Devotion #232

**Would You Be an Encourager?**

**2 Peter 1:12 –***“Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you.”*

We all have different personalities. This is how God made us, however, as much as God made our different personalities, we are also tainted by sin, which means our personalities are flawed. That’s tough to hear because the other part of our sinfulness wants us to think very highly of ourselves. So when you put a flawed view of self together with a flawed personality trait or traits, you have a real mess.

This mess shows up all the time. One of the main ways is through discouragement. Most people are not naturally positive, and those who are naturally positive are flawed in that positivity by sin. But, and praise the Lord for this, God has given to us the awareness, or should I say the truth, that in Him, we have everything we need to be positive and to be encouraging. What that means is as much as people are flawed in their view of themselves and even their ability to be positive, there are no flaws in what God has done or said. So any positivity that comes from others should be according to what God says and not what we say.

Let me try to explain that more clearly. There are people who are great encouragers. We love to be around those people because they make us feel better about ourselves. But the flaw in human positivity is often related to sinful ways of thinking. Most positive statements are about what we can be and how we can do all we want to do and be. That is not bad in some forms, but it is lifeless. It has no ability to change us because it is man-centered. True positivity comes when people point us to the truth of God’s Word, because His Word, His truth will never fail to do in us what He purposes to do. For example, a coach can push an athlete to be the best player he or she can be, but in the end what often happens is that athlete becomes arrogant, self-centered and demanding. But when the push is from the Word of God, there is humility that is generated, because the Word of God exposes the darkness of our souls and helps us see that God is the one who gave us the ability to be the best, so He is to get the praise.

Peter is a great example of the kind of positive people we should be. He is very encouraging, but his encouragement or positivity is not to cause them to focus on being someone great in this life, but to encourage them to live for God in all they do so that they will store deeply within their hearts the truth that no matter what happens in this life, they can rest assured that their souls will be with God in eternity. Because Peter knows the tempting power of both Satan and human fleshly thinking, he says he will constantly remind them of these truths - specifically, that if they live according to God’s word and apply His truth to their lives, they will have all confidence in knowing they belong to God and will eventually be freed from their painful and disoriented lives.

It is not enough to be an encourager though. What God wants and what people need is encouragement that comes from God, through His Word. You and I are to be the most positive people on the planet because our God, our heavenly Father, has done all that is necessary to save us from the penalty of our sins. We are to be the ones who continually remind and point people to Christ. Helping someone with our uplifting words is great, but soon they will be in the same situation mentally because their personalities are flawed. But, if you and I continually point people to God, to His Word, they will be able to embrace the truth and put their effort into being what God wants and be able to let go of what they want. When that happens, life becomes doable. It may still be challenging in a lot of ways, but there will be a new outlook because the vision will be from God’s perspective, not our own. We will see that God’s Word holds all of the answers to all of the questions. So, encourage someone today – maybe ever yourself – with truth from the Word. God loves you. He showed that love by sending His son to die for you, and nothing can separate you from His love. Now that’s an encouragement!