

although that may be needed, also, as it is a matter. "I am standing with you and will try to provide the help you need for the challenge you face." A good illustration of the ideal is provided in the aid given David by Jonathan in 1 Samuel 23:16..."he strengthened his hand in God." This is what we must learn to do. It is not so much a matter of correction or advice as it is a simple morale support in the name of the Lord and at times, with that, the attendant need, whatever it may be in the realm of our ability. This is very much what the Holy Spirit does for us in the ministry as promised by the Lord Jesus in John 16.

2. Encouragement: What does the Scripture say about it?

A wide variety of Scriptures may be cited for the use of this gift. I cannot comment on all of them in a brief work such as this, but with a general note, observe the following:

a. 1 Thess. 4:18, 5:11-12...we are all to strengthen one another in the knowledge that the Lord is coming again.

b. Heb. 10:25, 3:13, 13:2...we are supportive of one another in the face of the great trials that may come..or may already be with us.

c. 1 Cor 14:3..we are to seek on a regular basis what will build and help others.

d. Titus 2:15, 1 Tim. 4:13, 2 Thess 2:11..we are to be in the process of encouraging one another in "good works" and witness.

So when all are put together (and this is only a sampling of the total Scripture that speaks to the subject) there is no doubt that all of us are expected to be involved in the work of encouraging. Do I have the gift? Well...as I do the encouraging work I am told to do it will become apparent as to how fully I possess the gift. But we are all gifted to some degree in the fulfilling of this function...and that is important to note and live out. The joy of this serving is for all as the above texts indicate.