

The Encourager

Churches Helping Churches and People Helping People

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What is *The Encourager*?

The Encourager is a publication giving words of encouragement and hope to the community in these difficult times.

The world has been impacted by COVID-19 in a way that could

not be envisioned.

As people adjust to cope with major life changes, the articles in *The Encourager* will share relevant information to use.

Scriptures will be included to

provide encouragement, hope, and comfort.

If you are interested in additional copies, or if you would like to contribute articles, please contact the editor.

Bartering: People Helping People

In this edition of *The Encourager*, we will delve into the annals of history to discover the importance of “goods for goods” or bartering. **To barter, is to trade by the exchange of goods or services for other goods or services without using money.**

In what way does bartering offer any answers while we find ourselves in the midst of a worldwide pandemic? Surely, there are other topics that seem more fitting to quell the uneasiness of—When will this end? When will things return to normal again? Must every President’s briefing or WHO update be viewed as a blockbuster movie? Is this the new normal?

Shortages of Food

With a quick YouTube search or a compendious glance at the news, a fair and accurate assessment is that the public at large is in an adaptation mode. Especially now, the most logical discussions would be about food, money, and medicine. This is probably the best time to interject that the United Nations is warning of a global

food shortage due to the Coronavirus outbreak. Nowadays, taking an essential trip to the grocery store leads one to shop amongst **scantly stocked shelves**. In essence, this serves as further confirmation to the UN’s food crisis warning.

History of Bartering

As we highlight again the two words, *bartering* and *survive*, relevant history is a wise professor. Long before the importance of the stock market, the spice trade set the financial tone for the world. Merchants sailed the deep blue far and wide hazarding their lives for spices we now use to season our meat, flavor our stews, and stock our pantries. Spices were so valuable that they were used to pay one’s rent. Other uses for spices ranged from perfumes, embalming, medicines, and the preservation of meat. During those times of navigating through the waters and many fudging their own expeditions to take part in the spice trade, a pound of cloves was of more value than gold.

This led many to vie for a stake in the race to claim territories where spices were abundant, so to churn a profit. **Pink Himalayan salt** (not to be confused with common table salt) has over 80 naturally occurring trace minerals. Salt was once referred to as white gold. This commodity was prized so much that it was once given as a portion of soldiers’ salary.

Chocolate, enjoyed satisfactorily by enthusiasts worldwide, was once enjoyed in liquid form. This sweet indulgence in past times was of such importance and high demand that it became currency. The Aztecs and the Mayans were among those who took advantage of bartering **100 cocoa beans for a turkey**. The Aztecs loved chocolate, but it could not be grown in their territory. Because of this, they welcomed **goods for goods** with the Mayans.

To encapsulate all of the aforementioned, we see that **goods for goods played a vital financial role in shaping the economy of the world**. It was the

bartering practices that set the stage for commerce as we now know it.

Resurgence of bartering

There is no finer time than now for this skill to see a resurgence. How fitting is it in a time like this for communities to band together and offer **goods for goods** or services for services? Currently for many, the next pay check is uncertain. One can find

peace in the sense that **important skill sets can be converted to usable assets**. This is not a bad idea, using services for gain without monetary loss. Who wouldn't be up for having the living room spruced up by a painter in exchange for fresh produce or even farm to table meat?

Survival

Things will soon escalate into a

survival mode. 1 Thessalonians 4:17 says, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." The word *remain* in the Greek means to survive.

Bartering is a survival skill that will connect us together.

We can make it by helping one another!

Experiencing God's Peace

Did you know that even in the most difficult times, the Lord promises peace to the believers? Jesus says, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27).

This peace comes as a result of having faith in God and trusting His discretion. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."

If we are experiencing stress or anxiety, we can bring them to the Lord in prayer. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (1 Peter 5:7). Also, Jesus says, "Come unto me, all

ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:28).

When dealing with mental stress, it is important to remember this saying: ***If you don't like the way you feel, change the way you think.***

During this time we must stay busy! We all have heard the saying, "An idle mind is the devil's workshop". In other words, we must guard our thoughts.

The Apostle Paul writes, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure,

whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you" (Philippians 4:8-9).

If we trust the Lord and follow that Scriptural formula, we will be able to handle our situations.

Philippians 4:7 says, "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Jesus tells us, "**Fear not**, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

We can help each other!

Churches helping churches and people helping people:

Goods for Goods

Services for Services

Goods for Services

In these difficult times, we are looking to set up a network of churches helping churches and people helping people. If you have a skill to provide or items you would like to barter or exchange, please contact us! **You may call us at 518-272-6679 or email us at info@redemptionchurch.net.**

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