

THE ENCOURAGER

“He comes alongside us when we go through hard times, and before you know it, he brings us alongside someone else who is going through hard times so that we can be there for that person just as God was there for us.” 2 Cor. 1:4 (The Message)



We were on the way to a funeral, back in my hometown of Tallahassee. My older brother Terry had just called to say he had experienced some car trouble just before pulling into town. He told us to meet him at the Home Depot parking lot, adjacent to place where he was having the repair work done, so that we could pick him up for the funeral.

Twenty minutes later, we arrived at Home Depot, but there was no sign of Terry. We called his cell and learned that he was at the Home Depot store on the west side of town.

Later after the funeral, my cousin Linda asked Mom, “Didn’t you know there was more than one Home Depot in town?”

GET OUT MUCH?

Mom responded in the negative.

Linda then gently placed her hand on my mother’s shoulder and said, “Goodness, Aunt Theresa, they’ve gone and built up a whole new town around you and Uncle Oscar.”

Are you like my parents? Do you get out much?

If you do, (and I hope you do,) “get out” or “get away” from your regular church from time to time, you too will see that things have “built up!” The Lord Jesus has a world-wide church that is growing and moving. There are a variety of churches across town and across the world that are spreading the life changing message of the gospel of Jesus Christ and meeting the needs of His people.

It’s truly revelatory to see the enormous variety of formats, styles, and methods being employed to carry out His work. People from all types of cultures and backgrounds are working together to form the “Body of Christ.”

Next time you’re out of town or away from your home church, why not take a look around to see what He’s up to in some other churches? I think you’ll be impressed to see that other followers of Jesus Christ are learning, growing, sharing, and caring for others.

Going to church doesn’t earn you brownie points with God. But, Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, made these people (THE CHURCH) just for you. They are for your equipping and encouragement. Make sure you take time to “Get Out,” or “Get away,” from time to time and join with others who share your Savior.

By Tony Gulledge

“The present is the only time in which any duty may be done or any grace received.”

C. S. Lewis

“Mercy to the needy is a loan to GOD, and GOD pays back those loans in full.”

Proverbs 19:17 (The Message)



YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE TRUTH !

Why We Choose To Believe The Lie?

Maybe we choose to believe a lie, because the truth really does hurt. Perhaps, "WE CAN'T HANDLE THE TRUTH! Could it be that the comfortable lie saves us from a cruel pain truth creates? As we embrace the lie, does it help us cope with the reality that we aren't as self sufficient as we thought? Does the lie help us perpetuate the myth that we have no need for others, above all God Himself? What makes the lie so easy to swallow? Is the truth really so much harder to grasp?

Read more at my blog on at:
TonyGulledge.com

SOMEWHERE...

"Somewhere we know that without a lonely place our lives are in danger. Somewhere we know that without silence words lose their meaning, that without listening, speaking no longer heals, without distance closeness cannot cure. Somewhere we know that without a lonely place our actions quickly become empty gestures. The careful balance between silence and words, withdrawal and involvement, distance and *closeness*, solitude and community forms the basis of Christian life and should therefore be the subjects of our most personal attention. Let us therefore look somewhat closer, first at our life in action, and at our life in solitude."

Out of Solitude. Henri Nouwen



In Luke 5:6-11, Jesus had been teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath, under my attentive eyes and those of the other Pharisees. In time, a man with a distorted right hand caught Jesus' attention. We suspected he would interrupt his teaching for an opportunity to heal the pathetic disabled man and arouse the people. All of a sudden, Jesus called the cripple forward but began asking us questions. First he wanted to know if the law tolerated good deeds being done on the Sabbath. I shifted my gaze waiting for an older mentor to speak up. Before anyone could answer, Jesus asked, is this the day to save life or destroy it? What kind of question was that? Why was Jesus fixated on each of us? I could feel his eyes pierce right through me. "HOLD OUT YOUR HAND," I heard him shout to the cripple. At once, that bent and bowed up withered old hand was in no time healthy and functional! Part of me was happy for the cripple who was lame from birth, yet another side was annoyed because I knew this Jesus was upsetting our way of life. I then realized, it didn't matter what I thought. The people around me were rejoicing, but the Pharisees were pulling me off to the side. They were enraged by what had taken place and were determined to get rid of Jesus once and for all.

"Lord Jesus, break our hearts to see the desperate needs of those around us. Lead us to be your hands and feet bringing healing and restoration to their thirsty souls."

THE ENCOURAGER - A MONTHLY PUBLICATION TO ENCOURAGE THE BODY OF CHRIST.



CHECK OUT MY WEBSITE FOR ARTICLES, SHORT STORIES, AND BLOG AT:

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