

Overcoming Discouragement

2 Cor. 1:3-11

Discouragement

- Discouragement - No respecter of persons
- Affect everyone – employee, parents, leaders
- Causes – Persecutions, disappointments, frustrations...
- The “Un’s”
 - Unfulfilled, Unbearable, Unreachable, Unmanageable
- Even Paul affected (v. 8)

"For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life."

Discouragement

- Is a very real danger to a Christian – a weapon that Satan uses very proficiently
- Has potential to destroy us - be weary and give up (Gal. 6:9)
- Can lead to doubt, disinterest, depression and despair
 - Elijah – I have had enough Lord...take my life (1 Kings 19:4)
 - Gideon – why all this happen to us? (Judges 6:13)
- 3 reminders when facing discouragements

Devotion

- ***Remember Who God is to You***

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort." (v.3)

- **Remember He is God**

All things work together for good to those who love God (Rom. 8:28)

- Remember He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ

- Remember He is the God of all comfort

"Come unto me all of you who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. (Matt. 11:28)

"Peace I leave with you...let not your heart be troubled" (Jn 14:27)

Devotion

- Jesus the good shepherd

"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me." (Jn 10:14)

- We know the ending

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb..." (Rev. 12:11)

"Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." (Rev. 2:10)

- Count your blessings (Phil. 4:4, 11) – don't allow a few negatives to monopolize your attention

Discipline

- ***Remember What God does for You***
- Comforts us in our problems
 - *"...who comforts us in all our tribulations..." (v.4)*
 - Not take us out of tribulations but help us through it
- Strengthens us through our problems
 - When I am weak, then I am strong (2 Cor. 12:10)
 - *"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."*

Discipline

- Disciplines us with our problems

"For the Lord disciplines him whom He loves, and chastises every son whom He receives." (Heb. 12:6)

- Is our life right with God? God may be speaking to us through the problem to go back to Him or trust Him more

- God demands faithfulness, not success

"Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful." (1 Cor. 4:2)

- Our job to plant and water – God gives the increase

"I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." (1 Cor. 3:6)

- Not all flowers are roses

Discipline

- The discipline to persevere, remain faithful and committed despite the setbacks and apparent lack of results

Disciple

- ***Remember What God does through You***

- Helps us comfort others

"...that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which ourselves are comforted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. Now if we are afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation." (v. 4-6)

- Do not let worry kill you. Let the church help.

Disciple

- Conduit where God's will and work is done
- Your "failure" may be the example/encouragement to others
- Channels instead of Cisterns
- Paradox - bear another person's load to lighten your own
- Two are better than one - Eccl. 4:9-10
- Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep (Rom. 12:15)
- Look outward, not inward – we are God's workmanship, created for good works (Eph. 2:10)

When Discouragement Strikes...

- Remember...
 - Who God is – be devoted
 - What God does for you – be disciplined
 - What God does through you – be a disciple

Invitation