

AN ENCOURAGING WORD FOR TROUBLING TIMES #100 (by Rev. Dr. Alice Wolfe, 7/29/20)

“Encourage One Another”

This afternoon I had the privilege of joining with brothers and sisters in Christ from other local churches to pray for the Lancaster Police Department and the Fairfield County Sheriff's office. Why? Police officers throughout our nation have been receiving a lot of verbal and physical abuse lately, and (in my opinion) it's not right. (*PLEASE NOTE: This is NOT a political statement or debate. This is a call to encourage one another. Therefore, any non-encouraging comments will be deleted.*) I understand that some officers have stepped outside the bounds of their responsibilities and harmed people; that is not right, and they should be brought to justice (along with the people who are harming the police). However, I truly believe that the vast majority of our police force includes honest men and women who are trying to keep us safe and help us live in peace.

God calls us to encourage one another:

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.” (1 Thessalonians 5:11-15, NIV)

In these verses, Paul is speaking of our spiritual leaders, but I think the basic principles hold true for everyone: encourage one another, build each other up, acknowledge those who work hard, respect them for their work, live in peace with each other, lovingly warn those who are disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone, don't pay back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and everyone else. If everyone lived by these verses, what a wonderful world it would be! Unfortunately, we aren't there yet. However, it can start with you... and me... and each one of us... And as we encourage one another, God's love will spread through us... and help people and change lives and eternities, one person at a time.

Therefore, today and every day, let us look for ways to encourage one another and build each other up... Wouldn't you want someone else to do the same for you? Who does God want you to encourage today?

PRAYER:

Lord Jesus, thank you for loving us so much that you sacrificed your life for us and for all. Help me give my life for you and for others. Forgive me for the times I have been less than encouraging to others... Come and reign in me so that every word from my mouth encourages, builds up others, and points them to you. We pray for the police officers (and their families) around our nation, especially those who have been abused and are discouraged. Remind them that you love them and are with them. Watch over them and protect them. Guide them in all their decisions. And help us to find ways to encourage them and any who are discouraged or beaten down. May my words and my life build others up—that they may find new and everlasting life in you! Amen.

LIVE IT!

Pray for the police officers in our nation, especially those who have been abused and are discouraged. Pray and ask God how he wants to work through you to encourage people around you!