

But God.

“But God” are two of the most wonderful and powerful words in the Bible because holiness is not the way to Jesus, Jesus is the way to holiness.

Encouragement.

Oxford Dictionary: To give hope or confidence or stimulus.



But God.

The most common word for encouragement in the Bible is “*parakaleo*”—“*para*” meaning “beside, near, with, along side,” and “*kaleo*” meaning “to call or summon.”

A “paraclete” is someone called along side of another to counsel, encourage, help and bring comfort.

This word is used to refer to the role of the Holy Spirit.

When Jesus said to his disciples **John 14:18**.

“I will not leave you comfortless” he was saying, in effect:

“I will not leave you without encouragement.”

Paul refers to God as *the God of encouragement* (**2 Cor. 1:4**).

The basic word is always used for one primary purpose, to describe functions that will help Christians be built up in Christ, or to help them build up one another in Christ.

But God.

Ephesians 2:1-7.

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ, by grace you have been saved and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

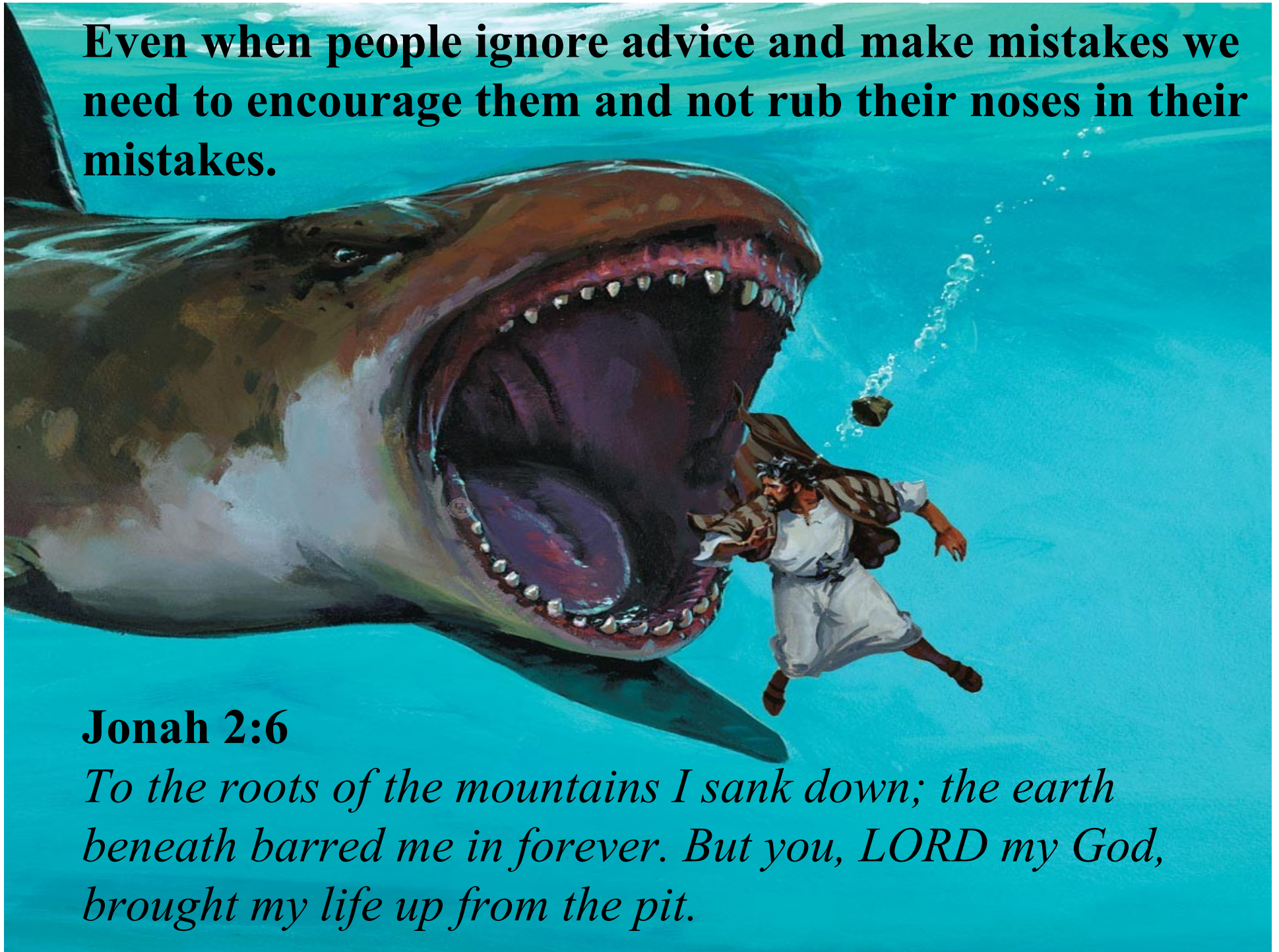
But God.

- This is a phrase that has been popularized by Angus Buchan and when I recently heard someone speak about this phrase I thought of him and the attack on him recently because he said something about covenants and then apologized as he created a stir as he realized that all Christians are partakers in the New Covenant that God has made with those who put their faith in Jesus and His atoning sacrifice on the cross and accept God's gift of repentance.
- This man who has been used mightily to encourage believers and rally them to prayer has been attacked not only by unbelievers but by professing Christians, he has even cancelled the prayer meeting scheduled for Loftus stadium in February. Spectator Christians are plentiful with lots of criticism, but we need to be encouragers.

Even when people ignore advice and make mistakes we need to encourage them and not rub their noses in their mistakes.

Jonah 2:6

To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the earth beneath barred me in forever. But you, LORD my God, brought my life up from the pit.



Encouragement in spite of mistakes.

Acts 27:20-26.

When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved. After they had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss.

But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed.



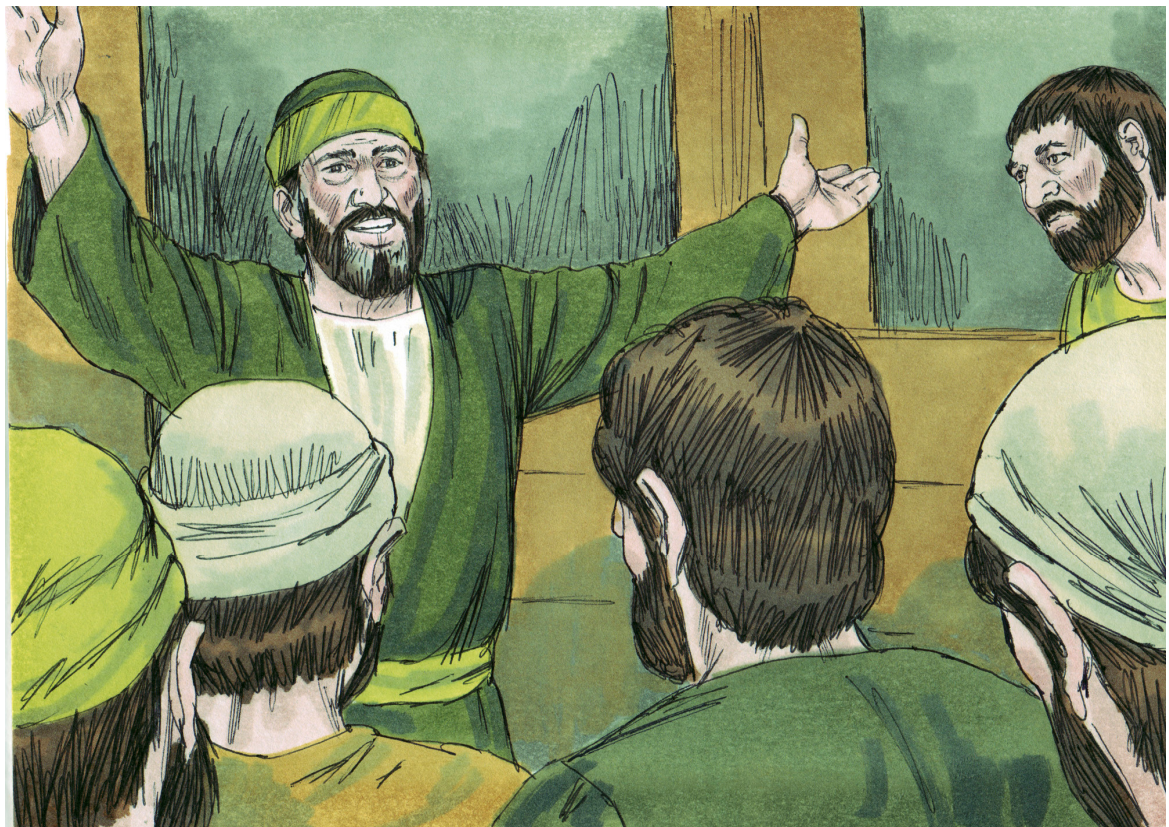
Encouragement in spite of mistakes.

Acts 27:20-26.

Last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me and said, Do not be afraid, Paul.

You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.

So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island.



Encouragement is needed in times of failure.

Galatians 6:1-2 & 9-10.

Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

The weak need to be encouraged and built up.

Romans 15:1-6.

We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please our neighbours for their good, to build them up. For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope. May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Encouragement in bereavement (1 Thess 4:13-18)

We do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Encouragement as the end times unfold.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11.

Now, brothers and sisters, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, Peace and safety, destruction will come on them suddenly, as labour pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.....

But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

Fellowship is a vital source of encouragement.

Hebrews 10:24-25.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Acts 28:14-15.

And so we came to Rome. The brothers and sisters there had heard that we were coming, and they travelled as far as the Forum of Appius and the Three Taverns to meet us.

At the sight of these people Paul thanked God and was encouraged.

MOST MINISTERS RESIGN ON A MONDAY.

<https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/to-discouraged-pastors-and-their-wives>

- AUDIO TRANSCRIPT: Happy Monday, and welcome back. Well, Mondays are notoriously difficult for pastors. The Monday Blues, as they're called, can set in after giving one's life and soul on Sunday. If you're not a pastor, pray for your pastor today as you listen.
- And all of this is compounded for pastors who struggle with tension inside their church's leadership, which then breeds tension in marriages and families. All of this leads to a question from an anonymous wife of a discouraged pastor.
- *"Pastor John, I really appreciate your Ask Pastor John podcast. It is one of my favorite things to listen to when I am walking or doing the dishes or folding laundry. Thank you. I write you as a discouraged pastor's wife. My husband and I have been in full-time youth ministry for four years now, and it breaks my heart to say it, but I feel almost fed up with ministry. My husband gets very frustrated and discouraged at times. I submit to his leading in our family and his call to ministry. But I am so discouraged.*

- *The last year has been really difficult for us, my husband, our marriage, and our family. My husband looks so defeated some days. It breaks my heart. We have received difficult criticism from church members. I have a hard time not taking the criticism personally. Some of these people are our dear friends, and it's hard not to feel betrayed. Our church leadership remains fairly silent regarding the criticism and neither offers support nor guidance in how my husband can improve. I know we are not perfect by any means, but without guidance we don't know what the church wants from us. We feel alone. Can you offer any encouragement to us?"*

<https://praisedc.com/1676312/why-are-so-many-pastors-committing-suicide>

In another church tragedy, Pastor Isaac Hunter, the son of the spiritual adviser to President Obama, has reportedly taken his own life. Hunter's death is making national headlines because of his megachurch father Pastor Joel Hunter's influence on the White House, his marriage troubles and an undated suicide note found last year, but his death is far from the only pastoral suicide in recent months.

Just days ago, a pastor who was grieving his dead wife reportedly shot himself in front of his mother and son, expressing that he was hearing his dead spouse's voice and footsteps. Pastor Ed Montgomery and his late wife, Prophetess Jackie Montgomery, served at the Full Gospel Assemblies International church in Hazel Crest, Ill.

In November, a Georgia pastor killed himself in between Sunday services. Larrinecia Sims Parker, the wife of the Rev. Teddy Parker Jr., found the pastor in the driveway of their home with a self-inflicted gunshot wound, Houston County coroner Danny Galpin reports.

<https://praisedc.com/1676312/why-are-so-many-pastors-committing-suicide>

Why the sudden rash of pastors committing suicide? Suicide is not a new problem among the clergy, but three known suicides in less than two months beg a deeper look at the issue. There is no lack of statistics about pastors and depression, burnout, health, low pay, spirituality, relationships and longevity. and none of them are good. According to the Schaeffer Institute, 70 percent of pastors constantly fight depression, and 71 percent are burned out. Meanwhile, 72 percent of pastors say they only study the Bible when they are preparing for sermons; 80 percent believe pastoral ministry has negatively affected their families, and 70 percent say they don't have a close friend.

The Schaeffer Institute also reports that 80 percent of seminary and Bible school graduates will leave the ministry within five years. It's not clear how many commit suicide, but it is clear that pastors are not immune to it. Psychologists point to several reasons why people commit suicide, from depression to psychosis to stressful life situations.

Elijah: 1 Kings 19:1-10.

Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow.

Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.



Elijah: 1 Kings 19:1-10.

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he asked that he might die, saying, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers.

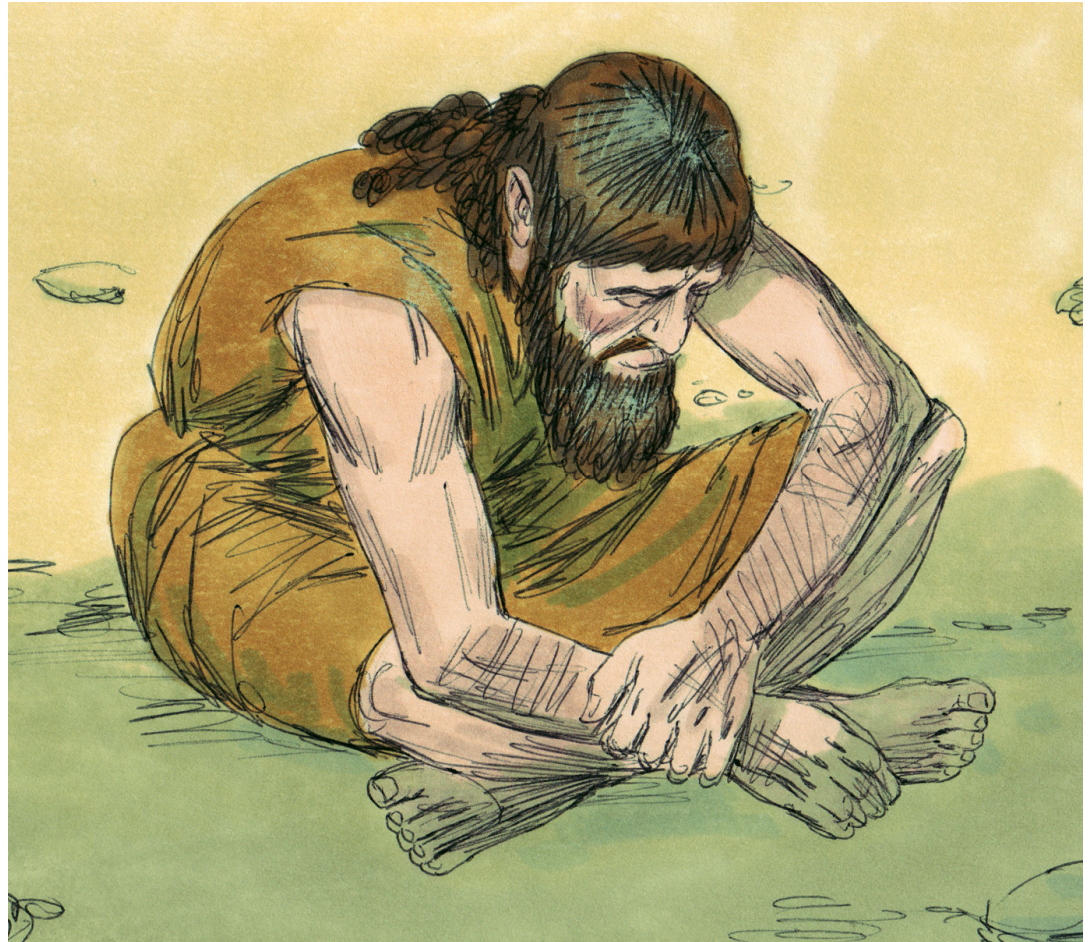
And he lay down and slept under a broom tree. And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again.

And the angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you. And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God.

Elijah: 1 Kings 19:1-10.

There he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said to him, What are you doing here, Elijah? He said, I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts.

For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.



The importance of encouragement.

Without fellowship and encouragement our hearts harden.

Hebrews 3:12-13.

See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.

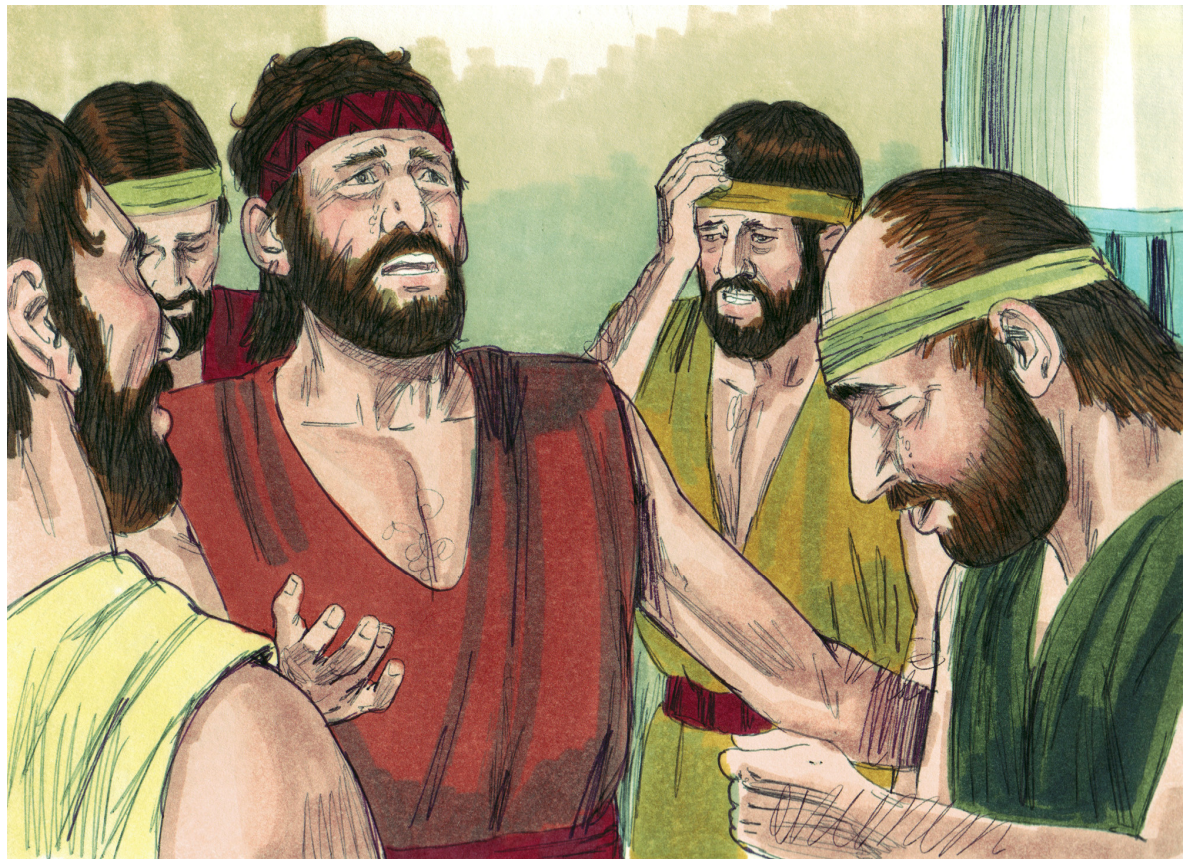
But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

Without encouragement, hardship becomes meaningless, and our will to go on wanes.

The prophet Elijah struggled with discouragement and so do we.

Genesis 50:15-21.

When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him. So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, Your father gave this command before he died: Say to Joseph, Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you. And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father.

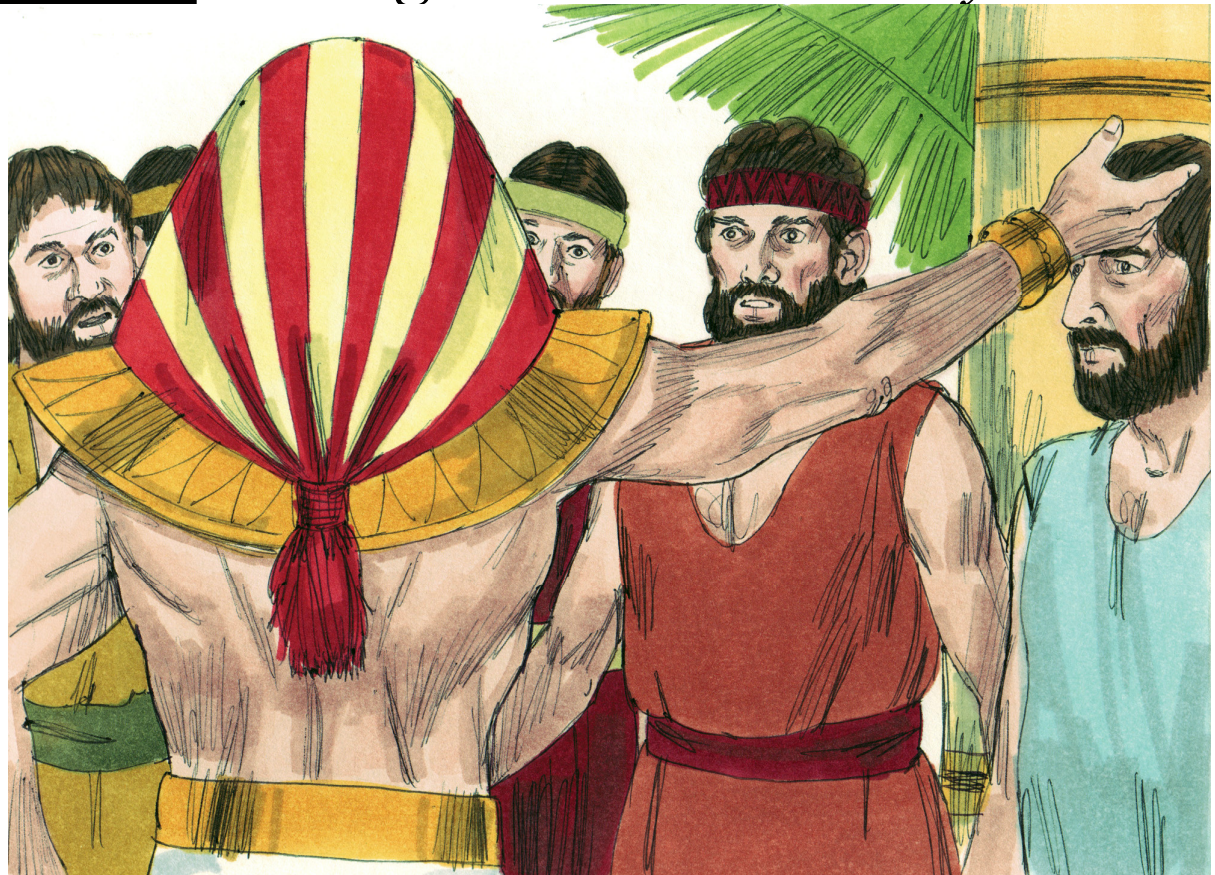


Genesis 50:15-21.

Joseph wept when they spoke to him. His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, Behold, we are your servants. But Joseph said to them, Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today.

So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones.

Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.



Paul's calling.

Galatians 1:11-17.

I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin.

I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it.

I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

Paul's calling.

Galatians 1:11-17 (continued)

But when God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, my immediate response was not to consult any human being.

I did not go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went into Arabia.

Later I returned to Damascus.

Paul encouraged even in his trials.

Acts 15:32.

Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers.

Acts 16:22-25.

The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods. After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. When he received these orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.

Paul encouraged even in his trials.

Acts 16:40.

After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia's house, where they met with the brothers and encouraged them. Then they left.

Acts 20:1-2.

Paul sent for the disciples and, after encouraging them, said good-bye and set out for Macedonia.

He travelled through that area, speaking many words of encouragement to the people, and finally arrived in Greece..



Be an encourager.
The world has plenty
of critics already.

Paul's emphasis on encouragement.

1 Corinthians 14:3, 31.

everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort...

For you can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be instructed and encouraged.

Ephesians 6:22.

Tychicus, the dear brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will tell you everything, so that you also may know how I am and what I am doing.

I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage you.

Paul encourages his disciple.

2 Timothy 1:2-9.

Perhaps Timothy needed this encouragement as Paul, his mentor was imprisoned awaiting imminent execution .

To Timothy, my dear son: I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.



Paul encourages his disciple.

2 Timothy 1:2-9.

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. So do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner. Rather, join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God.

2 Timothy 4:1-8.

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage, with great patience and careful instruction.

Paul the encourager needed encouragement.

Paul was deserted and the Lord himself encouraged him.

2 Timothy 4:16-18.

At my first defence, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me.

May it not be held against them. But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through

me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.



Paul the encourager needed encouragement.

Acts 23:10-11.

The dispute became so violent that the commander was afraid Paul would be torn to pieces by them. He ordered the troops to go down and take him away from them by force and bring him into the barracks. The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, “Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome.”

This encouragement from the Lord was necessary even though Paul had been warned by the Holy Spirit of the danger and trials that lay ahead.



Encouragement.

Even Jesus was strengthened as he prayed in Gethsemane and prepared himself to face the crucifixion.

Luke 22:39-44.

Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. On reaching the place, he said to them, Pray that you will not fall into temptation. He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done. An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.

Encouragement.

We need to encourage people in their ministry and resist the human tendency to always find fault.

1 Thessalonians 5:14.

Encourage the timid.

Romans 1:9-12.

God, whom I serve in my spirit in preaching the gospel of his Son, is my witness how constantly I remember you in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God's will the way may be opened for me to come to you.

I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong, that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith.

David encouraged himself in the Lord.

1 Samuel 30:3-6 (His men wanted to kill him)

When David and his men reached Ziklag, they found it destroyed by fire and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive. So David and his men wept aloud until they had no strength left to weep. David's two wives had been captured, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail, the widow of Nabal of Carmel.

David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But David found strength in the LORD his God.



Encouragement.

Like David we too can encourage ourselves in the Lord.

Ephesians 5:15-20.

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit.

Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

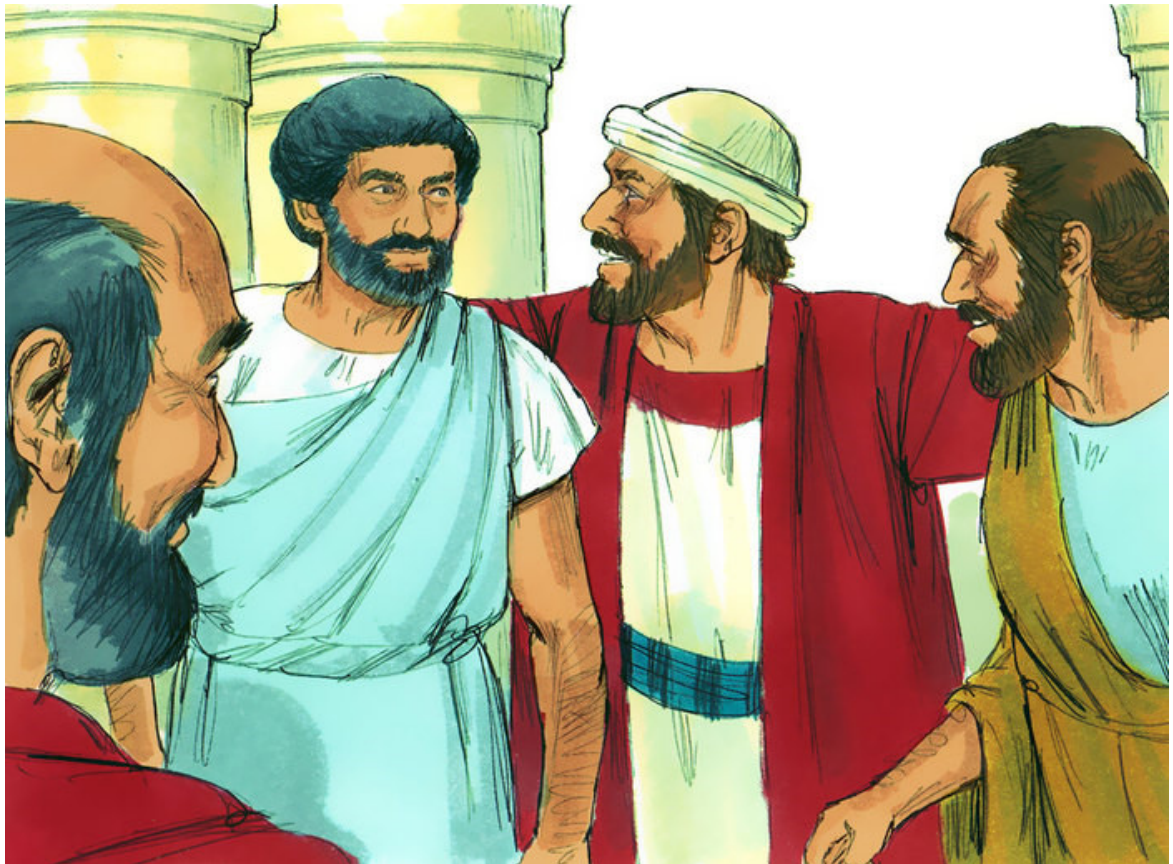


Encouragement.

A man in the early church named Joseph was given the nickname “Barnabas,” which means “Son of Encouragement” (Acts 4:36).

Acts 11:23.

When he [Barnabas] arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.



Encouragement.

- There are two kinds of people on earth today, just two kinds of people, no more, I say, Not the good and the bad, for 'tis well understood The good are half bad and the bad are half good. Not the happy and sad, for the swift flying years bring each man his laughter and each man his tears. Not the rich and the poor, for to count a man's wealth You must first know the state of his conscience and health. Not the humble and proud, for in life's busy span Who puts on vain airs is not counted a man. No! The two kinds of people on earth I mean are the people who lift, and the people who lean. Wherever you go you will find the world's masses Are ever divided in just these two classes. And, strangely enough, you will find, too, I wean, There is only one lifter for twenty who lean. This one question I ask. Are you easing the load of overtaxed lifters who toil down the road? Or are you a leaner who lets others bear your portion of worry and labour and care?

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

Encouragement when God disciplines us.

Hebrews 12:5-11.

And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says,

My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son.

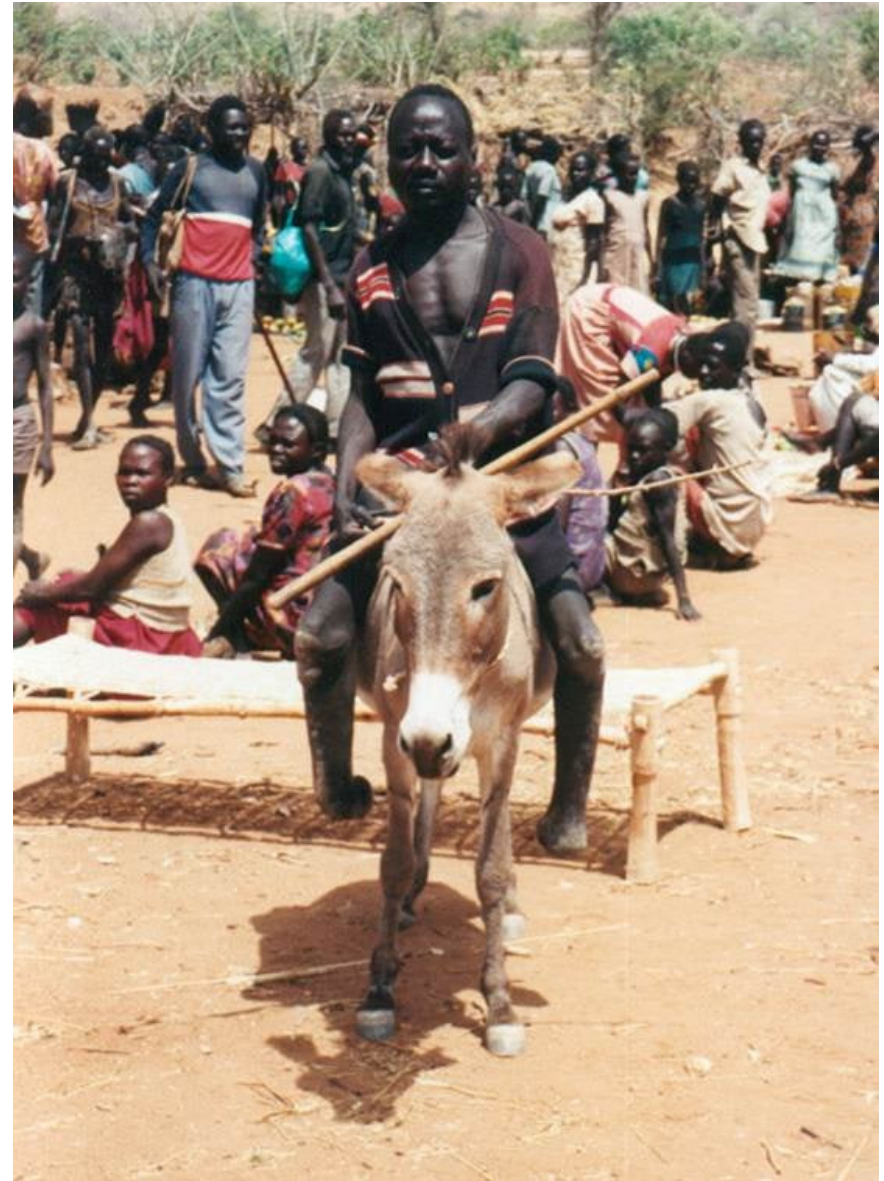
Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? If you are not disciplined, and everyone undergoes discipline, then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all.

Encouragement.

I think of the Nuba Evangelist in Sudan, who I met. Despite having had both his feet axed off at the ankles by malicious Muslims, he continued to walk on his knees, or ride on a donkey, to evangelize his neighbours.

The Bible declares: “How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring Good News.”

This brother had no feet and yet he did not allow that to prevent him from reaching, blessing and benefiting his neighbours and even his enemies with the Gospel of Christ.



Encouragement when God disciplines us.

Luke 12:17.

I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more.

But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after your body has been killed, has authority to throw you into hell.

Yes, I tell you, fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God.

Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

Encouragement when God disciplines us.

There were times when even Corrie Ten Boom felt cut off from the Lord. In such a time of despair, she once said to the Lord, “Have you forgotten your Corrie?”

In the following story Corrie tells about a time when she and her sister Betsie were in the concentration camp in Ravensbrück, and she had this terrible cold. She told her sister Betsie how much she just wished she had a handkerchief. Of course, handkerchiefs were impossible to find in that place. Betsie then suggested that Corrie pray for one, and Corrie just laughed at that ridiculous idea.

So, Betsie prayed. She said, “Lord, you see my sister, Corrie, here, has a very bad cold, and in Jesus’ name, I ask you TODAY for a handkerchief for her. Amen.”

Corrie tells that, shortly after that, she heard someone call out her name. She went to stand near the window of the barracks, where she saw a friend of hers, also a prisoner, and who worked in the hospital in Ravensbrück.

Encouragement when God disciplines us.

“Here,” her friend said. “Take this! I’m bringing you a little present.” She pressed it into Corrie’s hand.

“I opened the little package,” said Corrie, “and it was a handkerchief!”

“How did you know I needed a handkerchief? Did you KNOW that I have a cold?” Corrie asked.

“No,” said her friend. I was sewing handkerchiefs from an old piece of sheet, and there was a voice in my heart that said, ‘Bring a handkerchief to Corrie ten Boom!’”

“That little hanky, made from an old piece of a sheet, was a message out of the Heavens to me!” tells Corrie. "It told me that there is a Heavenly Father who hears, when on a tiny planet, the Earth, one of his children prays for an impossible, small thing; a handkerchief. And the Heavenly Father says to one of his other children, ‘Bring a handkerchief to Corrie ten Boom!’”

Encouragement when God disciplines us.

Corrie continued, “That is something the Apostle Paul calls 'The foolishness of God'... that is so much wiser than the wisdom of mankind. You can read it yourself at home. It's found in 1st Corinthians, chapter 1 and 2.”

“Does God answer all our prayers? Well, most of the time He does,” she continued. “Why? you might ask, not every request we make? Well, you see, because He knows what we do not know. He knows everything. Someday, when we are in Heaven, we will thank him for all the answered prayers, (where he gave us what we asked), and maybe even more for the unanswered prayers. Then we will see it from his point of view, and that God never made any mistakes.

Encouragement when God disciplines us.

Isaiah 49:14-16.

But Zion said, The LORD has forsaken me, the Lord has forgotten me.

Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne?

Though she may forget, I will not forget you!

See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands.



Audio (WMA) and text (PDF) ministry

FREE MINISTRY DOWNLOADS



AUTHOR: Ken Paynter

- ❑ For more ministry downloads visit:
<https://agfbrakpan.com/sermon-archives-list>
- ❑ For more ministry downloads by Ken Paynter visit:
<https://agfbrakpan.com/free-sermon-downloads-by-speaker/Ken%20Paynter>

COPYRIGHT INFORMATION

- ❑ Unless otherwise stated, Scripture quotations are taken from the NIV:
 - THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV®
Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™
Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.
- ❑ Scripture quotations taken from the NASB:
 - New American Standard Bible®,
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977,
1995 by The Lockman Foundation
Used by permission. (www.Lockman.org)
- ❑ Scripture taken from The Message
(www.biblegateway.com/versions/Message-MSG-Bible)
 - Copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002
Used by permission of NavPress Publishing Group.