



Session 6

The Encouraging Community
week starting October 24

An encourager is someone who gives you courage, a helper. In the Bible we are often reminded to be encouragers to one another. However, sometimes in our brokenness, we operate more as discouragers. Yes, it is true that we should discourage behaviors and attitudes that are not in line with God's heart for us, but even then we are called to do so as an encourager rather than a discourager. Jesus is the ultimate encourager, helping his disciples live out of his grace and truth.

GETTING STARTED

Report on the results of your Soul Training process of forgiveness from last week.

- Describe someone who has been an encourager in your life.

DISCUSSION

1. Read 2 Thessalonians 2:16–17. The words translated as consolation or comfort can also be translated as encouragement. Who is Paul referring to as the encourager? How have you experienced encouragement from him?
2. Read Hebrews 10:23–25. What sorts of behaviors was this author encouraging among the Church? Why are these important to the community and how can we do the same for one another here and now?
3. Have different people in your group read each of these verses aloud: Romans 15:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; Colossians 3:16; Acts 14:21–22; Acts 15:32. What do these verses have in common? How can we apply them to our lives today?
4. In 1 Thessalonians 5:12–28 Paul gives a list of instructions for encouragement. What items in this list stick out to you? What kind of people are we encouraged to be?

SOUL TRAINING

Find an encouragement partner. This week pray about someone in your life who will “spur you on toward love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10). Meet with that person and ask one another these three questions. 1. How is your soul? 2. In what ways do you need to be encouraged right now? 3. What, if anything, is holding you back from living more fully with God?

MEMORIZATION CHALLENGE

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds” Hebrews 10:24

PRAY

Jesus, by the power of your Holy Spirit, help us to be encouragers to each other. Fill our hearts and mouths with grace and truth so that we may build each other up and live as an encouraging community. Amen.