

Field Guide and Leader Guide 7.20.25

Scripture Reference

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Summary

Discipleship is more than a task. It's a journey of becoming like Christ and helping others do the same. But that path isn't always a steady climb. It's full of twists, dips, and obstacles that can leave us feeling stuck, discouraged, or alone. That's why encouragement is essential. Jesus' command to "go and make disciples" implies a kind of spiritual companionship, walking with others, cheering them on, and reminding them of who they are in Christ when they're ready to quit.

Scripture doesn't shy away from how hard life can be. From Moses and David to Paul and Timothy, we see faithful followers battle fear, despair, exhaustion, and self-doubt. But we also see how timely encouragement helped lift them up, re-center their faith, and renew their calling. Encouragement is more than positivity. It's power. It's spiritual fuel. When we speak life into someone, we help them move through the hard and into the good. One word at the right time can fan the flame of faith back to life.

Questions and Follow-Up

1. **Who in your life might be stuck in discouragement and could really use a life-giving word this week?**
 - **Follow-Up 1:** How can you be specific in the encouragement you offer rather than general?
 - **Follow-Up 2:** What's one way you've seen encouragement change someone's trajectory?
2. **When was a time someone encouraged you in a way that changed your perspective or gave you courage to keep going?**
 - **Follow-Up 1:** What exactly did they say, and why do you think it made such an impact?

- **Follow-Up 2:** How might you pass that kind of encouragement on to someone else?
3. **What's holding you back from speaking encouragement more regularly? Is it fear, busyness, or insecurity? How might God be inviting you to push past that?**
- **Follow-Up 1:** What lie or assumption might you need to confront to step into being more vocal with your encouragement?
 - **Follow-Up 2:** What would change in your relationships if encouragement became a daily habit?

Scripture References

Ecclesiastes 4:10 | Hebrews 10:24 | Proverbs 18:21 | 2 Timothy 1:6–7 | 2 Timothy 4:7 | Psalm 55:4–5 | Numbers 11:14 | Acts 11:23 | 1 Thessalonians 5:14

Conclusion

We live in a culture filled with criticism, sarcasm, and comparison. But Jesus calls us to build others up, to speak truth that strengthens, hope that lifts, and love that reminds them they're not alone. Encouragement isn't fluff. It's discipleship in action. Like Barnabas in the early church, we can become known as "sons and daughters of encouragement," people who fan into flame the faith of others simply by opening our mouths.

So today, speak life. Find one person. See the good in them. Say it out loud. Be specific. Let your words become a bridge that carries someone from fear to faith, from isolation to connection, from doubt to courage. You may never know how much it matters, but God does.