

# Encourage One Another

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[ 0 : 00 ] Now, there's a part of your body that can be poisonous. The tongue, yeah.

So we'll talk about that today. And go to James 3. James 3. The tongue.

The most powerful muscle we have is the tongue. And it's got powerful potential for good and evil. James 3 verse 8.

It says, but the tongue can no man tame. Context there is all kinds of beasts that can be tamed.

The tongue can no man tame. It is an unruly evil full of deadly poison. Goes on to say, there with bless we God, even the Father.

[ 1 : 28 ] And there with curse we men, which are made up to the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth both blessing and cursing.

My brethren, these things ought not so to be. James teaches us, even something as small as the tongue can cause a lot of damage.

It tells us, and the tongue is a fire. Just a little spark can cause this tremendous devastation. A massive bushfire.

So too our words. Even a few words. Can be so damaging, can't they? Make such a big impact. So choose your words carefully. I want to talk about tongues.

My subject is the speaking in different kinds of tongues. Because there are good tongues and there are bad tongues. So firstly, let's look at the bad kind of tongues.

[ 2 : 31 ] Here's some scriptures we'll just touch on. Bad kinds of tongues. Firstly, chattering. 2 Timothy 2, it tells us, Shun profane and vain babblings, of which will increase unto more ungodliness.

And their words will eat as does a canker. In other words, like an ulcer, gangrene. Of whom is Hymenus and Philetus? Wordly and empty chatter.

Chattering. Of Hymenus and Philetus, Paul tells Timothy, their words eat like a cancer.

Something horrible, isn't it? Words can eat away like gangrene. Worldly and empty chatter.

A man wisely once said, Better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to speak out and remove all doubt. Sometimes better not to say anything. Rather say nothing than say something that is cancerous, as it were.

[ 3 : 46 ] Goes on criticizing. There's another bad kind of tongue. Speaking evil of others. Titus 3, 2, it says, Speak evil of no man. Show meekness unto all men.

Evil speaking. In the word here, it's actually blasphemia. Speaking evil is blasphemia.

It's evil speaking. Speaking evil. Someone said about criticism, Whatever you dislike in another person, be sure to correct it in yourself.

A preacher said, The devil is the accuser of the brethren. Let him do all the dirty work. Criticizing. Speaking evil. Avoid that. Bad kind of tongues.

Another kind of tongue, The third one here, cursing. Psalm 10, verse 7, says, His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud. Under his tongue is mischief and vanity.

[ 4 : 47 ] Cursing. It goes without saying, Zip the lip rather than curse. And then another one here is complaining. Complaining. Philippians 2.14.

It says, Do all things without murmurings and disputings. Murmuring, grumbling, complaining. Certainly, death and life are in the power of the tongue.

Death and life. Death and life. Poison or blessing.

It's in the power of the tongue. So we talked about these bad kind of tongues. Chattering.

Criticizing. Cursing. Complaining.

Rather than speaking with such tongues, Rather let us aim to speak with these good kind of tongues. Let's talk about these. Good kind of tongues. These words that are kind.

[ 5 : 49 ] The Proverbs 31 woman. I know there's many women here. Proverbs 31 woman. She openeth her mouth with wisdom. And in her tongue is the law of kindness.

Use words that are kind. Words that are courteous. Proverbs 10.31. The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom. Be courteous.

Be thoughtful. Be wise. Thirdly, tongues that are praising. The psalmist in Psalm 35 verse 28, he says, And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.

Don't just leave your praising for Sundays. You can praise him on the way to work. You can hum and whistle and sing a song.

Amen. I praise unto God all the day long. 24 by 7. Praise him. It's a good kind of tongue, isn't it? And my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

[ 6 : 59 ] Psalm 51 verse 14. Another good kind of tongue is a witnessing tongue. Psalm 71 verse 24. My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness again all the day long.

My tongue shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long. Psalm 119 verse 172 says, My tongue shall speak of thy word.

My tongue shall speak of thy word. Now hide the word in your heart and then you'll have it on your tongue. You'll have it on the tip of your tongue when you need to witness.

Witnessing is a good kind of tongue, isn't it? Hebrews 10.25. And just, we're going to spend a little time on this last one here. Encouraging. Hebrews 10.25. Got to be one of my most favourite tongues.

Words that are encouraging. Words that are encouraging. Words that are encouraging. Hebrews 10.24.

[ 8 : 10 ] It says, And let us consider one another. One another. It's easy to consider what some people call themselves look out for number one.

Who should be the number one? Look out for number one. What does he want? Let us consider one another. To provoke unto love and to good works.

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is, but exhorting.

Exhorting. Which means encouraging. Encouraging.

Exhorting. One another. And so much the more as you see the day approaching. We're called to encourage one another. The word here, exhort, is encourage.

Likewise, it's called comfort. The comforter, as we heard earlier. The Holy Spirit himself.

Encourage. Encouragement.

[ 9 : 20 ] Encourager. It's the sense of paracletos. Called to the side of. Called along the side of. We're meant to be people who come alongside other people.

Encourage one another. It means to stand alongside people. Stand alongside someone. Assure them. Be a support for them. My sister was telling me earlier how she helped her friend by coming alongside them.

They're running a business and they need a bit of help. And she's doing it off her own back. That's encouraging, isn't it? That's encouragement. That's standing alongside other people who need a bit of a hand.

They need a bit of encouragement. It's standing alongside people to lift them up, to bring them new hope, to give them a hand, to share together, to pray for one another, to support one another.

Now, in the world of athletics, you've got the coach. And often you hear the coaches and the fans on the sidelines, barracking, yelling out words of encouragement, words that uplift.

[ 10 : 29 ] Go! Go! You can do it! You can get there! You can make it! Go for it! Keep it up! You're doing great! Keep on going! Keep on going! Wouldn't it be great if the body of Christ gave its members such encouragement that we could encourage one another, that we could spur one another on?

That's what we're meant to be. Wouldn't it be great? This is what God wants for us, to be such a people, to offer a helping hand, to express that word of appreciation.

Put it into words, what you're thinking. Wow, that was a blessing. Thanks for sharing that. That was an encouragement. How can I pray for you? How can I encourage you?

What's going on for you? Sometimes it's just quietly being there, isn't it, and listening, coming alongside, coming along the side of, whatever form it takes, encouragement, building people up, not tearing them down.

And we do this in the power of the Holy Spirit, who is the Comforter. The Encourager. The great heavenly encourager, the heavenly counselor, the Holy Spirit.

[ 11 : 45 ] How about you? Are you an encourager? God helping you, you can be more such. God helping you, you can develop that quality, that character. Do people see you as a spiritual cheerleader or a negative person?

Think about your words. A wholesome tongue is a tree of life. Wow. Don't you want to be a tree of life?

Don't you want to be that life, that fruitful one that brings life to others? Is our tongue wholesome? Do we speak loving words? Genuine words, not putting it on, but kind words, thoughtful words, healing words, wise words.

Every time you open your mouth, you show what's in your heart. What is in your heart? How is your heart?

[ 12 : 49 ] Out of the heart, the mouth speaks. Let's look a little deeper at this word, encouragement. Encouragement. It means to inspire others with hope, with courage, with confidence.

And encouragement is a gift. It's a gift. In Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12, you've got lists of gifts. And Romans 12 includes the gift of encouragement. It's a gift. It's a spiritual gift. It's empowered by the Holy Spirit, the gift of exhortation or encouragement.

It says, in part, he that exhorts it, let him wait on exhortation. Let him develop it. Let him nurture it. Make it grow. Make it stronger. Make it firmer. Make it evident. And you've got a gift work on it.

[ 13 : 52 ] Develop it. Nurture it. Strengthen it. Hear that exhorts. Let him wait on exhortation. Hear that encourages. Let him nurture that. Let him nurture that encouragement.

Develop it. Grow it. It goes on. Likewise, in 1 Thessalonians 5.11. It says, wherefore, comfort, or it's the same word elsewhere, intended, encourage, comfort yourselves.

Encourage yourselves together and edify one another. Build one another up, even as also you do. That's a command from God, isn't it? God says to me, to you, he says, encourage one another.

Encourage yourselves together and edify. Build up each other. Let's look at a person who the Bible calls Mr.

Encouragement. And I'm sure if you're a miss or a missus, you could likewise be a miss or a missus encouragement. Mr.

[ 15 : 03 ] Encouragement, his name is Barnabas, which means encourager, son of encouragement, literally, encourager. Barnabas is called an encourager in the Bible.

It's his name, it's his character. And Barnabas must have known what it was to lift up people and encourage other people because it was his name.

Encouraging people from God's word. When others gave up on people, Barnabas came alongside to help. He came alongside of them. He kept on encouraging and standing by people.

Instead of letting people down, he stood by people. The Bible tells what Barnabas did. We're going to cover just a few of those here. In Acts 4, 32, we see Barnabas comes on the scene and we see Barnabas in the context here, Acts 4, 32, was the context of giving.

Barnabas gave and he gave of himself. He gave of himself. He gave of himself freely to help needy Christians. There was a need that was evident in the churches and Barnabas stepped up and Barnabas got involved.

[ 16 : 21 ] He was a giving person. He used what he had to strengthen God's work. He sacrificed himself and his own interests for the benefit of others. What about us? Can we learn to cultivate a generosity of spirit?

Cultivate that generosity. Develop a generosity of spirit. Be generous. Be generous. How much better would the world be, would the church be, if we were more like Barnabas?

How can we give more of our time, of our substance, of our who we are, of our life's blood? How can we give of our talents, of our energies, to help the church go forward, to help the church grow, to give and keep on giving of ourselves, of who we are, of our substance, and encourage others to join in and share the load?

Barnabas gave of himself. He gave practically. He shared practically. And the second thing you do here is he stood up for others. In Acts 9.26, we see Paul comes on the scene.

He's been dramatically converted to Christ on the Damascus road. Paul had gone to Damascus to kill the Christians. He had been sent with a legal instrument that authorized him to enter the homes of Christians and drag them onto the street and bind them and arrest them and punish them and imprison them.

[ 18 : 03 ] And Paul was a man who had officiated at the killing of Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Here was Paul, an avowed enemy of the church.

He was public enemy number one. but then God dramatically changed his direction. When he went to Damascus breathing slaughter with his intent to kill Christians, when he got to Damascus, he started to proclaim Christ because God converted him on the road to Damascus.

Paul was an enemy of the church. And so when Paul came along as it were and started to come to church, as it were, he came along and he joined himself to the disciples.

The disciples didn't trust him. They thought he's up to no good. He's killed people. He's imprisoned our fellow believers.

They thought he was playing a trick. He's a con man. He's just trying to come to gain our confidence so he can kill more Christians. And in verse 27 of Acts 9, Barnabas came by Paul's side.

[ 19 : 23 ] Barnabas put his own credibility on the line and he declared his trust in Barnabas. Barnabas stood up for one who desperately needed a friend. Barnabas, the Mr.

Encouragement, stands up for others. We need to make the effort for others, to take the time for others, to reach out to those who seem lonely or rejected.

And there's people like that. At times come amongst us and it's taking the time, it's taking the trouble to care, to take time for others, to reach out for those who are lonely or rejected.

Let's not just, every church can be guilty of this. Sometimes we think, oh, that's the big churches.

No, it's in little churches too. Little churches can be just as bad as the big churches for getting clicky. Isn't that right? And we just, oh, we just shake hands with the same, you know, we just greet the same small number of people and we don't even know the name of the person on the other side of the aisle from us.

[ 20 : 37 ] We don't even know their name. We don't know what's going on for them. We can make that mistake, brothers and sisters, in a small church too. People get neglected. Let's not make that mistake.

Let's put ourselves out. Let's step out of our comfort zones. Go and talk to people. And sometimes the most important part of the church service is before the meeting starts and after the meeting's finished.

Don't head for the door at the end. Stick around. Take time. Share a smile. Give her some encouragement. I think sometimes it's good when we start late because it just gives that little bit more time for the fellowship.

Not that you want to be professional and everything and start on time but sometimes it's more about taking time for people, isn't it? That's what church is all about. And how can we give more of our time for others?

Church is a place where people can feel they belong and are accepted. sometimes it can be a lonely place. People can feel missed out.

[ 21 : 46 ] So find others and be a friend to them. Stand up for others like Barnabas did. Another thing that he did was Barnabas spoke encouragement.

In Acts 11.23 he exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. Acts 11.23 he exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.

He gave that word. Cleave unto the Lord he said. Cleave unto the Lord. Love God.

Hold fast to God. Hold firmly to God. Reach out to God. Let him touch your life. With purpose of heart cleave unto the Lord. Cleave unto the Lord.

Hold him dear to your heart. Barnabas edifies other believers. He went to the new group of believers in Antioch and he exhorted them. This means he offered them encouragement.

[ 22 : 46 ] He did his best to encourage them to go on in God. Everyone values encouragement. Sometimes it's speaking the word. When you see someone you think they look like they need a bit of an encouragement.

A word that uplifts them. Find something to say. Let God give you something to say. We see this in the worldly realm where even you see in worldly settings.

For example in the coaching of games, of football or other sports. there was a football coach in an American university team and he would talk to each new player at the beginning of the season and he would tell them I'm very impressed with your ability.

If you work really hard this year I think you'll be good enough to make it to the National Football League which was the next best thing they could aim for.

He told this to every player on the team and you know what happened he had the highest percentage of players of any university to make it to professional football.

[ 24 : 09 ] That word of encouragement can lift people. It can help them to see themselves in the new light. It can give them that boost that they need to keep on keeping on.

And if football coaches can do it surely we can. We have all met people like that who believed in us so much that we began to believe in ourselves.

Sometimes it's contrary to that. I've been in job situations where I used to work with Peter Guttridge many years ago and I was told you'll never make it to the next level.

I'm going to prove you wrong. I made it to the next level and the next level and the next level because sometimes you don't have to hear what people say. You can prove them wrong.

But wouldn't it be better if you had someone who was an encourager who actually said, yeah, I believe you can do it. You can do it. Keep on doing it. You'll get there.

[ 25 : 16 ] In other settings too, we see where it's just that little word of encouragement makes all the difference.

There was a nine-year-old boy and he was getting tired of practicing the piano and one day his mother heard of the great Polish pianist Paderewski come to town for a concert and she bought two tickets, one for herself and one for her boy.

So she dragged him along and sat him down by her and he was wearing a little tuxedo and he was smartly dressed and the boy was getting bored here waiting for the concert to start and he looked upon the platform and he saw this giant ebony black Steinway concert grand piano.

The lid on the keyboard was lifted and the leather bench was there and he looked at that piano and he popped his knuckles and said to himself oh man I'd like to play that. So while his mother was busy waiting, talking, slipping down the aisle, he walked down the front up the stairs and started along the platform and he sat down at the piano and he started playing his favourite tune, Chopsticks.

And while the people down front said, who? Who is this? Quit! Hey kids, stop! Where's his mother? Well of course his mother was so embarrassed about what was going on and then the great paderewski was fixing his tie and he heard what was going on and then without the boy seeing it he slipped alongside and came behind the little boy and reached around him and a beautiful melody he played alongside the boy's chopsticks and he said to the boy, keep playing, keep playing, don't stop, don't quit.

[ 27 : 05 ] and how often can we crush people by a word of criticism or a look or just not encouraging them but rather be like that man was with a little boy.

Don't stop, don't quit, keep going. Sure you'll make some mistakes but keep going. How easy it is to find some criticism instead.

Surely if a great concert pianist can help a little boy, if a football coach can help a team, surely Christians can do better than that, can't we? To encourage one another like Barnabas did, he spoke encouragement.

Another thing that Barnabas did was he soldiered on in trials. In Acts 13, 49, we see the context here is the time of trials and testings. Barnabas had everything thrown at him as a Christian and what did he respond?

Verse 52 says they were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost. Barnabas along with Paul, he preached the word of God, he faced persecution and rejection but instead of being discouraged and quitting they shook the dust from their feet and they went on their way rejoicing.

[ 28 : 29 ] If we're going through battles in life, for there's a valley of difficulty and hardship, let's be like Barnabas and soldier on. Don't let the setbacks stop you.

How real is our faith in God? Handle setbacks with joy and perseverance like Barnabas did. Encourage yourself in the Lord.

Another thing that Barnabas did was he stuck by the weaker ones in Acts 15 from 37 through 39 the stories of Mark and Mark had gone with the apostles on the first missionary trip but Mark had given up part way.

Part way he decided to join the trip to head back home mission. Later Barnabas wanted Mark to join in another mission but Paul would not agree.

Paul was opposed to that. He had quite a disagreement. Christians can disagree, we can differ, they did in the Bible. God brought good out of that and Barnabas ended up taking Mark and Paul

joined with Silas so they doubled their missionary effort.

[ 29 : 45 ] Barnabas' patient encouragement was confirmed by Mark's eventual effective ministry. Barnabas stuck by the weaker one. There's weaker ones, there's weaker brothers, there's weaker sisters, they just need us to hang in there with them.

That's what Barnabas did with Mark. Mark had proven unreliable. Sometimes when Christians let us down sometimes it's easy to dismiss them and stop trying to support others.

But Barnabas didn't give up on Mark. Barnabas didn't give up on him. Even though Mark was undependentable and one who couldn't be counted on, Barnabas didn't give up on him.

And Barnabas showed forgiveness to give him a second chance to overlook his faults with compassion. How we need more Barnabases today.

People will be patient with other Christians. Are we like Barnabas? We all need a little help. And Barnabas was such a one who gave that help.

[ 30 : 57 ] He saw Mark's potential. Barnabas was there to encourage him and to help him get back on track, to overcome his failings. When Mark could have felt so defeated and put off and no one had any trust in him anymore, he could have given up trying.

How often have we seen fellow believers fall by the wayside? When they get treated ill, when they're kicked when they're down, let's not do that to others.

Sometimes I think life's too short, isn't it? Isn't it so short? And the words that we speak can be so damaging, the poison of the tongue.

Rather, let's reach out and encourage them. Who knows whether we'll see tomorrow or whether they will. Rather, we give them a word of encouragement than a word of condemnation.

Let's be like the Good Samaritan. He stopped, he bound up the wounds, he helped the man who was injured and he sought recovery.

[ 32 : 09 ] You know, it's so much easier to gossip and find fault, isn't it? It's human nature, it is for me. I'm inclined to be picky and find fault and I've got to learn to bite the tongue.

Aren't you glad that God is the God of second chances? Jonah 3 verse 1, the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time.

second time. We can be like God himself and give people another chance to show mercy, to extend forgiveness like Barnabas did to Paul and Samar.

Forgiveness, it's often a difficult thing, isn't it? Easy said, then done. Forgiveness, especially if you have been personally wronged. forgiveness, forgiveness is not optional, it is commanded.

Forgive. It's not optional. He commands us to forgive. Is there someone that we can come alongside to help along the way?

[ 33 : 27 ] People in your life, people in your circle of influence that you can be a Barnabas to them. And it might go against the grain. It might seem hard to do.

we need to be like Barnabas, don't we? In our homes. How can our homes be more positive and encouraging if we were like Barnabas?

More like Barnabas. Now, marriages fall apart for many different reasons, but we do not hear a wife say, I'm leaving my husband because he says too many nice things to me.

Man folk here today. Speaking to me. Or, marriages might fall apart when a husband says, I don't love my wife anymore because she does so many sweet things for me.

How can we be more like Barnabas in our home? What about being more like Barnabas in our church? You know, there was a story told, and this is probably a reality in many settings of how people can get wounded in churches.

[ 34 : 55 ] There was a story about a church where there was a boy there who started to sing in the choir, and God had given him a beautiful singing voice. He was maybe 12 or 13, and he began to sing in the adult choir, and it was a very small choir, but his voice was changing, and every once in a while it would squeal, and he really added a lot to the choir, nevertheless, but he did have a remarkably beautifully clear voice.

But one day, one of the dear saints of the church took it upon herself to go to him and say, don't you know how silly you look singing up there with the adults?

It embarrassed him so much that he dropped out of the choir and he soon quit coming to church, and that was over 30 years ago, and this man says, it still bothers me to this day, I've lost track of him, and to this day, I still wonder, did he ever get back in church?

I just pray with all my heart that somehow, some way, he was able to get back into church. What damage the tongue can do, just an offhanded remark, just ill thought words can be poison, toxic. We need to be careful what we say, even at church, especially at church. We can destroy our relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ by words.

[ 36 : 31 ] Rather, let's show grace and concern and care and zip the lip when we think to say something that might hurt or harm or wound.

Encouragement builds people up rather than tears them down. Encourage one another, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the matter of some is, but exhorting, encouraging, encouraging one another.

And so much the day, the more as you see the day approaching, it's telling of a day coming, the judgment day. Let's not stand at judgment day and think, wow, I really blew at that time, what I said, what I didn't say.

We can encourage or discourage. There's two kinds of people in church. One kind finds all the fault they can and they do their best to tear others down.

Others seek to build up their fellow believers and help them grow in the Lord. We should be like a coach, shouldn't we? Much more than that, that God, the holy comforter, the holy encourager, would use us for his use, to speak to others what the holy spirit would say?

[ 38 : 00 ] Would they be words that are unkind or self-centered, not thoughtful? It's easy to criticize instead of encourage. It's been said that apparently women speak more than men.

And here's a challenge for you. How will you use your 25,000 words, girls? And you're 14,000 words men today.

Everyone needs encouragement some of the time. God wants us to encourage others as we pass through the world. Those words that we say can be such a blessing or a curse, so meaningful or so hurtful.

You can be an encourager, brother, sister. Maybe it's someone who is so discouraged that they aren't in church today. How sad it is.

It boggles my mind when I know of people like this. Something hurtful was said or done and they've dropped down.

[ 39 : 10 ] And the devil delights in that. The accuser of the brethren.

Let's not do his work. Rather, let's heal the broken hearted as our Lord would have us do. And all of us can be like Barnabas, Mr. Encourager, Mrs.

Encourager, Miss Encourager. You can help others to speak a word of cheer. Think what you can say and say it. Words of encouragement to those who need it.

Let's bind up the broken hearted. Let's lift up the discouraged. Let's exercise the gift of encouragement. Let's ask God to give us that wonderful gift of encouragement.

Let's not shoot the wounded but lift up and build up others. So look at Barnabas and see what can we learn of the practical needs, of the taking time, of the nurturing, of the supporting of others who are overcoming failure.

[ 40 : 20 ] They need our help. They need our help. Offer the hand of fellowship. And we can offer help. And again, even in a worldly setting, we can think of many examples.

Here's another one. Just to picture this. A young man named Mike, he was at school and his attendance and his grades were getting really bad. And he was getting really out of sorts. He really hated school. And they lectured him, they punished him, but to no avail. Finally he ended up in the superintendent's office, the principal's office of the school, school and the teachers recommended that he be expelled.

He's unteachable. And the principal talked to Mike that it seemed like he was getting nowhere. And to Mike's surprise, the principal said, Mike, hold out your hands. Mike, you've got wonderful hands, long and slender but strong, which is surprising for your stocky build.

[ 41 : 27 ] Boy, you've got the hands of a surgeon. Maybe that's what you are intended to be. Get going, Mike, and good luck. He said nothing about punishment or expulsion.

It was a genuine motivation, esteem and admiration. And Mike became, in the words of the principal, one of the best surgeons in the land. The man saw something he could encourage in that young man.

Are we like that with our friends? family, brothers and sisters in Christ? Can we be a Barnabas, a son of encouragement?

How can we be? It's about being sensitive to others' needs. Being on the lookout for what practically can we do, we'll say, to give appreciation, a smile, a kind word, let them know you care, share God's word, hand, a phone call, a card, a little note, a helping hand just quietly being there. Let me close with one little further picture of this. We can be using those bad kind of tongues, or we can use those good kind of tongues.

[ 42 : 54 ] curse and criticize and condemn, or we can bless, uplift and encourage.

And it's been said there are two kinds of people on earth today. And this is called the lifters and the leaners. I know I've said some of this before, but it bears repeating.

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 it's well understood. The good are half bad, and the bad are half good. Not the happy and the 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, he 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 the man.

[ 43 : 59 ] 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 two, I mean, there's only one lifter to twenty who lean.

In which class are you? 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?

A lifter or a leaner? Let's be an encourager. And the most encouraging thing we can share is the gospel, isn't it? the good news that lifts a soul from sin's despair, from the miry clay, and sets the feet on the rock, Christ Jesus.

To give a word that sees a soul change its eternal direction, you can be a lifter, you can be an encourager.

Now I've got written here a little prayer that I should pray, and this is a prayer you should pray, I think, from time to time. And here's what the prayer says, Lord, fill my mouth with worthwhile stuff and nudge me when I've said enough.

[ 45 : 32 ] Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for your word. We know, Lord, that you are the great encourager, the Holy Spirit, our comforter and encourager. Lord, we thank you. Help us to be such that we come alongside others to help.

Lord, especially to share the gospel, that life-changing message that should ever be in our hearts and on our lips. Lord, let us be in your pathway, Lord, as the great servant of man, and yet the majestic Lord of all help us to have the heart that heals the broken hearted.

Help us to have the eye that the certain Samaritan had when he saw the need and he met the need.

Help us, Lord, not to turn aside when we can do something and say something.

Help us, Lord, to have wisdom not to say some things that would hurt, but rather help us, Lord, to have words that heal.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.