

The Keys to Unlocking the Potential in Others – Aaron Heinly

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Isaiah 35:1-6

(a prophesy with multiple partial fulfillments and 1 final and full fulfillment: Restoration of Jerusalem after its Babylonian exile, Jesus restoring hearts to the Father when he came to Earth, Jesus bringing restoration in and through us today, and finally, Jesus ruling from Jerusalem and bringing total restoration to all things.)

Even the wilderness and desert will be glad in those days.

The wasteland will rejoice and blossom with spring crocuses.

²Yes, there will be an abundance of flowers
and singing and joy!

The deserts will become as green as the mountains of Lebanon,
as lovely as Mount Carmel or the plain of Sharon.

There the Lord will display his glory,
the splendor of our God.

³With this news, strengthen those who have tired hands,
and encourage those who have weak knees.

⁴Say to those with fearful hearts,
“Be strong, and do not fear,
for your God is coming to destroy your enemies.
He is coming to save you.”

⁵And when he comes, he will open the eyes of the blind
and unplug the ears of the deaf.

⁶The lame will leap like a deer,
and those who cannot speak will sing for joy!
Springs will gush forth in the wilderness,
and streams will water the wasteland.

Does anyone relate with these words, “Wilderness, Desert, Wasteland”?

Who wants to relate with these words, “Rejoice, Singing, Joy, Lovely, The Lord displaying His Glory, the splendor of God”?

Reconciling these two lists of words is what we call revival.

How do we do it?

2 Steps

1: Get a revelation of the goodness of God. In this case, God Himself is giving Isaiah that revelation.

Side Note: It's only ever God that can give a revelation of God so don't wait for good speakers. Don't wait for others to encourage you. The rest of this teaching will be about how important it is to encourage others – and how *God will reveal Himself* when we are obedient to encourage others. But the fact remains – it is God who reveals Himself so we don't *have* to wait.

So how do we get a revelation of the goodness of God?

Psalms 23:6

Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me
all the days of my life,
and I will live in the house of the Lord
forever.

His goodness and unfailing love is pursuing us! Its always there, following us, trying to get our attention. All we have to do is turn around.

Turn around from our futile pursuits of any form of goodness or love that is not in the person of God.

We waste so much time chasing what we think is good. We waste so much time chasing love.

It's all right there.

Repent. Turn around.

Psalms 37:4

Take delight in the Lord,
and he will give you your heart's desires.

That's Step One – get a revelation of the goodness of God – that will take your wilderness and turn it into a place of rejoicing!

Step 2 is almost more important.

The reason it is almost more important is because we have a tendency to let our springs dry up.

What is step 2? Let's look at Isaiah 35 again.

³With this news, **strengthen** those who have tired hands,
and **encourage** those who have weak knees.

⁴Say to those with fearful hearts,
“Be strong, and do not fear,
for your God is coming

Step 2 is Encourage others in the Lord.

Encouragement is the key to unlocking the potential in others!

Encouragement empowers us and others in step 1.

We were made in the image of God who is a Trinity that is Community Incarnate.

We were made for community. By design, it is more difficult to sustain passion for the Lord by ourselves.

Encouraging community is not a requirement but we were made to benefit greatly from it.

We have everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

But the trick is abiding in the knowledge of God.

And that's where mutual encouragement comes in. It works as a safety net. Or more likely as a bellows.

That's why fellowship was one of the four pillars of the early church.

Acts 2:42

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.

We have to make sure we are not confusing fellowship among Christians as Christian Fellowship.

Christian fellowship is encouraging others in the Lord.

Ephesians 4:29 Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

What do you think it means by foul and abusive language?

Anything that agrees with the accuser of the brethren is foul!

Anything that does not build up or give courage is abusive!

Let **EVERYTHING** you say be good. Not try to occasionally be helpful with your words.

Think about how much *you* need to hear encouraging words. We often feel very inadequate. Or crushed by the weight of the world. Just because someone isn't expressing that, don't think that it's not happening to them. Build them up!

As you build them up, you will be built up. The Holy Spirit builds you up as you encourage others.

Psalms 18:25

To the faithful you show yourself faithful;
to those with integrity you show integrity.

Luke 6:38

Give, and you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full—pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, running over, and poured into your lap. The amount you give will determine the amount you get back.

How can we encourage others without being fake?

Back to step 1: repent from seeking other forms of goodness and love and turn and let the goodness and unfailing love of God overcome you. Recognize you are seated in heavenly places – you have all the honor and all the blessing you will ever need, with plenty to share.

Anyone ever see Ghostbusters 2?

If you are engaged in MUTUAL encouragement, that sort of love for others will increase exponentially!

Romans 15:32

Dear brothers and sisters, I urge you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to join in my struggle by praying to God for me. Do this because of your love for me, given to you by the Holy Spirit. ³¹ Pray that I will be rescued from those in Judea who refuse to obey God. Pray also that the believers there will be willing to accept the donation ^[a] I am taking to Jerusalem. ³² Then, by the will of God, I will be able to come to you with a joyful heart, and we will be an encouragement to each other.

So what sort of potential are we unlocking with the keys of encouragement?

We are made in the image of God

Called to walk in the ways of Christ

Full of the Spirit and power of God

Confident of His many precious promises

Free from the past

Pressing on towards the goal

Counting both the trials and the treasures of this world as rubbish

Bearing the most desirable fruit of the Spirit (fruit is meant for others)

Walking in the Gifts of the Spirit

Hearing the voice of God

Finding all our satisfaction in Him

Aware of our specific calling

Setting people free

Pretty powerful potential, huh?

But remember it's not your encouragement that makes it possible – it's the work of the Holy Spirit and the transformation that takes place when people gaze upon Christ and be transformed from Glory to Glory.

Your encouragement merely unlocks hearts that may have locked out the light of the goodness of God – often accidentally.

What is a good general practice to edify yourself and others? Give thanks!

Psalm 50:23a But giving thanks is a sacrifice that truly honors me.

Here's why I'm giving this teaching: I stumbled upon it's truth in my own life.

Revelations 12:10-11

How is the accuser defeated?

Blood of the Lamb

Word of our testimony

Not loving our lives more than we love God

Mike Bickle pointed out that the word of our testimony includes what we believe and say about others.

Defeat the accuser!

Proverbs 18:21

Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue

It's not enough to not poison our children. We also want to nourish them. (Bickle)

Psalms 39:1-3

I said to myself, "I will watch what I do
and not sin in what I say.

I will hold my tongue
when the ungodly are around me."

²But as I stood there in silence—
not even speaking of good things—
the turmoil within me grew worse.

³The more I thought about it,
the hotter I got,
igniting a fire of words:

Encouragement is giving courage. Who wants to see their loved ones have courage?

Opposite of courage is fear.

What casts out fear? Love!

Christian fellowship, biblical encouragement is an act of love spurred on by the overflow of love you get from a revelation of God's love.

Hebrews 10:23-25 AMP

Let us seize *and* hold tightly the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is reliable *and* trustworthy *and* faithful [to His word]; ²⁴and let us consider [thoughtfully] how we may encourage one another to love and to do good deeds, ²⁵not forsaking our meeting together [as believers for worship and instruction], as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more [faithfully] as you see the day [of Christ's return] approaching.

Expound

1 Cor 14:3

But one who prophesies strengthens others, encourages them, and comforts them.

If you don't know what God is saying, just strengthen, encourage, comfort – 'cuz that is what He does.

Haggai 1:1-4, 12-14

On August 29^[a] of the second year of King Darius's reign, the Lord gave a message through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Jeshua^[b] son of Jehozadak, the high priest.

² "This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies says: The people are saying, 'The time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord.'"

³ Then the Lord sent this message through the prophet Haggai: ⁴ "Why are you living in luxurious houses while my house lies in ruins?"

Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the whole remnant of God's people began to obey the message from the Lord their God. When they heard the words of the prophet Haggai, whom the Lord their God had sent, the people feared the Lord. ¹³ Then Haggai, the Lord's messenger, gave the people this message from the Lord: "I am with you, says the Lord!"

¹⁴ So the Lord sparked the enthusiasm of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the enthusiasm of Jeshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the enthusiasm of the whole remnant of God's people. They began to work on the house of their God, the Lord of Heaven's Armies,

Apathy plagued the people. Why?

Isaiah 44:26-28

But I carry out the predictions of my prophets!

By them I say to Jerusalem, 'People will live here again,'
and to the towns of Judah, 'You will be rebuilt;
I will restore all your ruins!'

²⁷ When I speak to the rivers and say, 'Dry up!'
they will be dry.

²⁸ When I say of Cyrus, 'He is my shepherd,'
he will certainly do as I say.

He will command, 'Rebuild Jerusalem';
he will say, 'Restore the Temple.'"

And then Ezra 4:4-6, 23-24

Then the local residents tried to discourage and frighten the people of Judah to keep them from their work. ⁵ They bribed agents to work against them and to frustrate their plans. This went on during the entire reign of King Cyrus of Persia and lasted until King Darius of Persia took the throne.^[a] ⁶ Years later when Xerxes^[b] began his reign, the enemies of Judah wrote a letter of accusation against the people of Judah and Jerusalem.

When this letter from King Artaxerxes was read to Rehum, Shimshai, and their colleagues, they hurried to Jerusalem. Then, with a show of strength, they forced the Jews to stop building.

Precious promises where not seen in the time they wanted. They did not expect opposition and that gave them doubt. Furthermore, the high priest was a sinner.

The solution?

Ezra 6:14 sums it up

So the Jewish elders continued their work, and they were greatly encouraged by the preaching of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo. The Temple was finally finished, as had been commanded by the God of Israel and decreed by Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes, the kings of Persia.

And Zechariah 3:1-5

Then the angel showed me Jeshua^[a] the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord. The Accuser, Satan,^[b] was there at the angel's right hand, making accusations against Jeshua. ² And the Lord said to Satan, "I, the Lord, reject your accusations, Satan. Yes, the Lord, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebukes you. This man is like a burning stick that has been snatched from the fire."

³ Jeshua's clothing was filthy as he stood there before the angel. ⁴ So the angel said to the others standing there, "Take off his filthy clothes." And turning to Jeshua he said, "See, I have taken away your sins, and now I am giving you these fine new clothes."

⁵ Then I said, "They should also place a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean priestly turban on his head and dressed him in new clothes while the angel of the Lord stood by.

Let us be like Barnabas whose real name was Joseph but was remembered as The Son of Encouragement!