

Summary

In this sermon, Pastor Mike Sigmund explores the biblical command to 'encourage one another' as part of the One Another series. He emphasizes that encouragement is not just a nice gesture but a spiritual heavyweight command from God, alongside loving and forgiving one another. Through personal stories and biblical references, Pastor Mike explains what encouragement is, when we should encourage others, and how to do it effectively. He defines encouragement as words that comfort, cheer, and inspire strength and courage in others.

Pastor Mike identifies specific times when encouragement is particularly needed: during anxiety, when facing temptation and sin, and when people stop attending church. He emphasizes that encouragement should be given through both our own gracious words and by sharing God's Word. The sermon concludes with the powerful reminder that becoming an encourager not only impacts others positively but also transforms us. Pastor Mike calls the congregation to be intentional about encouraging one another, especially young leaders in the faith, and to counter the discouragement of the world with the hope found in Scripture.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather to discuss the power of encouragement, we ask that You open our hearts and minds to Your teaching. Help us recognize the importance of building one another up in faith and love. Guide our conversation today, Lord, and show each of us how we can become better encouragers in our families, church, and community. Reveal to us the people in our lives who need our encouragement right now. May this discussion draw us closer to You and to one another as we learn to obey Your command to encourage one another. In Jesus' name, amen.

Ice Breaker

Who is someone in your life who has been a significant encourager to you, and what impact did their encouragement have on your life?

Key Verses

1. 1 Thessalonians 5:14
2. Hebrews 3:12-13
3. Hebrews 10:25
4. Colossians 4:6
5. Romans 15:4

Questions

1. Pastor Mike described encouragement as a 'spiritual heavyweight' command. Why do you think encouragement is so important in the Christian life?

2. The sermon mentioned encouraging others during anxiety. Can you share a time when someone's encouragement helped you through a difficult or anxious period?
3. Hebrews 3:12-13 talks about encouraging one another so that we won't be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. Why is it difficult to speak up when we see fellow believers heading toward sin?
4. How can we balance grace and truth when encouraging someone who is making poor choices or heading down a wrong path?
5. Pastor Mike mentioned that people who abandon church often expect the pastor to reach out, but there's power when fellow church members reach out. Have you ever reached out to someone who stopped attending? What was the result?
6. Colossians 4:6 talks about our conversation being 'full of grace, seasoned with salt.' What does this look like in practical terms when encouraging others?
7. The sermon emphasized the power of God's Word to encourage us. What Scripture has been particularly encouraging to you during difficult times?
8. Pastor Mike said that becoming an encourager not only helps others but changes us too. How have you seen this to be true in your own life?

Life Application

This week, commit to being intentional about encouragement. Identify three people in your life who might need encouragement - perhaps someone who is anxious, someone who might be struggling with temptation, or someone you haven't seen at church lately. Reach out to each of them with a specific word of encouragement, whether through a text, call, card, or in-person conversation. Include a relevant Scripture verse if appropriate. Keep a journal of how this practice of encouragement affects both them and you, and be prepared to share your experience with the group next time we meet.

Key Takeaways

1. Encouragement is a command from God and a spiritual heavyweight alongside loving and forgiving one another.
2. We should especially encourage others during times of anxiety, when facing temptation and sin, and when people stop attending church.
3. Effective encouragement balances grace and truth, with words that are both kind and thoughtfully tailored to the person's situation.
4. The Word of God is a powerful source of encouragement that counters the discouragement of the world.
5. Becoming an encourager not only impacts others positively but also transforms us in the process.

Ending Prayer

Lord God, thank You for reminding us of the power and importance of encouragement. We confess that too often we've been quick to criticize or remain silent when we should have spoken words of encouragement. Help us to be people who build others up rather than tear them down. Give us eyes to see those around us who need encouragement, and give us the courage and wisdom to speak words seasoned with salt and full of grace. May we be faithful in sharing Your Word as the ultimate source of encouragement. As we go from here, make us agents of Your encouragement in a world that desperately needs it. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.