



Christian Mentoring

JOHN MALLISON MINISTRIES

ENCOURAGEMENT IN MENTORING

Robyn Claydon

A very important aspect of Mentoring is giving "encouragement". Hebrews 10:25 says "Let us encourage one another all the more as you see the day approaching." We are also urged in Philippians 2:1,2 to pass on to others any encouragement we have received from being united with Christ.

John Newcombe in answering a question about the most important thing he does for the young tennis players he coaches/mentors said that it is giving encouragement. While they needed skill and motivation, without encouragement they would give up.

Some years ago the Commonwealth Games were being run in Fiji. The marathon was to take runners all round Suva and bring them eventually into a large uncovered stadium.

Thousands waited for the first runner to appear. The first was running well and seemed to have all the energy needed to finish the race and come in first.

As the spectators watched him run towards the finishing line they also noted that runner number two had come into view. He was running weakly and couldn't keep straight. It didn't look as though he had the energy to finish the race and so the crowd stood and shouted to him "Go on, you can make it!" They watched as he fell and several spectators ran down to stand by the side of the track and urge him on. "The end is in sight", they urged, "you can do it" and while they encouraged him to keep going he summoned the strength he needed and crawled over the line. The concerted will of the people in the stands and of those standing alongside him helped him to keep going.

Some of the people were probably tempted to pick up the man and carry him over the line, but they couldn't do that. If they had, he would have been disqualified. He had to run his own race, but he could be encouraged from the sidelines.

We all have to run our own race as hard as that may be, but often encouragement from others is needed to help us keep going and keep the goal in sight.

That is Mentoring.

REFLECT...

Think back over your life for a moment. Who encouraged you when you were little? Who encouraged you when you were older? Who has given you encouragement in recent years?

Was the encouragement in passing or was it sustained over a period of time. What form did the encouragement take? Was it through a word spoken just at the right time, a letter or a phone call? What effect did it have on you?

Would the person who gave you that encouragement have realized how helpful it was?

Who have you encouraged recently? To whom have you given written or spoken something encouraging? Who could you encourage today? Encouragement is something we can all do much more often than we do.

Mentoring, however, is more than the occasional word of encouragement. It is giving sustained encouragement, input and guidance to someone else on a variety of levels and over a period of time.



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Do you have someone who does this for you? If not, why not pray that God will direct you to someone who can stand with you, support you and help you to keep going in your life and in your ministry?

What about you? Could you be mentoring someone else? Perhaps you could pray about this too.

How about using your home for informal Mentoring?

All you need is a home, a date and time, a few young people and a few older Christians. It's a great mix for a night of sharing and encouragement. You never know, it might lead to some one-on-one mentoring long term!

Give it a try!

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