

Midweek Study

Dr. Josh Franklin • Senior Pastor

HOW TO DEAL
WITH
HOW YOU FEEL



God's Answer for Discouragement

"And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart." (Gal. 6:9)

Discouragement may be satan's number one weapon. Adrian Rogers says, "There's a legend that tells about the devil one day, who was auctioning off his tools—you know, the tools that he wrecks every work of God with—and he had all of his tools out there. There was pride, and the price on pride. And there was laziness, and there was arrogance, and there was hate, and there was envy, and there was jealousy, and all of these tools. And he had a high price on all of them. But there was one tool that had a sign under it: "Not for Sale"—sort of a strange looking tool. And someone said, "What is that tool, and why isn't it for sale?" He said, "Well, I couldn't afford to get rid of that one. That's my chief tool. It's discouragement." And the friend said, "Well, why is it so important?" **"Well," he said, "with this tool I can get into a heart and pry it open. And once I get into that heart, I can do most anything I want. Discouragement is my chief tool."**¹

Bob Russell says, "A lot of **preachers**, who don't have a problem with immorality or false doctrine, get discouraged because they see so little growth and see so few responses to the invitation. **Teachers**, who began with such high ideals in the public system and started with the goals of imparting knowledge and guiding lives, get discouraged and lose their vision. **Christian businessmen** begin with the goals of starting a business, hiring godly people, making money and being generous with the profits only to get discouraged as they see their salesmen transfer to their competitor, or people not appreciating what they are doing. **Parents** want to rear their children to know the Lord, but they get discouraged as their children become teenagers and begin resisting and rebelling against the Lord. **Moses once got so disgusted with the children of Israel that he prayed, "God, just wipe them off the map!"** **Elijah once got so discouraged with his responsibility that he prayed, "God, just take my life – I'm the only prophet left in Israel."**²

Russell continues, "There is a difference between depression and discouragement. Depression is a prolonged period of melancholy often brought on by a series of circumstances, while **discouragement is a temporary loss of enthusiasm for a particular task. Discouragement focuses on a goal that seems unattainable.**"³

The dictionary defines *discourage* as "to deprive of courage, to deter, to dishearten, to hinder." The New Testament uses three Greek words to carry the idea of being **disheartened, dispirited, or discouraged.** We always translate them as "to faint" or "to grow weary." For example ... **"Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become *discouraged*"** (Colossians 3:21). **2 Corinthians 4:1 says, "Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart."** ... [I]n **Ephesians 3:13**, Paul writes, **"Do not lose heart at my tribulations for you."** Jesus brings up the subject in the context of prayer. **"He spoke a parable to them,"** **Luke 18:1** tells us, **"that men always ought to pray and not lose heart."**⁴

¹ Adrian Rogers, "Dealing with Discouragement," in *Adrian Rogers Sermon Archive* (Signal Hill, CA: Rogers Family Trust, 2017), Ne 4.

² Transcribed from Bob Russell audio sermon, "Dealing with Discouragement," from Nehemiah.

³ Ibid.

⁴ David Jeremiah, *Slaying the Giants in Your Life* (Nashville, TN: W Pub., 2001), 22.

How to Defeat Discouragement⁵

(from *2 Kings 13:14-19*)

King Joash is discouraged, because the enemy is on the border about to march in and take over the country. Joash is a young man, who doesn't have a lot of experience and whose father is dead. Elisha, who has been the defense of the nation, is near death. Joash knows nothing else to do but to come to his spiritual advisor. He uses a phrase in verse 14 which says "You represent God, and God has been our defense, but you are about to die. The enemy has us. I am discouraged, and I don't know what to do." God gave Joash 5 steps on the path to overcoming his discouragement, which becomes our path as well:

- 1) "Joash came to Elisha." (v.14) **Here's the principle: When discouragement comes, do not withdraw or become isolated.** When discouraged, Joash went to Elisha. *Proverbs 18:24* says, "A man who has friends must himself be friendly" (NKJV).
- 2) "Take your bow and arrows and bring them to me." (v.15) The arrows were all the defense Joash had against the enemy. Elisha "laid his own hands on the king's hands". **Here's the principle: Surrender all you have to Jesus.** Jesus touches them, transforms them and blesses our efforts. Read *Matthew 14:15-21*. 20,000 hungry people are around Jesus. The disciples bring a little boy's lunch, which Jesus blesses and feeds the masses. Don't underestimate what you have that you may give to Jesus.
- 3) "Open the window and shoot the arrow." (v.17) Shoot the arrow in the direction of the enemy. **The principle is: Get into action.** When something discouraging comes into your life, you can be tempted to ask "Why, God?" This is natural, but you should graduate from that question to ask the follow up, "What now, God?" and move forward. Quit talking about your discouragement. Quit brooding. Take a step. Get busy. Do what you know you ought to do.
- 4) "This is the Lord's arrow, full of victory." (v.17b NLT) **Here's the principle: God wants us to remember His mighty power and the promise of His deliverance for His people.** Read *1 Samuel 17*. David continued to believe, "The battle is the Lord's!" You cannot fight the battle alone, but you have to do your part. David hit the giant with one stone, and he cut off Goliath's head. But God's power was behind the stone.
- 5) "Keep hitting those arrows on the ground." (v.18-19) The prophet is upset because Joash stopped hitting the ground. **Here's the principle: Keep hitting the ground. Stay in the battle.** You may start strong, but you give up. You back off. The enemy never backs off. Read *1 Corinthians 15:58*.

Paul Harvey's definition of success: A successful person is the person who gets back up one more time than he falls down.

Proverbs 24:16 says "For a righteous man may fall seven times and rise again, but the wicked shall fall by calamity." Failure is never final until a person quits trying. John Maxwell has a book entitled: "**Sometimes You Win, Sometimes You Learn**" (with the word "Lose" marked out).

Psalms 37:23-24 reads, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delights in his way. **Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholds him with His hand.**" The only failures are those who refuse to get back up.

Philippians 1:6 says, "Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."

George Morrison has said, "God rarely allows His servants to see how much good they are doing, so you will have to work by faith and leave the results to Him. We'll get the report and the reward when we stand before Him in glory, not one minute before."⁶

⁵ adapted from Bill Bennett, "How to Defeat Discouragement," (unpublished recording).

⁶ Warren W. Wiersbe, "Formula for Frustration," *Prokopè*, May-June 1987, 1-2.