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Grounders:

There is something about encouragement that restores the soul. I recently spoke at the funeral of my friend who was an ABC sportscaster. One word described him. It was *encouragement*. As I contemplated his life, I realized that three characteristics comprised his heart. I described him as an ABC encourager. I encourage you to assimilate them into your own life as the author of Hebrews calls us to do (Heb. 3:13; 10:25) because there is something about encouragement that restores the soul.

First, encouragement is *aware* of the presence of people and their needs. Jesus was aware of the people that He encountered and their needs. In fact, a repeated phrase in Scripture says that Jesus was aware of the hearts of those he faced. As a result, He encouraged them. What about you? Will you encourage others by being aware of their presence and their needs? There is something about encouragement that restores the soul.

Second, encouragement *builds up* others. Ephesians 4:29 says that the only words that come from our mouths should be ones that build up others. Jesus was known for building up others, so much so that they changed the world after His ascension. What about you? Will you not only be aware of others and their needs, but will you also encourage them with words that build up? There is something about encouragement that restores the soul.

Third, encouragement *comforts*. It comes along side and calls others to a better way. Jesus called the Holy Spirit, His Spirit, by the name Comforter. The Psalmist says that God encourages the afflicted. He comforts us in our times of trouble. What about you? Will you not only be aware of others and their needs, build them up, but will you also comfort them by meeting a need? If you do, you will realize that it's not you, but Christ in you that encourages.

Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give your rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matt. 11:28-29). There is something about Christ's encouragement that restores the soul.

Encouraged,
Mitch