

Rising Above Discouragement

How often do you find yourself being discouraged? What is the source of it? Is it people? Is it yourself? Is it the current world? Is it conflict on your job or in your family?

Many things can cause us to be discouraged. Discouragement is something that the devil can use to cripple us in our faith and service to God.

Many of God's servants have faced discouragement.

- Joseph endured many unfair and rough moments (Genesis 37-40).
- Moses was frustrated with the griping and complaining of Israel. There came a time when he no longer wanted to lead them to the Promised Land (Numbers 11:10-15).
- Elijah fled into the wilderness and hid in a cave from Jezebel (1 Kings 19:1-3). He did after experiencing a great victory against the false prophets of Baal.
- Jeremiah is called "the weeping prophet." His entire ministry was full of discouraging moments (Jeremiah 20:15-18).
- The Apostle Paul endured numerous difficulties while preaching the gospel (2 Corinthians 11:23-27). And yet, he never quit on Jesus!
- Jesus faced agony as He bore the responsibility of the cross (Luke 22:42-44).

Discouragement can bring about many negative consequences.

- It can bring about pessimism. While running and hiding from Jezebel, Elijah thought he was the only one in Israel faithfully serving the Lord (1 Kings 19:9-10).
- It can bring about fear. Elijah's discouragement led him to walk by fear instead of by faith (1 Kings 19:1-3). He even stopped being a man of prayers (James 5:17-18; 1 Kings 17:36-37).
- It can bring about a defeatist attitude. Elijah wanted to give up and even die in the wilderness (1 Kings 19:4). He lost clarity of thought and perspective.
- It can bring about isolation. Elijah was so discouraged that he went and isolated himself in the wilderness (1 Kings 19:3). Have you ever done something similar?

How do we overcome discouragement?

- We need to remember that God knows and cares about our situation (1 Kings 19:9-14; Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5; 1 Peter 5:6-7).
- We need to remember to stay connected to God and one another (1 Thessalonians 5:14).
- We need to remember our purpose (1 Kings 19:15-17; 1 Peter 2:9-10). Our purpose is to always focus on God and bring Him glory!
- We need to remember to keep a proper perspective (1 Kings 19:18). Life is not always as bad as it seems at the moment.

Conclusion:

Do you need encouragement from your spiritual family?

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