

*“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” – Heb. 10:24-25*

On Monday, I wrote about my natural aversion to high school football coaches. And once again, as I mentioned then, many people appreciate Coaching in that form as a motivational, teaching, growth-encouraging tool. Just not me. So now, the rest of the story.

Football ended that freshman year in Nov, just in time for tryouts for the Winter Musical. While my cousins were football stars, my sister had been on the stage. So, I thought I'd try that out as well. I had sung and done some plays at church through the years, and had heard 4 years of stories about the fun of tryouts, practices, and performing. I had learned the names of the director and many of my sister's friends, so I had an automatic "in". So I tried out. I'd never seen "Hello, Dolly" before, but it sounded fun.

And thus began a career in acting that became my pastime, identity, social circle, and calling from God. And finally, I found someone who could motivate me to grow, improve, and achieve my very best. Her name was Pat Hutchinson and she was the theater director. Pat was much more gentle than my football coaches, and though there was some yelling when we got sloppy or lazy, generally her encouragement was direct, honest, but loving. I truly believed she wanted what was best for me as well as the show, and that made all the difference.

I have both valued and emulated this form of directing people through the years, walking alongside rather than yelling from the front to catch up. So when I read Hebrews and God says, "encourage one another," this is what I try to do. Is there yelling at times? Sure, but only when someone is slacking off ethically. Is there teasing or mocking? Not my style.

As my relationship with God grows, I find Him Directing me more than Coaching me. I believe Jesus came to us to walk along side us, not run on ahead and pull us along. I believe Jesus came to help us be the most Godly "us" we can be rather than try to form us into what He thinks we should be (though in God's case, this is probably the same thing). And so I follow God my Director, do my best to learn my lines and memorize my scenes, and then put my whole self – the self that God made me to be – into my ministry.

Questions to ponder:

How is God like a director, walking alongside you, helping you to see the best way to do ministry and live life, and encouraging you to be all He created you to be? Have you seen God the Director in your life this week?