

Deuteronomy

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 15 June 1983

Preacher: Wood, Clement (1920-2010)

[0 : 00] Amen and Amen. The Lord, fulfill thy petition.

In dependence upon thee, Lord, I venture to draw your prayerful attention this morning to Deuteronomy chapter 1 and a part of verse 38.

Deuteronomy chapter 1 and verse 38 and these two words.

Encourage him. Encourage him.

The Lord helping me. I seek to speak from these two words in three ways.

[1 : 29] First, as they related to Joshua. Secondly, as they concern the servants of God, ministers of the gospel, under shepherds, and pastors of churches.

And thirdly, how these two words will affect such who sit under that ministry.

Think not that these two words this morning are to be applied only to the pulpit. For as the Lord encourages his servants as you by prayer, love, affection, encourage the servants of God, they are used by God to encourage you.

God's servants need encouragement and you need encouragement. In the scripture that we have just read in your hearing, you will remember that there were these words spoken unto all Israel.

Be strong and of a good courage, fear not nor be afraid of them, for the Lord thy God, he it is that doth go with thee, he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, so that dear people need such exceeding great and precious promises.

[4 : 01] There was a word of promise also for Joshua, the Lord, he it is that doth go before thee, he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, fear not, neither be dismayed.

in the first place in the first place, encourage him. These two precious words of strength to this dear servant of God, Joshua.

Let's go back to early days in the wilderness journey and see Joshua as the minister of Moses.

That is that he attended Moses, walked with Moses. He did not go to the top of the mount, but tarried at the foot of the mount.

God was preparing Joshua for a great work that is before him. In the ministry ministry or in the church of God, the aged saints and those in middle life are enabled at times to look back and see the hand of God by way of preparation whether for the ministry or in the church in that way in which the sovereign God has called you to serve him.

[5 : 54] Our next observation Joshua was the captain of the army then came Amalek and fought against Israel.

Joshua the captain Moses praying Aaron and her upholding his hands victory whilst the hands of Moses in prayer were upheld.

Harder to pray than to fight. Both are needy. Watch, pray, fight, take the whole armour of God, stand and withstand.

But what was that word that the God spake to Moses as that wonderful victory was given?

Write this for a memorial in a book and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua.

[7 : 12] Why? Because God had a work for him and this memory of victory in time past would strengthen his hands and his faith and encourage him to go forth in the name of his God.

I touch these points briefly. Joshua with that faithful Caleb who hath followed me fully saith God came back with a report of faith and trust in God that by God's help they would be able to enter into the land true there are walled cities true there are giants in the land true there is a powerful enemy but our God by his help we can overcome them.

The terrible sin of unbelief. Israel I tarry not on the historical part but because of the unbelief of the people Israel journeyed for another 40 years in that wilderness but Joshua and Caleb and all 20 years and under God said we would bring in into the land of promise.

those 40 years now in the book of Deuteronomy are past the journey is over God's faithfulness is set before the people they lack nothing their shoes have not worn out their garments have not waxed old the manna has never failed water from the rock and the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night guiding them preservation victory and help and now they stand at the threshold of the land of promise that flowing with milk and honey that almighty God has promised to give his people but Moses is not permitted to enter in the time of a life of usefulness of faithfulness is at its end and

Moses is taken to heaven and God has called Joshua to follow we read in this book those two words in one place if memory serves me right call Joshua encourage him and so in the early part of Joshua we have God speaking Moses my servant is dead now therefore arise go over this Jordan as I was with Moses so I will be with thee I will not fail thee nor forsake thee the secret of the strength blessedness power comfort and assurance of those promises was in this to cleave most closely without deviation to the word that

[11 : 04] God had spoken this book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth thou shalt meditate therein day and night that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous and then thou shalt have good success our older friends will know that I sat under the pastored of a dear faithful servant of Jesus Christ for 25 years and on his deathbed he gave us this word no deviation brethren pray for grace to hold fast to the truth as it is in

Jesus that word that has been so faithfully lovingly and ably proclaimed within this pulpit by those two former godly pastors and I believe this the humble desire of the dear man to come to you if the Lord will hold fast the truth think not that you may pass over any part of it whatsoever it is to observe to do according to all don't get the pen knife out you remember the wicked king in the days of Jeremiah there was the scroll there was the word of God there was the pen knife crack it to pieces cast it into the fire you say you'd never do it I'm not so sure about myself you may say what a minister of the gospel talking like that yes friend in this way and we may tend to pass over something that finds us out something that we don't want to read something that we want to turn from teaching them said

Jesus to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded thee now this is the strength this is the support this is the standing the blessing as we hold fast by God's grace to the word as it is in Jesus the truth have not I commanded thee when you are beginning to be afraid and Joshua when you are beginning to feel weak have not I thy God the strength of Israel have not I commanded thee and of a good courage be not afraid neither be dismayed for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest just one more or two very brief thoughts here on Joshua there in front of him was the

Jordan overflowing its banks that had to be passed to enter into the land of promise God made the way it was the ark it was the word of God it was to go after it three precious words that have been blessed of my soul of recent days go after it not in front of it Jesus in front the people behind a distant reverence there's access to the throne blessed liberty for sinners to come to Christ but ever with reverence remember my friend our God is holy it is the path of faith it is to follow the ark and the ark there borne by the priests in the midst of the Jordan waited and the whole people went over and there were stones two pillars some where the feet of the priest stood and there another pillar on the other side

Jordan where all the people had come through God had made the way what mean these stones said the children and these little children in forest fold may ask you questions I hope they do and I hope you speak to them of God and what your God has done they have heard of your dear former pastor tell them of what he has that ministry tell them of the things of God encourage them Jericho all cities the weapons of their warfare are not carnal but mighty and here's the strength brethren through God to the pulling down of strong holds what is this ark what are these company of people what are these trumpets yes my friend in

[16 : 50] God's time on the seventh day of the seventh time shout the victory is sure and the walls come down and the city is taken but is it all victory is it all triumph does Joshua make no mistake friend look at the defeated Ai not that we blame that on Joshua there was an Achan in the camp is there one in forest hold heart searching question a Judas Iscariot whose hand is with me on the table solemn thought and this won't harm the child of God it will bring you into prayerful exercise and concern defeat because of departure from the word of God repentance that's the comfort putting it away and victory did

Joshua make no mistake who are these people that are coming Joshua in his old rags and moldy bread oh he takes a step what didn't he do he never prayed to God about it it's so easy I know what to do with this be aware of anything easy friend be aware of taking any step without prayer be aware of doing anything and thinking of self confidence that you can handle a small matter take it all to God in prayer I must not tarry longer on this first part of our meditation but let us just conclude that first part in hearing the testimony of the dear man of God behold this day I'm going the way of all the earth and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the

Lord your God spake concerning you all are come to pass unto you and not one thing hath failed thereof come now as I may be helped of God to speak of these two words in this way concerning the ministry there's no greater call on this earth no more solemn office than to be called by God to the ministry of the word of God we are workers with God as the word declares now let us be very clear there we are nothing we are but a vessel but

God uses vessels he'll thirst empty them that's painful profitable cleanse them from defilement fill them hold them in his hand use them according to his sovereign purpose and will and then cover that vessel so the vessel is out of sight that all the praise and the glory shall be his we have to speak of those things for the honor and glory of our God to do with the precious gospel what a word that is in the

Thessalonians to be put in trust with the gospel what a trust my brethren it's the word that is centered on Calvary the sacred sufferings of Jesus Christ and the precious blood there shed the triumph of the cross the resurrection and intercession of our saviour it is to preach the word to be instant in season and out of season encourage him who is sufficient for these things we have to do with not your possessions not your bank balance not your business but never dying souls and that reaches to eternity and how solemn the burden how great is the weight the care of all the churches oh for grace to preach

[22 : 36] I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God I'm pure said Paul of the blood of all men encourage him my friend God's servants are those as they stand on the walls of Zion that are attacked by the devil surely tempted opposed these are they who venture in faith it may be very hard for you to understand or to realize but

I believe this every true servant of Jehovah every sermon they preach is a venture of faith because a man may have a natural ability a good education and a measure of talent but my friend the burden of the word natural gift and talent will never carry a man through it's God that helps you may think practice makes perfect it may in earthly things but never in the ministry I believe the more we preach the more dependent we come I am but a child speak

Lord help Lord oh the Lord help me that goes on in that little vestry or in the little cottage or in these pulpit stairs under this pulpit cushion as you singing the hymn you may not think it but sometimes the minister has no text to come into the pulpit you say well man you ought to prepare he's struggled perhaps all night he's had a sleep this night and if the Bible's closed like that by God friends you can't find the text you can't go back and preach on the text that you had last week I know it and there are times when it might be to the last moment before God gives that minister a text I do not say that this is a common experience but it is known at times that you wouldn't know it so encourage him now how are you to encourage him you'll tell me you're never so poor

God bless you friend it's those people that think they can do all things that we're very worried about and I say this very lovingly this morning it's these poor prayers that do so much good you know it's these poor sinners that are a strength of the ministry it's not this man that says God I thank you I'm not as other men are and I can do this and I can do that you can encourage then with your prayers pray pray for pray for the dear servant and your dear pastor to come among you as you did for your dear former pastor pray before that service pray them as they for them as they preach encourage him and are you going to forget him at the end of the

Sunday brethren may I open my heart to you that this sometimes is the most painful part of the ministry when the devil is let loose where is the sign who hath believed our report to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed going home burdened cast down misunderstand me not I do not mean that there are not times blessed be God when special help is given and we go home humbled rejoicing and thankful and praising and blessing God but pray for the dear man after the preaching friend encourage him pray for him in the burden that he carries pray for him as he takes the church meeting difficult matters perplexing circumstances pray that he may be given wisdom to handle matters wisely and in the fear of God let me give a little example to encourage you you may say well this matter

[28 : 10] I don't seem to have wisdom to know what to do how to speak or how to act or how to vote pray about it friend many years ago I had a godly deacon he's now in heaven very strong in body and by reasonable old age his legs were bowed he walked with two sticks he was with me in my car going down as I was preaching in Wiltshire I had trouble with the car God answered the prayer I didn't touch that but as we journeyed on the way he turned to me he said I felt so helpless sitting here I could do nothing in his prime he could have pushed that car any distance and I don't say that lightly he got tremendous physical strength but he said I could do nothing but I prayed for you so friend if you feel you can do nothing if you feel you have no wisdom if you feel you don't know what to say pray that's the strength this is the support encourage him your dear pastor by prayer by your presence in the sanctuary loyal not only the morning service but weeknight service prayer meetings wherever possible encourage him that your place is not the first one that's going to be empty after he's been here for a little while that you've gone off somewhere else the sad path the experience of pastors and encourage him do not go all over him at once your dear pastor mr stanley dells told me that one or two that were all over him in the first of his pastorate here were the first to lead and those that very quietly received him were his most loyal when I went into turn with road the people just quietly received me and I them friend be preserved from excitement get down on your knees pray that

God will bless the appointment and that you may not be an aiken in the camp departing from the ways of God to bring sorrow and distress to the dear man of God encourage him encourage him by a kind word from time to time speak to him if the ministry has been blessed write him a little note encourage him what are you going to do if you don't agree with him if there's something he says you don't quite understand leave it or gossip about it brethren I'm speaking in love friend the answer is go home first of all and pray about it if you don't understand then either have a quiet word with him praying together or a little letter written in the spirit of humility and this would clear as so many of the misunderstandings that have arisen from time to time which has been fanned into terrible fire by the awful influence of the evil one let me name two examples my own particular case one was this that after a morning service years ago at

Hamleth Road one of my dear old members he's now in heaven he came up to me said you know I can't find it easy to repent well that made me think what have I said what have I said the dear man was a little hard of hearing and I remember in that sermon quoting the children's hymn it is not enough to say we are sorry and repent and still go on from day to day that I said that it was easy to repent I explained to him and he put his hand on his shoulder he said that's quite right there was no misunderstanding may I just name another a man resolved he'd never hear me preach again because apparently I misquoted a scripture I didn't know it didn't know anything about it he never wrote to me never contacted me as he ought to

I could have cleared the matter in a moment but some months or year after some friends were staying with him and I was expected in a nearby chapel for special service and they wanted to hear me he could do nothing else but go with them oh that was an appointment of heaven for him I speak to the glory of God that man was blessed he came up after the service and told me all what I told you and I said friend if only you had written to me or I said it might have been we are but human might have said misquoted a word I could have cleared it at once within three months that man had passed away how thankful one was encourage him you can see friend watch against the devil who's ever ready to sow the seed of discord among brethren that root of bitterness it may be but a little seed of weed and it's a root and if it's not plucked right out root and all it's going to stay there you in your garden and

I'm not an experienced garden but I know the futility of trying to get a weed out and take the top off and think well I've done it but it's not that weed will go stronger it's got to go right out and that by prayer that by love that by mutual understanding and that by the cleansing precious blood of Jesus Christ our Lord encourage him encourage him in your practical giving in the collections for the cause in maintaining the need of your dear pastor and helping in any way that you possibly can remember what a minister may sacrifice of the things of this world to minister unto you in the name of Jesus Christ I know this and we proved it and oh the thought

[35 : 41] I had may I just name it as I came you would remember where old Hartfield station was wouldn't you now that's the very point I shall never forget the spot in my life the latter part of December 1960 where dear Mr.

John Ralph and I parted that was the end of my business he took it on and that's where he left me I was finished finished made it by venturing in faith family my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus does God care for oxen he does but your responsibility in the sight of God is to remember the need of the dear servant of Jesus Christ in a practical loving way and encourage him encourage him when he comes to your door perhaps to visit you encourage him as he labors among the young encourage him as he goes about to visit the sick encourage him as he may have difficult matters to handle perhaps and I pray God it will not be here but you know there's a euodius and a syntique that need to be of one mind in the

Lord pray that he may be the healer of breaches pray my friend that a little oil may flow I was recently up in East Anglia preaching I was telling a dear friend that I'm no man with my hands a toolbox I am no good at all and this dear man just turned to me and said well I can't give you a useful hen he said do you ever have a bit of hard wood I said friend I do the hardest bit of wood is my heart left of myself but he said are you putting a nail into a piece of hard wood put a drop of oil on it and friend what a difference a drop of oil will make in the things of God where there's friction where there's a rasping where there's a moving smoothly a drop of sacred heavenly oil to get all flowing together in the spirit of humility in the love of Christ in holding fast to the word of God why I have said about keeping close to the truth as it is in

Jesus yes friend but not contentiously not with a harsh spirit or with that loving spirit of Jesus Christ or with that tenderness and faithfulness meekness and humility my pastor used to say meekness is not weakness humility is not spineless my dear friend hold fast stand firm contend earnestly but in love encourage encourage him and don't forget his partner will you ever pray for the minister's wife ever think of their lonely hours ever think of what they suffer when they see their husband pacing about perhaps on a Saturday and they know the dear man hasn't got a chance see him come back very worried and burdened because of something that's happened and these things that happen sometimes are some silly little stupid little thing for the most part and they fan up oh

I say pray for the dear wife partner of the dear servant of Jesus Christ think of their lonely hours think of the family in the sacrifice to encourage them encourage him I must come now to the third part as we may be helped of our meditation this morning and that is although I must just name one more thought that comes to my mind I named about prayer you may not have the sword you may not be the Joshua but you may be the Aaron and the Hur what did they do something very simple they held up those hands didn't they but what would it all been if they hadn't been there you see friend don't think you're too small

[40 : 34] I go back to Canada when I was there in the war years for a year and the beaver an amazing creature how they work and I was told that men had pulled down one of the dams they made and went back the next night and there were the beavers inching their way and their logs into their place and so forth but not only that were little muskrats if memory serves me right working with the beavers you may not fear to be the strong beaver you may fear to be one of those little ones but working together that's it together friend and this oil again flowing if you think of machinery it's you in your small corner and I in mine I was once preaching and in the congregation my very early days as a well known pastor and there was a humble little servant of God who just went round a few of the little chapels and I felt in prayer to pray for both of those dear men individually in their work and after the service was over it was

Mr. Frank Austin he came up to me and he said to me he said I'm glad you prayed for friend so and so and he quoted these lines you in your small corner and I in mine that's it friend be faithful now encourage now as I look then at this word a servant of God who is tried and tempted and attacked by the devil at times comforted supported strengthened and helped by God and supported with the love and affection and prayers of his dear people then he will be used of God to encourage him or her or the child and in this way the stranger that may come into the sanctuary encourage him hope and pray that he'll come again pray that

God may bless him and pray that others may be gathered in encourage him I'm so thankful at home that I don't think a stranger will ever come in without some of my dear people speaking to them and seeking to encourage them and I feel that is right encourage him then I was thinking more particularly of those that don't show any love to these things they come to God's house because they've got to the young you need much patience seek all you can in a loving way to encourage them pray over them a dear man who now is over ninety one of our godly deacons in one of our churches in his early days he sat in the pulpit and shook his fist at the minister but the time of love came and who can tell and some may be like the onesimus that runs away turns their back on god's house determined that they'll have nothing more to do with it but all that eternal purpose of god and here i would say encourage him i do not know what how many you may have had from the young leave you and have gone into the world we have and i suppose every course of truth of size has these that have gone right into the world well i love to feel this my door is open the door of the chapel is open the door of my heart in welcome is open the door of my heart in prayer is open who can tell follow them pray over them weep over them travail over them as god blesses you with travail for their never dying souls encourage him a dear soul that left our chapel for twenty years came to visit her sister who was looking after the minister that was to preach on the saturday chapelled a journey and her sister said well go and see to mr so and so well i remember him so she went in and mr so and so spoke very nicely to her and just as she was going out she said mary i expect to see a chapel tomorrow yes sir she was there and god brought her back it was my privilege later to baptize her don't give up friend still pray still pray wrestle on encourage him now the seeker and i believe there are many seekers here they need encouraging and these dear children and young people and you know i love them they've a great place in my heart i've even been accused sometimes of speaking too much to children and young people i leave that with my god friend it's the same truth but as a dear farmer once said to me who knows a lot about sheep he said we feed this special food for sheep and lambs together but the food for lambs needs to be broken up a little more we preach and we would encourage the children the little ones and hope and pray that you dear children that there may

be something that you may understand and that God will lead you to pray to know yourself as a sinner and to come to Jesus you dear young people teenagers you've got some problems haven't you oh yes we know about it I'm not unmindful of conflict I want to find things out for myself I want to prove that this is right now you're right to appoint on that if by all means seek for yourself to establish in your heart the truth of these things but when you come to your conclusion I would advise you to do two things one is to turn most importantly right through it and finally to God's word does it may straight with the Bible and then seek guidance from those that are fathers and mothers in Israel your pastor your teacher your parent and have a word with them don't go and say well I know it all and I'm not going to listen to anybody else encourage you we would encourage you come to your dear once I used to go to my dear old Sunday school teacher Miss Grace Camp as a teenager and she was such a help to me they didn't mean to say I had not loving parents I couldn't speak to them I could I could speak to my pastor but she had her place in my life and may the older ever receive very tenderly sympathetically and understanding those that are younger with the up to date modern conflicts that they have the days of evil encourage him that one that longs for baptism don't push them don't do that a quiet word sometimes if one is laid on your mind I remember a dear friend once came up to me a year before I was baptized I believe you've got an exercise I couldn't answer I didn't resent resent and she said this I pray God he'll give you no rest and you come and that's what we pray that God will bring you and we would encourage you perhaps you say ah but I've got to come before the church well what are they aren't they the people you love aren't they the people that have been blessed haven't they come before the church isn't it right to tell to sinners round what the dear saviour you have found you may say ah but how can I come to the table of the Lord well who's the table spread for now indeed we must be very careful whenever oh what a solemn thing it is to eat and drink unworthily but that's not unworthy unworthily is to make a profession of faith and to be walking a path of sin but to be unworthy that's the way that's the place it's for unworthy sinners neither dear man the minister that put the cup into the hand of a weeping woman that felt she couldn't take the cup woman is for sinners encourage him encourage him encourage the dear members of the church to hold fast the profession of your faith nothing wavering he is faithful that promise encourage that one that may be depressed cast down and burdened and tempted by Satan in mental almost affliction don't despise them don't go up and slap them

on the back and say well you must have faith in God but seek to encourage them with a kind word you'll have to pray much about it my friend the hardest case to visit are those in depression spiritual depression and darkness of mind but do encourage them oh do encourage them you may be in that path you may walk in that way such a word as this I will not leave you comfort now I will come to you now you see as a minister is laid into such paths as these he's blessed to encourage those that walk in those paths I sat says Ezekiel where they sat and this is the work of the ministry encourage him encourage those in their sickness and their pain their sorrow and their distresses their bereavements encourage them to hope in God encourage the lonely by visiting them don't forsake or forget the lonely and what about that one you don't get on with so easily that one that may be a crooked stick in the bundle or pray for them and perhaps a kind word may do so much good what about yes encourage those that are drawing to the end of the journey that their

[52:10] God will never fail them never forsake them he'll bring them through oh sacred times standing by the death bed of some of the dear saints that have left a testimony oh what a sacred blessed solemn season that is to see saints fall asleep in Jesus my brethren I see more the time has gone encourage him I must leave this word I have felt very burdened I felt I could bring no other I have not sought that this should be in any way considered for a moment as any form of a recognition service at all I would never intrude on that at all but my love and affection to you over the years and to the dear man that's coming to you and the sacred memory of that dear man of God

Mr. Stanley Dow I share with so many of you the fragrance and spirituality of that life and those words from time to time spoken sweet and it is this in love that has prompted me to bring this word to you and what can I say and now brethren I commend you to God to the word of his grace which is able to build you up to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified the Lord be with you all Amen may we close our worship this morning with hymn 332 do now let the people all be strong and make

Jehovah's arm their song his shield is spread over every saint and thus supported who shall faint what though the host of hell engage with mingled cruelty and rage a faithful God restrains their hands and chains them down in iron bands to ■ who had mingled at st who
The End

The End The End The End

The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End

[59 : 14] The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End

Amen.