

Gift of Encouragement Acts 4:36-37

Introduction: The fascination of our children and youth with JRR Toiken is evident in their support of the movies, "The Lord of the Rings", and "The Fellowship of the Ring." That popularity makes his following confession even more incredible. He wrote, The unpayable debt I owe to C.S. Lewis was not influence as ordinarily understood, but it was sheer encouragement. He was the only one that believed my stuff was worthwhile SHEER ENCOURGEMENT - "PURE UNQUALIFIED." People of all ages are starved for encouragement. It is a gift that means more than money.

How does encouragement work?

One must recognize its POWER. The writer of the book of Hebrews emphasized it in chapter 3 and verse 13, "**encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.**" Could that mean that lack of encouragement leads to despair, anger or bitterness? That is the clear admonition to fathers in the raising of their children in Colossians 3:21. Eliphaz unwillingly paid Job a great tribute. Your words have kept men on their feet. Job 4:4 There is a regulation in the Royal Navy which says, No officer shall speak discouragingly to another officer in the discharge of his duties.

There is the need to define the words for encouragement. We are given two words for encouragement.

1. Parakalew (para-along side) and (kalew-to call) to call alongside---It is one of the names of The Holy Spirit who is The Grand Comforter, John 16:7 In our text it is vividly shown in the life of uncle Barnabas. Acts 4:36-37. Also study the case study in Acts 15:36-39
2. Oikodemeo, oikos-house and demeo-to build: to build up someone we often see the word edify it is an event word .It relates to a crisis, a difficulty or a testing, Romans 14:19 "**so then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up on one another.**" Romans 14:19.

Let me briefly show you some models of encouragement in the Bible. These are drawn from a lecture given by Dr. Earl Palmer at Regents College in Vancouver BC about 1985. It is here that the communicator does some independent study of these words to show different ways to encourage

people. I am simply listing the model with the Scriptures for the preacher to exegete adding personal experiences and word studies.

1. The **Family** model: Romans 14:1 pros lambano = to take or receive or welcome, Acts 28:2.
2. The **Teaching** model: Acts 18:26-27. One of the finest illustrations is that of Henrietta Mears who taught such people as **Dr. Howard Hendricks, Bill Bright, etc.**
3. The **Warning** model: This is another word that is synonymous with encouragement. It is to exhort. Philippians 3:2
4. The **Helping** model: Philippians 4:3
5. The **One mind** model: Philippians 2:1-2

(Here the communicator shows how people become sensitive to those who are in need of encouragement.)

Be on the look out for the lonely, the doubting, the hurting, the one who has stumbled, the lost, the widow or widower, the person dealing with divorce, the person who lost their job.