



**1 Thess 5:11; 2 Corinthians 13:11-14; Hebrews 10:23-26**

## **OPEN**

Can you think of a time when someone's encouragement made a difference in your life?

## **DISCUSS**

Read the above Bible passages together as a group. Living the "one anothers" is crucial for Christian community. Why do you think *encouraging one another* is crucial vs being a nice thing to do?

Respond this definition of Encouragement: "Encouraging someone is equipping them for their next challenge, providing people with tools is a profound encouragement to them. Encouragement is also simply noticing another person. It answers the questions, 'does anyone even notice I'm here?'"

How does encouragement differ from giving a compliment?

What are the challenges or barriers you encounter when it comes to encouragement?

React to these two quotes:

"Most of us are acutely aware of our own struggles and we are preoccupied with our own problems. We sympathize with ourselves because we see our own difficulties so clearly." – Chicago Tribune Article

"Be kind to everyone; for all of us are fighting a great battle." -- Ian MacLaren

Encouragement is any expression of real love directed at the real fears that haunt people. What are the fears with which the individuals in your family, your small group, your circle of friends, or work team do battle?

## **The Encouragement Experiment**

Pay attention to those in your group or those you encounter this next week in your day-to-day life. Who could use encouragement that would inspire courage in their life? What will you do with this opportunity?

Report back to your group what happened in the encouragement experiment.