

## **The Power of Encouragement**

### **Ready:**

?May the God who gives you encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Jesus Christ, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ.?

-Romans 15:5 (NIV)

### **Set**

I had the blessing of seeing 2012 Olympian-hopeful Michelle McKeehan break the national record in the 200 IM at the Indiana State Swimming High School finals. After breaking the national record with a time of 1:58:06, McKeehan received an encouraging standing ovation from every person in the packed Indianapolis natatorium, including her opponents.

In this same natatorium, as I volunteered for a United States Masters Swimming Championship a few months later, I witnessed encouragement from a different view. After one athlete hobbled toward the starting block on crutches with a smile spread across her wrinkled, 80-year-old face, two other swimmers took her crutches and balanced her on the block for the start. As her timer, I questioned whether or not she would be physically able to finish her 100m freestyle, since she seemed to be struggling during her final lap. As I looked around to see if I should go in after her, I noticed the natatorium was getting louder from the cheers of encouragement from fellow swimmers. One by one, they were standing up all around the natatorium, cheering and clapping for her to finish. And she did finish, with a smile on her face. It was that day that I realized the incredible power that God has given us in the form of encouragement.

Today, I challenge you to be the voice of God to encourage and inspire others to great things in Him.

### **Go**

1. Do you remember a time that you were encouraged by your teammates?
2. Do you remember a time that God encouraged you with His Word?
3. Who in your life needs encouragement today, this week, this month?

### **Workout**

Philemon 1:7

1 Thessalonians 5:11

2 Thessalonians 2:16

**Bible Reference:**

Philemon 1



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