Dear Open Door Family,

Words are so powerful. That is why the book of Proverbs and James talk about how powerful the tongue can be. Angry, bitter words can wound very deeply. But thankful, encouraging words can build up. I have a file that I have kept for many years. In it are many of the notes and thank you cards that have encouraged me down through the years. Every now and then if things are tough I get them out and read them. They are powerful because they remind me that God uses His people to encourage and build each other up. We see an excellent example of this in this passage today. Let's look at it together.

2 Chronicles 30:21-22 *(ESV) And the people of Israel who were present at Jerusalem kept the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with great gladness, and the Levites and the priests praised the Lord day by day, singing with all their might to the Lord. [22] And Hezekiah spoke encouragingly to all the Levites who showed good skill in the service of the Lord. So they ate the food of the festival for seven days, sacrificing peace offerings and giving thanks to the Lord, the God of their fathers.*

The people were celebrating the Passover with great joy. They had set their hearts to seek God. As they celebrated and worshipped God in Jerusalem they did it with *"great gladness"* and the Levites who were leading the worship were *"singing with all their might to the Lord"*. How do we sing and worship. Do we put all of our strength and energy into our singing? Do we focus EXCLUSIVELY on the Lord Jesus and all He has done for us? Or do we allow ourselves to be distracted by any random that comes into our minds? Hezekiah also encouraged the Levites who were serving the Lord well. How many times do we encourage those who serve the Lord? If we see a young person singing or playing on worship team do we thank them? If we see a Sunday school teacher pouring themselves out in order to build into the lives of our children do we tell them how much we appreciate them? May we learn to be people who express our thanks to those who serving.

PRAYER: Lord help me to seek You and Worship You with a heart full of JOY. Help me to be an Encourager especially to those who serve You faithfully and well.

Pastor Mark Kieft
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