



New Beginnings, Volume 5, 2008  
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*Hebrew 10:24-25A*

*“Think of ways to encourage one another to outbursts of love and good deeds. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do...”*

What kind of world would we live in if people seriously tried to live life in a way that always encouraged one another? What an amazing concept! Imagine that every person that you came in contact with had a smile and an encouraging word for you. It seems so much of life has become negative rather than encouraging. I suspect this has something to do with the way our news is reported to us. The news seldom ever talks about what is right with our country and the world. It focuses on what is broken, what is wrong, and what is evil. It is a small wonder that many of our conversations focus on the same things. It is a small wonder many people experience life as depressing because they do not hear a steady diet of encouragement.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus talks about loving one another. Jesus tells his listeners that the two greatest commandments are simply to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength and to love one another. Jesus knew that if we as humans simply honored these two commandments from God, that the lives of all of us would be dramatically improved not only in the present, but for all eternity. For all that churches and even the Bible try to teach us, here we have in one sentence, the secret to a life filled with peace and joy forever. Yes, some will say that this type of utopian thinking just won't work, but have we ever tried it? Even if you took out any reference to God, just living life with love toward every other human person would make your

life and their much brighter. Loving God as well would secure this joy for all time.

One of the reasons this simple good of more positive living fails is because most people really will not commit to being loving toward others. Tragically, the majority of people (even good people) are more focused on themselves and their own desires than they are the overall good of everyone. “Let me take care of my needs first and then I'll worry about encouraging others”, they will say. This is because most people, even very wealthy people, believe they live in a world of lack rather than abundance. This is where loving God becomes essential because God is the creator of all things and the provider for all who follow His will. There is no lack with God and that is why there is always encouragement in our relationship with Him.

One final thought, the writer of Hebrews knew how important it was for us to meet regularly with other people of faith. He knew that this strengthened and encouraged everyone to lead a life that reflected their love for God and others. Thus going to church becomes a joy not an obligation. Worshipping God and ministering to one another is not about guilt or obligation, it's about joyful service. If joy and encouragement is what you want in life, why not start anew with people who are joyful and encouraging.