



PURSUING BIBLICAL COMMUNITY

Study 4: Encouragement, Correction & Reproof

ICE BREAKER

Who was your favorite family member when you were growing up, and why?

OPENING PRAYER

LOOPING BACK

(If you committed as a group to access the articles and tools.)

How were the articles and tools you accessed on your own beneficial to your understanding of hospitality and generosity? Is there anything in particular you have changed as a result of them?

INTRODUCING OUR TOPIC *(invite 1 person to read and then discuss very briefly)*

Although this study is entitled ***Encouragement, Correction and Reproof***, it could just as easily be entitled ***Friendship***, because an important identity to embrace as a disciple of Jesus is FRIEND - an identity which forces us to ask ourselves, do I want to be a friend like Christ? Jesus said, "No longer do I call you slaves...but I have called you friends." (John 15:15). We see Jesus loving, encouraging, ministering, eating and drinking with his friends, and, if necessary, correcting and reproofing them.

Biblical community fosters deep friendships, where friends encourage, correct, and, sometimes, reprove one another with humility and grace. This implies that people are close enough that they have the intimacy, maturity, and discernment to speak into one another's lives. The purpose of this friendship is to build up and not to tear down. It is to help everyone grow into the likeness of Christ Himself (Gal. 4:19).

OPENING OUR BIBLES

1. Everyone turns to passage and have one person read it out loud
2. Pause for a moment and allow people to quietly reflect on the passage
3. Ask the question/s in the text box after reading all passages
4. Passages with an asterisk are optional depending on timing

Section 1: Encouragement

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

I Thessalonians 5:11-14

Hebrews 10:24-25

Acts 4:36; 11:22-26; 13:1-3; 15:36-41 (*optional)

Proverbs 18:24; 27:17 (*optional)

Romans 15:4-7 (*optional)

What do we learn about Encouragement from the following passages?

Are there ways you have experienced these in your own life?

Section 2: Correction and reproof

II Samuel 12:7-15a

Proverbs 9:7-9

Galatians 6:1-2

2 Timothy 2:22-26; 3:16-17 (*optional)

The idea of correcting or reproofing others may make us uncomfortable. "Who am I to judge?" is the common adage. What do the following passages teach us about Correction and Reproof? How do these passages help us?

APPLICATION

1. Do you routinely seek to offer words of affirmation and encouragement to people you are close to and build them up as followers of Christ? (it's good to be reflective and honest here)
2. How do we encourage one another in our Community Group? (take time to affirm how this is happening. If someone has a word of encouragement to share with the group how this has taken place lately in your group please share)
3. Spend time as a group brainstorming some practical ways to be an encourager? (make a point of adopting at least one idea someone else mentions)
4. Do we trust each other enough to allow for rebuke or correction when needed?

ENHANCEMENT

On our NCC website <https://www.newtoncovenant.org/pbc> you will find an excellent article by well-known author Larry Crabb on The Power of a Well Timed Word. We encourage you to read it. There is also a great handout on Spiritual Friendship.

CLOSING PRAYER

Start your time of prayer in quiet. Ask God to speak to each member in your group as you ask the question:

Is there someone who comes to mind that you would like to encourage this week?

After a few minutes open up for group “popcorn” prayer, encouraging members of your group to a time of praise, thanking God for this 4-part study and the ways it has been impactful.

*Popcorn prayer is where each person just prays a short phrase. In this case, a phrase of praise. It goes back and forth among members in the group and each person

probably prays 2-4 times. The leader will close off the time after the “popcorns” stop popping.

We trust this has been a wonderful 4 part study. Please don't hesitate to reach out to your leader or a member of our pastoral staff if you would like support in any of the 4 areas we studied or are interested in a more intentional discipleship journey.