

Encouragement *(Pastor John T. Kurien)*

In his autobiography, Conrad Hilton, the founder of the Hilton Hotel chain, told of a time early in his career when he faced bankruptcy. He had payrolls to meet, plus taxes, leases, and interest payments. He needed \$200,000 to keep the business going, but the banks were unwilling to lend money to him. On one afternoon, when he was desperately sitting in his office, his mother came to visit him. After some small talk, Conrad said ruefully, "Maybe I am in the wrong business. Maybe I should have learned to make cradles and coffins." The elderly woman looking directly into his eyes and said, "Some men jump out windows, some quit, some go to church. Pray Conrad, pray harder. And don't you dare give up!" Conrad Hilton later credited these words with the establishing of what would become one of the world's greatest hotel chains.

When Moses sent men to spy the land of Canaan, they returned from searching the land after forty days. They brought back an evil report to Moses and to all the congregation of Israel and told them that the people were strong, the cities were walled, and the children of Anak were there. However, Caleb stilled (encouraged) the people before Moses and said, "Let us go up at once, and possess it" (Numbers 13:30). In his farewell speech, Moses encouraged the Israelites by saying, "the Lord thy God hath set the land before thee: go up and possess it" (Deuteronomy 1:21). The devil always tries to discourage us to keep us from receiving the promises of our Lord. He puts negative or critical spirits to prohibit us from spiritual enthusiasm.

We see at a time of revival, that king Josiah set the priests in their charges, and encouraged them to the services of the house of the Lord (2 Chronicles 35:2). Apostle Paul sent Timothy to the assembly of the Thessalonians to encourage them in their faith (1 Thessalonians 3:2 Amplified). Again in chapter 5:11 it says, "Therefore encourage one another and edify one another, just as you are doing (Amplified). William Barclay, in his book called 'The Letter to the Hebrews' said, "One of the highest human duties is the duty of encouragement... It is easy to laugh at men's ideals; it is easy to pour cold water on their enthusiasm; it is easy to discourage others. The world is full of discourages. We have a Christian duty to encourage one another."

Encouraging one's spouse is perhaps the greatest need. A husband and wife have a responsibility before God to encourage each other. Encouraging parents will produce encouraged and encouraging children. Perhaps one of your friends needs to be encouraged. When David was in trouble, Jonathan his loyal friend, arose and went to David and encouraged him in the woods (1 Samuel 23:16). When David was in trouble and when the people around him spoke of stoning him, he encouraged himself in the Lord his God (1 Samuel 30:6). There is someone who may need encouragement: it may be your pastor, brother, sister, children, or your neighbor. Let us encourage others for doing good and we should do it in the appropriate time. Thus, never give up, and keep on praying.