

## Giving by Praising

Each time we meet, from you I hear  
 Some word of praise, a bit of cheer.  
 You see some hidden, struggling trait;  
 Encourage it and make it great.  
 Tight-fisted little buds of good  
 Bloom large because you said they would.  
 A glad, mad music in me sings;  
 My soul sprouts tiny flaming wings.  
 My day takes on a brand-new zest.  
 Your gift of praising brings my best,  
 Revives my spirit, flings it high;  
 For God loves praise, and so do I.

-Author Unknown

The week before my father died, when I was a senior in college, he took me aside and showed me a box of clippings of newspaper and magazine articles he had written and hidden away. When I asked in surprise why he hadn't shown me these before, he replied, "Your mother discouraged me from writing because I don't have a college education, so I've done it in secret and she doesn't know."

Mother had not meant to be a discourager, but she had stated what seemed an obvious fact to her: If you're not educated, you shouldn't write.

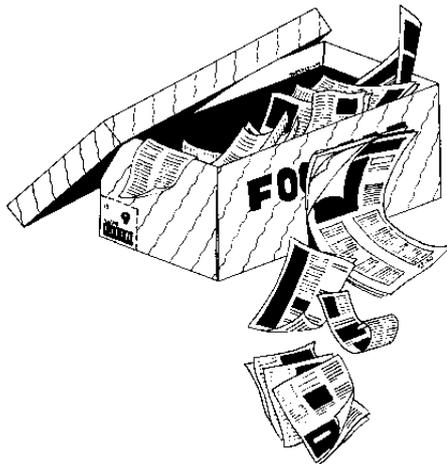
My father had not let this attitude depress him, but he had "hidden his light under a bushel." He told me he had written an article for the *Advance* magazine but it had not been published. "I

guess I reached for something a little too big this time," he shared. How touched I was that he had told me about his interest in writing and the article he had submitted to the *Advance* magazine! Within days my father dropped dead in a Boston subway station, and on the day of the funeral the new issue of *Advance* arrived—with his article published in it. Had he not confided in me, I would never have opened that issue.

I have the framed article with my father's picture hanging in my study, and each time I glance at it I wonder what that man might have become as a writer if only someone had believed in him.

We live in a discouraging world full of people who put us down. What bright lights we can be when we say the simple words, "I have confidence in you!"

—Florence Littauer



## Everybody Needs Encouragement!

Quotes from David Brandt Berg

■ Most people are not really conceited, but feel a certain amount of inferiority and tend to get a little discouraged with themselves, therefore encouragement is a very important thing! I do it all the time!—I praise everybody for everything they do that I see is good.

■ We all need the encouragement of others, and yet most of us fail all too often to express appreciation or comfort to those about us! As we must account for every idle word (*see* Matthew 12:36,37), so we must for every idle silence!

■ The showing of genuine gratitude and appreciation of [another's] help immediately tends to make a proffered friend even more friendly, and inclined to befriend you again.

■ Try to remind yourself constantly of others' good qualities, the good things, and try not to think about their shortcomings. All the way through the Bible, the Lord commended people for their good works. It has nothing to do with our salvation, which is a free gift, but it's our service and good works for Him that He especially commends. Thank God that He really appreciates our sacrifice and the things we do for Him above and beyond the call of duty!

■ Always remember, everyone is hungry for praise and starving for honest appreciation!