ENCOURAGEMENT

The late Batsell Barrett Baxter, was Chairman of the Bible Department at David Lipscomb College in Nashville, Tn. when I was a student there and was my friend, counselor and teacher. He tells the story that when his mother found she was pregnant with him, she said, “If it is a son, he will preach.” He was proud of that and spoke often of it. He never, ever thought about being anything but a preacher. Think of all the encouragement that mother gave that son to bring him along to fulfill her desire.

Encouragement is very important. “and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,” (Heb.10:24 NASB) We can be spurred on by the encouragement of others. Sometimes it can mean the difference between success and failure. It can also mean whether a church grows or not because of the attitude displayed.

A long time ago there was a young man who wanted to preach. He devoted days of study time and practiced honing his skills until he became one of the best. But he had married a wife, a Christian, but one who did not understand the place she had come to in life, to be a preacher’s wife. He was on his way to becoming one of the best in the brotherhood, but because there was trouble at home, he crashed and burned at an early age. If she had been the kind of wife needed in this situation, no telling what he could have accomplished in soul saving over the years.

I do not mean there is no time for criticism. There is and it should be done when needed. But few seldom know the value of encouragement. It can cause a mediocre person to attain heights he never dreamed. It can cause a person to go the extra mile that will be the crowning achievement of his life. It can cause a person to make the extra effort that will save a soul. It can bring glory to God in so many ways, because of the extra effort people make.

If you see someone who needs encouragement, give them a boost. If someone has helped you, let them know.