**Topic: Encouraging Others**

**Bible Passage: 1 Thessalonians 5:11 & Ephesians 4:29**

**Activity: Love Language**

Have each student in your group think of an encourage phrases, such as “I really like having you as a friend because you’re a great listener” or “I think you’re really talented because you play an instrument/sport.” Encourage them to make the phrases pretty generic, like something that they could say to multiple people. Once they have phrases in mind, explain that they will have 5 to 10 minutes to introduce themselves to everyone in the room. The catch is that they can only say their name, the other person’s name, and the encouraging phrases that they have in mind. The conversations will end up being comical, but that’s the point. By the end of this activity, each student will probably be laughing at the craziness of the conversations. But each student will also have been complimented or encouraged by every other student.

**After the activity, ask the following questions:**

* How did you feel when you heard an encouraging phrase?
* What is the most encouraging thing /compliment someone said to you in this activity?
* What is the most encouraging thing /compliment someone has ever said to you?

In this activity, it was hard not to laugh at the conversations because all you could say was your encouraging phrase. It sounded funny, but everyone probably felt pretty good about themselves after hearing that many compliments. That’s what encouraging words do. When someone compliments or encourages us, it brings us joy and comfort.

You have probably heard of the Golden Rule. What does it say? (Allow students to respond) That’s right, it says, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” This means that you should treat others the same way that you would want them to treat you. If you would want encouragement when you’re down, then you need to be an encourager to others when they’re down.

Encouragement can really change a situation. And it’s not just a good idea; it’s actually a commandment from the Bible for all Believers to follow. Listen to this verse…

Have a student lookup and read the following verses:

**1 Thessalonians 5:11** - “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”

Encouragement can be as simple as being kind or listening to someone as they share. It could be saying an encouraging word about them when they are feeling down on themselves. Or it could be point out the positives in a seemingly all-bad situation.

Our encouragement can help others to muster up the courage it takes to finish what God has called them to do. The Bible commands us to—and our friends need us to—be encouragers.

Break into small groups and read the following passages of Scripture and ask the corresponding questions:

**Ephesians 4:29**

* What are some phrases that would “build up” others?
* Do you feel like you can do more when someone is encouraging you and cheering you on?
* In what ways can you use your words to “build up” someone this week?

**Proverbs 18:21 & Proverbs 10:11**

* How does the tongue have the power of life and death?
* How does the Proverbs 18:21 relate to Eph. 4:29?
* In what ways is the “mouth of the righteous” a “fountain of life”? What doe that mean?
* How can our words give “life” to others?

**2 Corinthians 1:4, 1 Thessalonians 5:14, & Romans 15:4-5**

* What do these verse tell us about how God encourages?
* In what ways does Scripture and the promises it contains encourage us?
* Why does God encourage/comfort us in our troubles?
* How are we to respond when others face tough problems or hard times?

**Hebrews 10:25**

* Why is it important for us to meet together?
* What are some ways that we can encourage one another when we meet together?
* We will one day see Jesus again, how does our encouragement to one another help us in the meantime?

**Closing Activity: Be an Encourager**

Give each student a 3x5 note card and a pen/pencil. Ask students to take a few minutes to think of someone that they come in contact with each week. It can be a friend, sibling, parent, etc. Encourage them to spend some time in prayer to ask God how they can encourage that person this week. As God reveals some things to do for that individual, have students write it on the note card. At the end of the activity, explain that students can keep the note card as a reminder of the encouragement God has called them to give. If possible, invite them to bring the cards back next week and share stories of how they gave encouragement.