

# Small Group Newsletter



## The Anatomy of encouragement by Mark Lake

*Proverbs 10:11 The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life.*

We've all had that moment where we were impressed with someone's performance and felt the urge to give them a word of encouragement. Then, as we open our mouth, the only thing that comes out is, "Hey, you did a great job tonight" or, "Thanks for your leadership—that was good today." While I'm sure they appreciate the praise, think of how much more powerful it could be if we simply put some thought and intention into our encouragement.

Perhaps the key to putting a punch to our praise is looking at the anatomy of effective encouragement. While there is much more to it, here are three simple ingredients to get you started:

**Sincere:** Before speaking words of encouragement, check your motives and make sure you're doing it to lift up the other individual, not to gain something for yourself

**Specific:** If you want your words of praise to have more punch, then be specific with your encouragement. Notice the specifics of what people do well, and consider how it impacted you personally.

**Strength Focused:** God has gifted each of us in very specific ways. Each day we use and develop those strengths. Over time, as those strengths develop, they become obvious to others. Paul had been around young Timothy so much that he became very familiar with his strengths. And then, in a very crucial time in Timothy's ministry, Paul told him, "Fan into flame the gifts God has given you." By giving people encouragement centered on their particular strength, we are in essence helping them fan the flame of their strengths.

Bless you as you encourage those in your group!!

Pastor Dave

**Notice: Small Group Leaders Retreat**  
**March 22-23, 2013**  
**Speakers: Gerald & Marlene Kauffman**