

AN ENCOURAGING WORD FOR TROUBLING TIMES #121 (by Rev. Dr. Alice Wolfe, 9/10/20)

“Be an Encourager”

The world has lost a special encourager. Throughout his many years of teaching and coaching, Mr. Del Barr excelled at encouraging his students and players. Many who had Mr. Barr as a teacher or coach have shared on a Facebook memorial page the countless ways he encouraged them and built them up. In many cases, his encouragement positively influenced his students for the rest of their lives. I was blessed to have Mr. Barr as one of my junior high teachers and later as a friend in my home church.

Why was Mr. Barr such a special encourager? Because he found encouragement from the great encourager, Jesus Christ, who is always encouraging us to be all God created us to be. Jesus left his throne in heaven and came to this world to be with us (God with us), to show us how to love and how to live, and to give his life for us. Through his death and resurrection, we can be forgiven of our sins and restored in our relationship with God. Though we mess up and fail, Jesus always sees the potential in us and never gives up on us—he keeps encouraging us to be all God created us to be.

In following Christ’s example, Mr. Barr gave of himself to encourage and build up his students—to help them become all God created them to be. He didn’t let them give up or quit; he encouraged them to try again and again. Even when students or players thought they had failed, Mr. Barr saw their potential and helped them see it—and in many cases, achieve it. God calls us to do the same...

“... encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.” (1 Thessalonians 5:11, NLT)

In our world today with so much back-biting, mean talking, criticism, and discouragement, we need more encouragers like Mr. Barr. Will you be an encourager? Let’s give of ourselves and resolve to not tear down each other or our nation, but, instead, commit ourselves to encourage and build up each other—to help others be all God created them to be!

PRAYER:

Loving God, our hope and encourager, thank you for loving me and never giving up on me! Forgive me for the times my words and actions have hurt, discouraged, or torn others down. With the love and encouragement I receive from you, help me to love and encourage everyone around me—in all I am and say and do! Amen.

LIVE IT!

Who have been encouragers in your life? If you can, thank them. Live in such a way that all your words and actions encourage and build up others!