



# THE ENCOURAGER

Let us never forget



“Let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the day approaching.”  
Hebrews 10:25

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President/Missionary: Gay Reynolds  
Editor: Sue Reynolds

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I am from the small city of Sylacauga with a population of about 15,000 in the central part of Alabama. I currently serve as firefighter / ladder truck operator and chaplain in the Sylacauga Fire Department, that is a paid department. I also serve as Lt. and chaplain in the Oak Grove Volunteer Fire Department.

I was raised in church, but the Christian walk was something I didn't understand until a few years ago. I was third from the youngest of seven children. My parents lived the Christian life and attended church until I was 13 years old. When I was 15, my parents divorced and from that time, until a few years ago, I only attended church occasionally. In retrospect, I realize I was wandering in the wilderness almost like the Israelites in the dessert. I found out the hard way that sometimes you have to get lost to find your way home. If you understand that, you know where I'm coming from. That is a testimony in itself.

I married right out of high school to my high school friend and sweetheart, Deirdre, who only lived about a mile from me. I thank God for Deirdre who put up with me during the years I wandered away from God (in the wilderness). We've been married for 18 years and have two sons Aaron (17) and Dylan (15). Both are strong Christians. Aaron is a youth deacon at Oak Grove Baptist Church. Dylan has been called into the ministry and he preached his first sermon about visions when he was 13. We all attend Oak Grove Baptist Church.

Now that I have a better understanding of the Christian life, I look forward to life. It's exciting to find out what God has in store for us next. Being a Christian, I know where life is leading me — into an eternal life of happiness — and I want to find a way to take everybody with me. A big dream, but I'm going to work on it. I know I've been called into this ministry as a chaplain. For this, I want to express my thanks to my chief at SFD, Tommy Abrams, for his support to the schools that the chief allowed me to attend, and to my whole department's support. Without their support there would be no ministry at all.

I have a lot of maturing to do in this Christian walk, but at the same time there seems to be a sense of urgency. Life is short. We don't have a lot of time for error. It seems like many of us are just going through the motions of life never realizing that every breath we take is in the hands of God. One of the most encouraging things I've found about following Christ is from the Bible verses that talk about the sin of Adam and Eve that condemned us all and then later tell us that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, appeared on the scene to save us from this condemnation. This is made clear

## Meet A Member



**ROBERT OSBOURN**

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in one of my favorite verses, Romans 5: 17, **“For if through one man, death ruled because of that man’s offense, how much more will those who receive such overflowing grace and the gift of righteousness rule in life because of one man, Jesus Christ!”** As I continue through God’s word to Revelations, the Bible tells me clearly that with Christ we have victory and eternal life where God Himself will wipe away all of our tears. There will be no more death, no more crying, and no more pain. How exciting it will be for all of the people that are saved! Rev 21:4 **“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”** This time

we spend on earth will only be like a second compared to eternity. The Bible says, “like a vapor mist,” James 4:14, **“You do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.”**

We will have trials and tribulation. But we are not supposed

to become comfortable in this world because this is not our final home. We are out of place. That is why God’s word says not to be conformed to this world. Roman 12:2 makes this clear. **“Do not be conformed to this world, but continually be transformed by the renewing of your minds so that you may be able to determine what God’s will is-what is proper, pleasing, and perfect.”**

As I learn to look through the eyes of my heart instead of through my natural eyes, I learn to respect the unseen (because the unseen is that which is eternal). There is nothing like waking up in the morning with the peace of God in my heart. So often people want to rely on their senses like touch, taste, sight, hearing, and smelling that they forget about the spiritual side of things. We must pay closer attention. I think we must be careful not to use God like a spare tire by putting Him first when our life is flat then when everything is good placing Him back in the trunk.

When I first got saved, I was working 24-hour shifts at the fire station and then doing construction, (mostly drywall finishing work) on my off days. I worked almost seven days a week. Only two weeks into my new life, or renewed life as a Christian, I fell off of a ladder doing my side work and tore my ACL and LCL in my right knee. While working two jobs, I barely made enough money to make ends meet. I wondered how I'd ever make ends meet now that I was out of work. I'd just been saved and now this. This was not supposed to happen. “Where are you God?” I asked.

**Fellowship of Christian Firefighters**  
INTERNATIONAL

For the four months I was out of work, all my fellow firefighters at Sylacauga came together and gave me their sick time; I did not miss a single check from the fire department the whole time. I will forever be thankful to them for that.

The income from my second job was still missing, but every time we got low on food or money the Lord sent help. Most of the time it came at the last minute. God was testing my faith and I came out stronger and drew closer to Him in many ways. I'd wake up at night with prayers that I didn't know where they were coming from. I thought I was just thinking them up, but soon found out they followed scriptures that I read later. I realized that the Holy Spirit was helping me pray. Even though I was in a low point in life with my injury, I had a sense of peace I never had before. In reality, I was in the highest point in my life.

I felt at the beginning the Lord was speaking to me about working two jobs. God put a calling on my life that could not be fulfilled with me working like that. As a young Christian, I ignored God. I thought I knew better. I tried to put my life in my own hands instead of relying on the hands of God. Not realizing that the power of God is unlimited (omnipotent).

I joined the Fellowship of Christian Firefighter at the first of this year and started a new chapter, "South Talladega County Fellowship of Christian Firefighters."

As I was writing this, I wanted to let you all know what my favorite verse was. The more thought I put into it, the more confused I got. There are so many that touch my heart and I find that they change from day to day to match the situation I'm going through for that day. Please take a look at some of my favorite verses. Read Galatians 2:20 slowly and really let it sink in.

**"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.**

A good one to say every morning before getting out of bed is Psalm 118:24:

**"This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."**

We can be brought into a state of salvation, our sins being all blotted out having a hope for eternity. We must not rely on our own works; it is God's free mercy that will set us free, if we accept it. IT IS FREE!!! God loves us! Ephesians 2:8 tells us

**"For by such grace you have been saved through faith. This does not come from you; it is the gift of God."**

In each of these verses, I noticed that the subject of faith is an integral part. Maybe I need to work on faith today. This really helps me in my Christian walk. It gives me something to work or improve on.

If you doubt your own salvation here is an example of how you can accept Jesus into your life.

*Father, I know that I have broken your laws and my sins have separated me from You. I am truly sorry, and now I want to turn away from my past sinful life toward you. Please forgive me, and help me avoid sinning again. I believe that your Son, Jesus Christ, died for my sins, was resurrected from the dead, is alive, and hears my prayer. I invite Jesus to become the Lord of my life, to rule and reign in my heart from this day forward. Please send your Holy Spirit to help me obey You, and to do Your will for the rest of my life. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen."*

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