

How to Be an Encourager – November 3 & 4, 2018
Follow-up Bible Studies

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Day One: Genesis 47:1-12

- A bit of background: abandoned and sold into slavery by his brothers, Joseph went on to amass great power and influence in Egypt. If this story were your own, what would you do with your power? Who and what would you say “yes” to? In this instance, what did Joseph do with his power (1-2)? He is vouching for people who betrayed him; how does this make you feel?
- Describe Joseph’s brothers’ encounter with Pharaoh (3-4). What do you think Pharaoh’s tone of voice and body language were like when he asked his question? What did Pharaoh say to Joseph (5-6)? Imagine if the brothers came before Pharaoh without Joseph’s endorsement; what would be different about this story?
- Describe Jacob’s encounter with Pharaoh (7-10). What was the outcome of these encounters (11-12)? What opportunities are there for *you* to encourage someone by sponsoring them? Ask God to show you what the impact would be. Respond to him.

Day Two: 1 Samuel 23:7-29

- Set the scene of this point in the “Saul wants to kill David” saga (7-8). How did David respond to the news of Saul’s plot, and what did the Lord reveal to him (9-12)? What action did David then take (13)? Describe the next steps of Saul’s pursuit of David (13-15).
- What did Jonathan do (16)? What did he say to David, and what did they do together (17-18)? Do you think Jonathan sensed fear in David? What else could’ve inspired him to speak these words to David? How does Jonathan’s message point to Paul’s words in 2 Corinthians 1:20? Today and throughout this week, be like Jonathan by bringing encouragement to those who need it.
- Summarize Saul’s pursuit of David (19-26). Why did Saul break off the chase (26-28)? What happened next for David (29)? As he fled from Saul, what hope and confidence do you think Jonathan’s message of encouragement gave to him? When you are encouraged by someone, what impact does it make on you?

Day Three: John 21:15-19

- What is the setting of this passage (15)? What did Jesus ask Peter (15)? Summarize the next parts of their conversation through verse 17. How does Jesus want us to demonstrate love for him? Just like Peter, we get to participate even if we’ve failed in the past. What encouragement does this bring to your heart?
- What did Jesus next say to Peter (18)? What is the meaning behind these words (19)? Jesus ended by saying, “Follow me!” Throughout each day we are given opportunities to follow Jesus. In both success and failure, what does this look like in your life? Be encouraged: God says “yes” to you even when you fail!
- Thanks to the cross and the resurrection, anyone who’s failed can receive the same restoration Peter did. Rejoice in the Lord for this ultimate encouragement, and pray you’d always experience God in this way. And may it inspire you to be a Jesus-style encourager!

Day Four: Acts 9:36-43

- Set the scene of this text (36). Describe Tabitha (36). What happened to her (37)? How did Peter come to be involved (38)? Describe the way the widows grieved Tabitha's death (39).
- What does this scene communicate to you about Tabitha's legacy as an encourager of a certain stripe? Who are the Tabithas in your own life? Take some time now to praise God for them. This week, send an encouraging message to each of these Tabithas.
- What did Peter then do (40)? As a result of his prayer, what happened (40-41)? Why do you think Peter made certain the widows knew about this? Describe the broader impact of the miracle of Tabitha's resurrection (42).
- While Tabitha likely continued on as a generous encourager "doing good and helping the poor," how do you think being raised from the dead flavored her discipleship? What flavor of encourager and disciple are you?

Day Five: Acts 11:1-18

- What news reached the believers (1)? What did this cause those in Jerusalem to think about Peter (2-3)? Summarize the narrative-challenging story Peter then told (4-15). What do the unclean animals symbolize? What does the message – "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean" – mean for you today?
- Meditate on Peter's words in verse 12: "The Spirit told me to have no hesitation..." Have you ever had Holy Spirit encounters like this? If so, what were the circumstances? As Jesus described him in John 14:16-17, in times like this the Holy Spirit is our encourager. Pray you'd hear an encouraging tenor in the Spirit's voice in these moments, and that you'd follow his lead.
- What did the vision and encounter with gentiles cause Peter to realize (16-17)? In verse 23, Barnabas had a similar revelation. When God shows you something new, may you be a conduit for encouragement and proclaim, "Who am I to stand in his way?"