

DEALING WITH DISCOURAGEMENT 57

TEXT: Phil. 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

INTRODUCTION:

- A. All of us feel down at times.
- B. We feel like, "What's the use anyway!"
- C. Ever felt unwanted, unappreciated, everything is going wrong.
- D. Most people have these feelings-discouragement.
- E. What causes discouragement? How can we overcome it?

BODY:

I. SOME CAUSES OF DISCOURAGEMENT.

A. Fatigue.

1. Lack of rest affects mind as well as the body.

2. Elijah was tired ready to give up (1 Kings 19:4-10). **And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had executed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time." And when he saw that, he arose and ran for his life, and went to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die, and said, "It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!" Then as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an angel touched him, and said to him, "Arise and eat." Then he looked, and there by his head was a cake baked on coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank, and lay down again. And the angel of the Lord came back the second time, and touched him, and said, "Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for you." So he arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights as far as Horeb, the mountain of God. And there he went into a cave, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" So he said, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken**

Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life."

3. Jesus took time to rest, Mk. 6:31 -32 And He said to them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat. So they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves.

B. Health Problems.

1. Most people have these sometime.

2. Paul had a thorn in the flesh but found strength in it, 2 Cor. 12:7-10. And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

C. Money Problems.

1. Often because of poor management.

2. Learn to live within your means.

3. God provides our necessities.

a. Phil. 4:19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus

b. Matt. 6:25-34. Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your

heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

D. Feeling useless and unappreciated.

1. We all need to feel wanted and useful.

2. Jesus knew what it was to be rejected. Isa. 53:3. **He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.**

II. HOW TO OVERCOME DISCOURAGEMENT.

A. Trust in God- Prov. 3:5-8. **Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones.**

1. Song says, "Trust and obey for there's no other way..." 214

2. We are in God's hands, Rom. 8:28, And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

3. Rom. 8:31-39. 31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord

B. Pray to God.

1. God will always hear- 1 Peter 3:12. **For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."**

2. Jesus prayed- Matt. 26:36-46. 36 Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there."

3. We all have problems on life's way and need the power of prayer committing all in faith to God content to leave it there.

C. Help others-sometimes we get self-centered.

1. Always those worst off than you are.

2. Jesus went about doing good, Acts 10:38.

3. There are ten things to do to overcome discouragement-find a good deed and do it for 10 others.

D. Count your blessings.

1. Song "Count your blessings." 33.

2. Israelites did not count their blessings in the wilderness and lost the promise land. We could lose heaven.

E. Don't give up.

1. "Poem".

2. Heaven waits at the end of the way, Heb. 12:1-2. Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

CONCLUSION:

A. Discouragement is the devil's tool: let us not be defeated by it.

B. Only way to have a fruitful and happy life is to become a Christian. Matt. 11:28-30. "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. "Take My

yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

5. DON'T GIVE UP.

1) An unknown author expressed a great truth in this well known poem.

"When things go wrong as they sometimes will,
When the road you're traveling seems all uphill,
When the funds are low and the debts are high,
When you want to smile, but you have to sign,
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest, if you must - but don't quit!

Life is queer with its twists and turns,
As everyone of us sometimes learns,
And many a failure turns about
When he might have won had he struck it out;
Don't give up, though the pace seems slow-
You might succeed with another blow.

Often the goal is nearer than
It seems to a faint and faltering man,
Often the struggler has given up
When he might have captured the victor's cup.
And he learned too late, when the
Night slipped down,
How close he was to the golden crown.

Success is failure turned inside out-
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt -
And you can never tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems afar,

So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit-
It's when things seem worst that you mustn't quit!