

Anonymous Encouragement

Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose.

Philippians 2:1-2

As author John Maxwell has noted, there is a difference between being a leader and being a manager. He often points out that management focuses on maintaining systems and processes, while leadership is about “influencing people to follow.” One way to cultivate such influence is breathtaking in its simplicity: Influence involves caring sincerely about others.

While going through my senior year of college, there were days when it seemed as if the weight of the world had been placed on my shoulders. Classes were scheduled at odd times, so I had to plan meetings, work, and other errands as opportunity allowed. One day, I was feeling particularly frustrated when I stopped by my mailbox. Most of the time, there was nothing inside. But on this day, I found a card containing a few encouraging lines penned in blue ink.

What struck me was that it didn't have a name on it. It didn't have to. The card had done the job it was intended to do—to show me that I was cared for and appreciated.

Of course, showing someone that you care can be accomplished in ways other than sending a card to someone. A kind word can do the same thing. If somebody is struggling with an issue (or life in general), simply sitting and listening can be worth more than any words that may come to mind. And don't forget prayer, for “the earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results” (James 5:16).

However, encouragement isn't just reserved for those who know Christ Jesus. *All* people need to hear positive words, especially the words that tell of One who died for us so that we can have eternal life. Let's strive to be an encouragement to all we come in contact with daily.