



## DEFEATING DIACOURAGEMENT

Lesson 1 - Is Discouragement a Sin?

September 8, 2020

What do we need when we are discouraged?

*Romans 15:4* For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

HOPE! Hope is the antidote for discouragement. The Bible was written to bring us hope. Therefore, we need to go to the Bible to find healing from discouragement!

Is Discouragement a Sin?

What is sin, according to the Word of God?

*1 John 3:4:*

*Everyone who sins \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_; in fact, sin is \_\_\_\_\_.*

What law?

*Exodus 20:1-17:*

*And God spoke all these words:*

*<sup>2</sup> "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.<sup>3</sup> "You shall have no other gods before me."<sup>4</sup> "You shall not make for yourself*

an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.<sup>5</sup> You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me,<sup>6</sup> but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.<sup>7</sup> “You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.<sup>8</sup> “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.<sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work,<sup>10</sup> but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns.<sup>11</sup> For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.<sup>12</sup> “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.<sup>13</sup> “You shall not murder.<sup>14</sup> “You shall not commit adultery.<sup>15</sup> “You shall not steal.<sup>16</sup> “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.<sup>17</sup> “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

Is there any specific law which says “You shall not be discouraged” or “You shall not give up” or “You shall not feel like running away”?

Therefore, we can conclude that we are not directly breaking the law—the Ten Commandments—when we are discouraged.

*James 4:17:*

*If anyone, then, knows the \_\_\_\_\_ they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is \_\_\_\_\_ for them.*

## Jesus Understands Discouragement

Jesus experienced discouragement.

*Matthew 17:14-17: When they came to the crowd, a man approached Jesus and knelt before him. “Lord, have mercy on my son,” he said. “He has seizures and is*

suffering greatly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. I brought him to your disciples, but they could not heal him.”

“You unbelieving and perverse generation,” Jesus replied, “how long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.”

Matthew 26:40-41: Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Couldn’t you men keep watch with me for one hour?” he asked Peter. “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Matthew 23:37-38: “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate.

Luke 19:41-42: As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, “If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes.

What are some words or phrases in these passages that indicate a feeling of discouragement or despair on Jesus’ part?

Hebrews 4:15-16:

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to \_\_\_\_\_ with our \_\_\_\_\_, but we have one who has been \_\_\_\_\_ in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

When Does Discouragement Become a Sin?

Why Are We So Vulnerable to Discouragement?

1 Peter 5:8: “Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”

## *The Devil's Best Tool*

*It was once announced that the devil was going out of business and would offer all his tools for sale to whoever would pay his price. On the night of the sale, his tools were all attractively displayed, and a bad-looking lot they were. Malice, hatred, envy, jealousy, sensuality, deceit, and all the other implements of evil were spread out, each marked with its price. Apart from the rest lay a harmless-looking wedge-shaped tool, much worn and priced higher than any of the other tools .*

*Someone asked the devil what the wedge-shaped tool was. "That's discouragement," was the reply. "Well, why do you have it priced so high?" he asked. "Because," replied the devil, "it is more useful to me than any of the others. I can pry open and get inside a man's consciousness with that when I could not get near him with any of the others and when once inside I can use him in whatever way suits me best. It is so much worn because I use it with nearly everybody, as very few people yet know it belongs to me." It hardly need be added that the devil's price for discouragement was so high that it was never sold. He still owns it and is still using it.*

What do we learn about our enemy from the following passages?

*John 8:44: You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*

*2 Corinthians 2:11: in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.*

Ask yourself this question: When a person is deceived, do they know it?

Yes       No

Therefore, is it possible that your enemy has used discouragement as a tool to try to defeat you and you were not even aware of his scheme or his attacks on you?

Yes       No

If discouragement is—at least at times—a tool of our enemy against us, how do we combat him so that we take that weapon out of his hands?

*2 Corinthians 10:3-4: For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.*

What is our offensive weapon?

*Hebrews 4:12: For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

*Ephesians 6:10-18: Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. <sup>13</sup> Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, <sup>15</sup> and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

*<sup>18</sup> And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.*

Check off the techniques that you believe would be effective in using God's word to defeat the enemy of your soul when he tries to use discouragement on you:

- Hold up the Bible and declare that it is your weapon.
- Start using a specific plan to read the Bible daily.
- Carry your Bible with you all the time.
- Sing a song that has a Bible verse in it.

- Write some specific verses concerning discouragement on cards, and put them in visible places all around you.
- Memorize some key verses to quote.
- Force yourself to find a quiet spot and read the Bible for a few minutes.
- Put the Bible under your pillow as you sleep each night.

A weapon is effective only when you know how to use it.

The desire to become knowledgeable in God's Word—skilled in the use of the sword—has to come from within. Do you have that desire - truly?

*Psalm 119:101 - 104: I have kept my feet from every evil path so that I might obey your word. I have not departed from your laws, for you yourself have taught me. How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! I gain understanding from your precepts.; therefore I hate every wrong path.*

Notice how Jesus defeated the enemy.

*Matthew 4: 4, 7 and 10: Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"*

*7 Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"*

*10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"*

What three-word phrase do you find in each of these verses?

Did Jesus have a written copy of the law or Scriptures with him at the time?

- Yes
- No

How was Jesus able to quote the appropriate "comeback" to the enemy when the enemy tried to tempt him?

What does this tell you about how we must prepare to defeat the enemy in the area of discouragement?

## Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to get you into the Word of God so that when your enemy chooses to try to defeat you by discouraging you, you will be prepared to use your weapon against him.

Remember what Jesus said, “*Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them*” (*John 13:17*). The blessing, the victory, comes in the doing.

## Suggested Assignment

I will be encouraging you to memorize a verse of scripture with each lesson.

Here's the verse to memorize for this lesson—*2 Corinthians 10:4*:

*The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.*

I challenge you to pray each day something like this:

Dear Lord, I know that often the enemy is able to defeat me by discouraging me. I believe that because I am your child, I have the weapon I need to defeat this enemy. Would you please help me to discern the enemy's attacks on me this day and when he comes at me with discouragement of any type, give me the will and the power to resist him with your divine weapons and through the power of your Word.  
Amen.

This is a very good start on learning to defeat discouragement.