

Crossroads Community Church

Last week's Baptism is a great encouragement to our church family; Craison our youngest Baptism member rejoices with us all and his mother Silvie.

As our hearts still celebrate last week's baptism we thank God for another fantastic Sunday morning on which the Son came to meet with us. Worship was joyful and festive, Pastor Don shared announcements and offered the service in prayer,? Dear Father God, we give You thanks, may we be encouraged by the testimony of our brothers and sisters who have committed their lives to you, in Jesus name Amen.?

?Do we believe God is building a family founded on peace and unity? We examined last week that a single string is easily broken but a rope woven of many strings is strong and resistant to breaking. As a family in Christ Jesus we are many forming one body and together we can withstand many trials of life. God tells us that we ought to encourage each other to do good,? Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works,? Hebrews 10:24. In our childhood most of us have encountered at one time or another someone who discouraged us when we expressed what we would like to do in our adult life. There's an old saying; ?expect the worst and that's what you'll get? and unfortunately many aspirations have been crushed this way. What if we do the opposite and expect the best in each other, do you think this will promote positive results? Absolutely, encouragement is vital if we are building a solid church family, (1 Thessalonians 5:11). Imagine being in a race, we are encouraged to do our best by the crowd cheering us on, the same concept applies to our growing relationships with each other and with God, even when the going gets tough. However to encourage does not come naturally, we need to choose to be encouraging and by the help of the Holy Spirit we can be genuine in our words of affirmation, in our invitation to come to church and in our sharing of the Gospel.

God keeps spurring us on to keep doing what we do for Him despite opposition and ridicule. Jesus himself was criticized and despised so if He has chosen us to show His love and share His Good News it is safe to assume that we will also suffer the same as He did, (John 15:16-19). When we aim to genuinely encourage we will listen to each other's needs and support each other when we are weak as Jesus spirit enables us to, (Matthew 11:28-30). We are also called to carry our daily cross, meaning we deny our every selfish whim and we think of doing what honors God no matter the cost or difficulty. Can we think of a better way to do so than to help someone else carry their cross? (Luke 9:23). We can face many challenges when we rely on God's Spirit and if we are many to carry the load the burden is lighter and more bearable.

It is imperative that we keep sharing the Gospel with everyone because eternity is at stake for all of us, and God is not willing that any perish and we ought to desire the same for our family, friends and neighbors, (Hebrews 3:13). On the other hand we must be kind-hearted, patient and encouraging when we share the hope we have. Our genuine love and concern for them will motivate them to learn about Jesus for themselves and they too will want to experience that same joy. Our words need to be uplifting, positive and gentle; not negative and condemning, (Proverbs 12:18, 18:20-21). Taking the time to listen, to pray and read God's word together are ways that show love, giving a gift or a card to show we care is nice too, and other times it can be as simple as a smile or a hug, or a phone call to let someone know we are thinking of them.

Beloved, Jesus showed us that humility will always precede a loving relationship, (Philippians 2:3). Just like the man on the cross next to Jesus was humble and acknowledged his need for forgiveness, we need to be humble to do the same, (Luke 23:42-43). Our common need for forgiveness binds us to Jesus so we ought to remain humble and patient with each other as we grow in our faith and forgive one another as Christ forgives us all. So we rejoice as we all come together in unity under God, for we are God's family and when one member hurts we share in sorrow, and one rejoices we also share in happiness, (Romans 12:15). As we go about our week let us think of those we can remind of God's love and faithfulness, the greatest gift we can give each other is encouragement fuelled by the power of our love for Christ, and this power will revive us to be the church God wants us to be?. Asherey Shalom!

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