

3. Encouragement: How do we go about it?

The very first thing, probably, is to stay healthy for yourself (Galatians 6:2). It is possible that one in poor health can help another but it is less likely. Then, in the concept of Hebrews 10:25 and Romans 12:5, stay close together. Know the other believers and in particular be familiar with their duties and responsibilities. The importance of a fellowship that is close cannot be over-stressed. At this point it should be a matter of concern with regard to what others are facing and we will try to be better informed with regard to it...not in a gossipy sense but in the reality that we can only encourage as we are aware of another's setting. We then pray (and, of course, have been doing this throughout) and move to encourage or exhort another by reassurance of our personal interest, willingness to help, reality of appreciation, or whatever may be appropriate for the occasion. Sometimes we do or say nothing...we simply sit and "feel" with others. Then there are times when we say "sic 'em" so to speak. The nature of the action must be appropriate with the situation.

C. Conclusion: The most important thing, finally, is that we see the role we play in the lives of others through encouragement and strengthening. When we can understand that then we look for means. Unfortunately many of us do not think of the exercise of this skill until it is often too late. The gift is "lesser" only because it is less frequently mentioned...but in the life of the collective company, hardly anything is more important other than the saving message of the Gospel.
Learn to Encourage One Another

IV. Learn to Give Heartily

Romans 12:8

A. Some Introductory Notes

The phrase in Romans 12:8 that gives rise in our discussion is "he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity." What is given is not mentioned and the