

PRACTICE 7

ENCOURAGE



faithbit challenge
Oct 31 & Nov 1

For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

1 Thess. 5:9-11

The Eighth Commandment

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, slander, or defame our neighbor, but defend him, [think and] speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything. The 8th commandment is about encouraging others!

Encouragement goes straight to the heart.

In fact, the word itself comes from a combination of the prefix *en* which means "to put into" and the Latin root *cor* which means "heart."

Knowing what a big difference encouragement makes in your own life, what can you do to help others to take heart when the going gets tough and the way feels long?

10. Make celebration a more regular part of your relationships. Celebrate others' victories, large and small with a note, coffee together, a special meal, a congratulatory phone call, or just a high-five!

11. Realize the power of presence. Just being there can be encouraging! When you're with others, you're telling them that they're important.

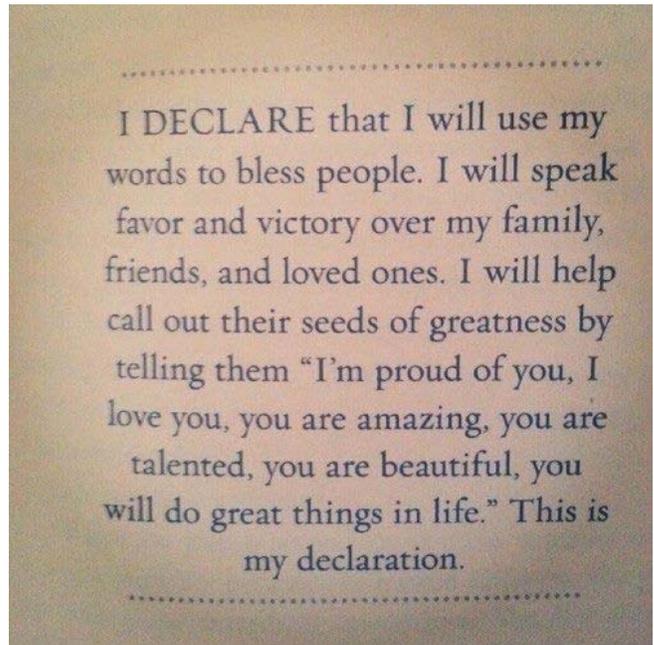
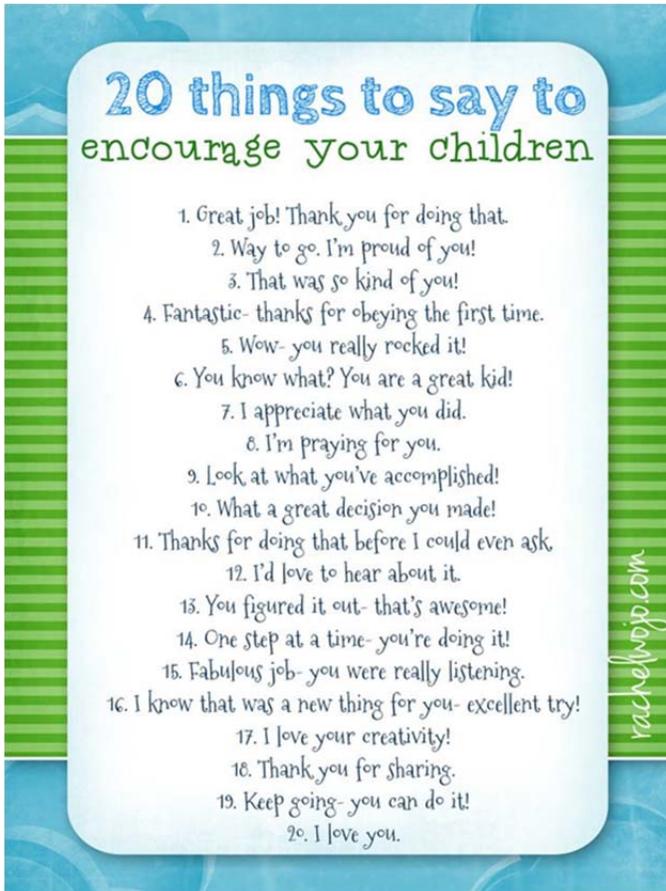
12. We encourage one another by showing up! Showing up for worship, Bible study, or fellowship events encourages others. The writer of Hebrews says, "Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as we see the Day approaching." Hebrews 10:25

13. Use encouragement as an outreach. If anyone should be known for being an encourager, it should be the Christian. Write a letter of appreciation to people at work, your apartment manager, your child's teacher, or your doctor. Often, when we interact with these people, we are asking for their services. Take time just to say thank you!

14. If you really want to encourage someone who gives you excellent service, write a letter of commendation to the person's boss.

15. When you see someone making positive changes in their lives, affirm them. "You seem to have a really great attitude about...", "It may be that I'm just starting to take notice, but I see that you're...", "Do you think that you are becoming more...?"

16. Tell people how they've encouraged you!



IDEAS ON HOW TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS

1. If an encouraging thought comes to mind, share it!
2. When you introduce someone, add a few words of praise for the person's abilities or accomplishments.
3. Be specific when you offer words of praise; it makes your encouragement more credible and concrete: "You did a great job at...", "I really appreciate that you...", "I was really impressed that you..."
4. When someone is discouraged or hurting, offer specific, practical help. If you ask, "How can I help?" the person might be at a loss to answer. It's better to ask, "Would it help if I..." or say, "I would like to..."
6. In a digital world, there's nothing like receiving a hand-written note in the mail.
7. Remind fellow Christians of the specific promises of God's love, forgiveness and steadfast care.
8. Depending on the circumstances, it may be helpful to remind a person that it is okay to lament and cry out to God in anger.
9. Write someone a note to tell them that you are praying for them.

The best part about using encouraging words with your kids is the glow of happiness you'll see on their faces. After all, "Your hard work is really paying off!" says you noticed their work, while, "You're so smart," might be hard to live up to next time. Try a few of these encouraging words with your kids, and watch their behavior—and effort—improve.