



**SUMMER-TIME  
DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS**  
Carstairs-Bancroft United Church  
September 6, 2023



Photo: Pixabay

## THE GIFT OF ENCOURAGEMENT

*Encourage one another and build each other up.*

1 Thessalonians 5:11

**READ 1 Samuel 23:14 - 23**

“Your bees are swarming!” My wife stuck her head inside the door and gave me news no beekeeper wants to hear. I ran outside to see thousands of bees flying up from the hive to the top of a tall pine, never to return.

I was a little behind in reading the clues that the hive was about to swarm; more than a week of storms had hampered my inspections. The morning the storms ended, the bees left. The colony was new and healthy, and the bees were actually dividing the colony to start a new one. “Don’t be hard on yourself,” an experienced beekeeper told me cheerfully after seeing my disappointment. “This can happen to anyone!”

Encouragement is a winsome gift. When David was disheartened because Saul was pursuing him to take his life, Saul’s son Jonathan encouraged David. “Don’t be afraid,” Jonathan said. “My father Saul will not lay a hand on you. You will be king over Israel, and I will be second to you. Even my father Saul knows this” (1 Samuel 23:17).

Those are surprisingly selfless words from someone next in line to the throne. It’s likely Jonathan recognized that God was with David, so he spoke out of a humble heart of faith.

All around us are people who need encouragement. God will help us help them as we humble ourselves before Him and ask Him to love them through us.

**By James Banks**

### **PRAY & REFLECT**

**Dear God, You give me eternal encouragement and good hope. Help me to show Your love to someone today. Amen**

Who do you know who needs encouragement? How might you humbly serve them today?

### **SCRIPTURE INSIGHT**

The central feature of 1 Samuel 23:14-23 is the “Jonathan visit” a friend-to-friend encounter at a very critical time. Though God can use casual, unplanned meetings with those we may or may not know, Jonathan's visit was rooted in a deep, lasting friendship (see 18:1-4). This meeting is believed to have been their last. The depth of their relationship comes through in the lyrics of David's lament for Jonathan (see 2 Samuel 1:25-27). Selfless, brief, timely visitations like these can be a real gift to those needing encouragement from God. – By **Arthur Jackson**

*Used with permission*