world. Our struggles are against the spiritual forces of evil that are in the spiritual realm. (Ephesians 6:12). This truth makes the encouragement of our God to us, His people, even more important.

It is not just that we face the world's displeasure but we are caught in the "cross hairs" of a spiritual battle and a spiritual enemy. When we are encouraged by and in our God, we have strength and we are enabled to put on our "spiritual armor" (Ephesians 6:10-18) to do battle against the forces of darkness and remain steadfast in and for our God.

Encouragement from our God and from other believers makes it easier to live in this fallen world. We are encouraged to live our lives in the aspect of true holiness. Yes, it is difficult. However, as we encourage each other to live our life as a holy child of God – we will be able to actually live it out as a holy child of God.

Encouragement gives hope and assurance that we will make it through the difficult times. The entire Word of God is a word of encouragement to each and every true believer. The Word of God encourages and helps us through times of discipline and testing. The Word of God encourages and nurtures the child of God. It teaches them how to be steadfast and how to show kindness to others. (1Corinthians 13:4-7 and Galatians 5:22-26).

Joshua 1:9 tell us, *"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee where ever you go."* We see in this section of scripture that God actually tells Joshua three times to be strong and of a good courage. (Joshua 1:6,7,9) In Hebrew writing that is like saying it to the third power (10³) which literally means God was tell Joshua to be **strong and of a good courage** one thousand times. Wow!!!

Yes, just as Joshua was encouraged by the Lord, God is telling each of us, His children, to be strong and of a good courage. We are to be encouraged by the Lord our God **and** we are to encourage each other as we walk this life out as children of the most High God. We must stop any manner of bringing or being a discouragement to our brothers and sisters in the Lord.

We are to encourage each other to continue the work of telling others about Jesus. We are to continue to encourage other believers to live out the true Word of God. We are to bring correction when needed (and it is needed). However, we are to bring it in a way that is encouraging others to walk in the true ways of the Lord found within His full Word (Genesis-Revelation) and not to tear them down.

I pray that we would all learn from and be as “Barnabas” was, “the son of encouragement,” to others in the Body of Christ. We all can be encouraged both, by God and by each other, by reading and knowing the Word of God for ourselves.

Below are some scriptures concerning encouragement and encouraging others. I pray that you would review them and take them to heart. God bless.

Isaiah 43:2 - *“When thou pass through the waters, **I will be with thee**; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walk through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.”*

1 Thessalonians 5:11 - *“Wherefore **comfort yourselves** together, and **edify one another**, even as also ye do.”*

Isaiah 40:31 - *“But **they that wait upon the Lord** shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”*

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 - *“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; **Who comforts us** in all our tribulation, that we may be able to **comfort them** which are in any trouble, **by the comfort** wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.”*

Psalms 23:4 - *“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for **thou art with me**; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”*

Romans 8:31 - *“What shall we then say to these things? If **God be for us, who can be against us?**”*