**Encouragement 06 By Don Allen
Four Corners Tour by Motorcycle**
2006 June 2-11 (10 Days) 7,070 miles
Madawaska ME./ Key West FL. /San Ysidro Cal./ Blaine WA.

My goal also was to do 2,000 miles in 48 hrs. Maine to Florida./ Then 2,400 miles in 48 hrs. Coast to Coast. Jacksonville FL. To San Ysidro Cal. All doable. I had the experience, knowledge, & right equipment! These were to be **documented** rides, while still doing the 4 corners tour.
I rode N. Maine to S. Florida (All Rain the 1st day) in less than 48 hrs. However. being tired at 10PM in S. Florida, I forgot to check my mileage. Next morning I checked mileage. 1,995 miles. I was 5 miles short. I failed to get the 2,000 mile certificate. An overwhelming sense of failure & discouragement set in. After going to Key West FL, I needed to go up to Jacksonville FL. to get receipts with time, date, location, mileage, & signed witness, in order to start the C2C ride of 2,400 miles in less than 48 hrs. I was **tired** & **discouraged,** so instead I headed north on west side of FL. To route I-10 then headed west. That meant I would not get a certificate for the C2C ride because I didn’t go to Jacksonville. Ironically, I still made it to west coast within 48 hrs. Another failed documented ride.

 I’ve said all that to demonstrate the importance of **Encouragement**, and also why it’s not wise to go it alone. If I had a riding partner, maybe he would have **Encouraged** me to go to Jacksonville & get the documents needed for the C2C.
Lesson learned: Surest way to failure & defeat is to be tired, discouraged, & alone.
Tired: don’t think clearly! Discouraged: give up too easily! Alone: Only hear negative thoughts rattling around in your head!
Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 Two *are* better than one, Because they have a good reward for their labor. 10For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him *who is* alone when he falls, For *he has* no one to help him up.
1 Samuel 30:6 Now David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God.

I struggled with discouragement this scripture came to mind. I needed to encourage myself in the Lord! Other scriptures came to mind, my thoughts turned towards God. I started looking more at the landscape (God’s creation) thinking less about my disappointments. I still had the goal of 4 corners tour to complete! This thought came to me: Forget those things which are behind & reach forward to those things which are ahead! Press on toward the goal! What was ahead turned out to be a lot of extremes. 15 hr. days, 105 degree temps, hundreds of miles of nothing but flat land with dirt & rocks as far as the eye could see.

Then all the cities: Houston, San Antonio, San Diego, Los Angeles, Portland, and Seattle.
 4 Lanes, heavy traffic, moving at ungodly speeds. These people are crazy! But then I’m in middle of this high speed insanity on a motorcycle! Guess I’m crazier than they are!

After completing the 4 corners tour in Blaine WA., I proceeded on 2 lane roads through the Cascade Mts. in WA. Then down to Rocky Mt. Colorado with one more goal to achieve. I wanted to ride up Pikes Peak. But that didn’t happen; it was closed due to extreme high winds. Another disappointment! Only this one came with Grace. I was too thankful just to be alive & unharmed to let disappointment get to me. About a mile before the turn to Pikes Peak, the wind literally blew me off the road! To say I was scared would be an understatement! I can sum up the whole experience in one word: ANGELS ! It was a mixed blessing, unnerved me, yet gave me confidence knowing God is with me.

 The next 2 days became extremely challenging across Eastern Colorado, Kansas, & Missouri on I-70. I battled **extreme cross winds**. Traffic was moving at 75 MPH, I was doing 45 MPH, hoping not to get rear ended. The bike is leaned hard into the wind, but I was still being blown across the center line. The wind was so strong I had to stay on the bike while getting gas. My nerves were shot. I cried, I prayed, I kept on going. (In hills of Vermont we don’t have wind like that.) I finally had enough, and got a motel. I had to park the bike behind a building and tie it to a post so the wind wouldn’t blow it over. I thought maybe tomorrow would be better. No such luck, the next day was more of the same.
 Have you ever felt lonely, confused, seemingly doomed!? Things look & feel hopeless, every step is a struggle! ( in my case, every mile). You’re Discouraged, not sure what to do or where to go to regain your spiritual or emotional footing? Your strength is gone, you’ve lost your courage, & you’re ready to give up!? You just want this nightmare to end!?

It happened to me while riding my motorcycle on I-70 across Kansas!
Now remember, I’ve been from Vermont, To Madawaska ME./ Key West FL. /San Ysidro Cal./ Blaine WA. To Colorado, riding all day, every day for 15 consecutive days, for a total of 9,400 miles. To say I was exhausted, would be an understatement!

Your situation or circumstances may be different, but the feeling can be the same.
We may not be aware of it, but a spiritual battle could be taking place! When we hit that spiritual low & we’re ready to give up, that’s when “the Accuser of the Brethren” shows up with his list of negative thoughts to whisper in our ear. Usually, outward circumstances, or what appears to be fact, underscores those negative thoughts.

If the devil can’t break us with negative thoughts, his next trick is to use an audible voice. Usually coming from a friend, relative, or another Christian. Using words of criticism, telling us what we can’t do. After all, devil knows “Prov. 18:21 also! Death & Life are in the power of the tongue.”

However, if we’ve been studying the Bible & memorizing scripture, the Holy Spirit will bring to our minds verses needed for that moment to **encourage** us. I know this TRUTH because I’ve personally experienced it.
Every one of us, as we travel life’s highway, face strong crosswinds of adversity, causing us to feel, confused, discouraged, scared, or defeated! When our strength is gone, we’ve lost our courage, and we’re ready to give up, the Last thing we need is someone speaking negative, critical, words of death to us. In fact, we don’t need to hear that stuff even when we’re on the mountain top & everything is going smooth! It poisons our soul & breaks our spirit.

That’s exactly why “The thief who comes to steal, kill, & destroy, loves to get Christians speaking negative to & about each other!
We often underestimate the power of the spoken word, thoughtlessly allowing things to come out of our mouth that ought not. (Dr. Phil: It takes 1,000 atta girls- to overcome one: Bad girl.
I know that is a bit secular, but there is an element of truth in it.)

The Body of Christ desperately needs more “Friend Therapy”
“Friend Therapy” is when people come along side to **encourage** us when we’re going through difficult times. New Testament word: “To **encourage**” is a combo of Greek “Para” meaning “alongside of “ and “Kalo” means “to call” Parakaleo! The noun “**encouragement**” is “Paraklesis”

So, to **encourage** is to be called alongside someone. I think of a person putting an
arm around another’s shoulder – partly for support, partly to impart human touch, But always to strengthen & build up.
**Encouragement** is uniquely characteristic of our triune God. Father, Son, & Holy Spirit, all make **Encouragement** a matter of priority. Paul uses Paraklesis in 2 Cor. 1:3 to describe the Father, calling Him “God of all Comfort” (**Encouragement**)!
In 2 Thess. 2:16 Paul describes Jesus as one who has “Given us everlasting Consolation. (**Encouragement**)!

 And the Holy Spirit is so identified with **Encouragement** that it’s one of His names. Jn.14 & 16 the Holy Spirit is called Paraklete Comforter. KJV / Helper NKJV , NASB / Counselor NIV Jn.14:26 ). The Holy Spirit’s ministry is to come along side believers, lead them into all truth, & to **Encourage** them with the Truth of God Jn.16:13)

The Holy Spirit did exactly that by bringing to my mind scriptures to **Encourage** me as I was on my motorcycle in Kansas doing battle with strong crosswinds of adversity! In that situation the Holy Spirit had to do it that way because I was alone!
In most situations the Holy Spirit uses other people to speak words of **Encouragemen**t to us!

When we come along side someone & **Encourage** them on the basis of God’s Word, we are following in the ministry of the Holy Spirit! Father, Son, & Holy Spirit are all **Encouragers** & we should be as well.

The English prefix “en-“means to put into or onto.” Therefore “En-courage means to put courage into or onto another person! While courage can be generated by & for oneself, it is most often a commodity given from one person to another!

Inspire, give confidence, give hope to, reassure.

“Japanese proverb: One kind word can warm up 3 winter months.”
Prov. 12: 25 “Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad!

**What did I learn during all those lonely miles, riding around the USA on a motorcycle?** Don’t go it alone! Find a riding partner! The surest way to failure & defeat is to be tired, discouraged, & alone!
Often, folks would say to me: “Are you riding alone!?” My answer was always the same: “No, Jesus is riding with me!” And He certainly was! However, sometimes it’s also helpful to hear audible words of **Encouragement** from another human being.
(These principles apply in the Spiritual realm as well!)
Angels can handle a motorcycle in strong winds, when I can’t.
I’m more convinced than ever, “It’s better to have tried & failed” than not to have tried at all.
Someday, up from the ashes of failure will grow the roses of success!
Every failure has a lesson; Every success inspires us on to the next challenge!
Jesus never said He would keep us out of storms, He did promise to be with us through the storms!
 When my strength & courage were gone, & I was ready to give up, JESUS was there. His strength & Encouragement brought me through the storms & winds of adversity! I learned the value of “Friend Therapy” or the lack thereof!

In real life sometimes we need to be “en-couraged” – given a dose of courage by someone who is feeling stronger than we are.
That person may speak a word, say a prayer, write a letter, come by for a visit, clean our house, or cut our grass. There is no formula for **Encouragement**! It can take on many different forms. Even something as simple as sitting down with the person, keeping our mouth shut & just listen. Usually we know when we need **Encouragement** & we know when we receive **Encouragement**. And oh how thankful we are when someone **Encourages** us!

A man who buried 3 of his sons, had this to say about different people who came to see him when one of his sons died:
“I was sitting, torn in grief. Someone came & talked to me of God’s dealings & why it happened, & of hope beyond the grave. He talked constantly. He said things I knew were true. I was unmoved, except to wish he’d go away. He finally did. Another came & sat beside me. He just sat beside me for an hour or more. Listened when I said something, answered briefly, prayed simply, & left. I was moved, and **Encouraged**. What a lesson for us all !! I hated to see him go.”

Some times on the highway of life we get off trail, and into rough terrain, until we begin to lose our sense of direction. A sense of panic & fear sets in. I’m alone & no one knows that I’m lost & hurting! Some are lucky enough to find their way back to the main highway. But too many people don’t. They have no one who knows where they are, to pick them up when they fall, & guide them to safety. That’s why the Bible instructs us to have a ministry of **Encouragement** to one another!
1 Th.5:11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.
1 Th.5:14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.
Heb. 3:13 exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.
 Heb.10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another,* and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.
 Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
Philippians 4:19 My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.
1 Peter 5:7 Cast all your care upon Jesus, for Jesus cares for you.
Matthew 19:26 / Mark 10:27 / With God all things are possible.
[Luke 1:37](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%201%3A37&version=NKJV) With God nothing will be impossible.”

The Preachers Blessing

And now may the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you, giving you His Peace. Give us the Peace that surpasses all understanding, even when the world around us is falling apart. Give us grace without limit that enables us to walk in paths of righteousness. Let us rejoice in the joy of our salvation each and every day, knowing that because Your Son Lives, we have our very existence. Because He is a Conqueror, we are more than conquerors. Because He is victorious, we are crowned in victory. In Jesus’ name, Amen!