



DEFEATING DISCOURAGEMENT
Lesson Seven- Discouraged People in the Bible:
The Apostle Paul
October 2020

Our six memory passages:

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.

Psalms 142:1-2: I cry aloud to the Lord; I lift up my voice to the Lord for mercy. I pour out before him my complaint; before him I tell my trouble.

1 Samuel 2:2: There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.

Psalms 62:1: Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him.

Psalms 103:13-14: As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.

Proverbs 4:23: Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

We normally don't think of the Apostle Paul as being discouraged, but you'll see that he struggled with discouragement just like the rest of us. He gives us some good principles to apply to our lives in learning how to respond to disappointment, to bad news, to unhappy circumstances, and to discouragement.

Romans 1:11-12:

I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong – that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith.

A first principle from Paul: **E**ncourage others!

In the midst of your discouragement—when you feel least like saying or doing anything encouraging—make it a point to encourage someone then.

Galatians 6:7:

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

Three important principles about sowing and reaping:

1. You reap what you sow.

If you sow encouragement, you'll reap encouragement.

2. You reap in a different season than you sow.

If you encourage someone today, you'll reap encouragement –if not today, soon.

3. You reap more than you sow.

Proverbs 11:25:

A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

When you give others encouragement - refreshment - it will come back to you, and you always reap more than you sow.

What are some simple acts of encouragement you could do?

- Write a note of encouragement.
- Call a friend who is out of work and encourage him or her.
- Think of someone you know who has recently suffered a loss and send a card or some small gift.
- Help your mate with something he or she is working on.
- Compliment your child on something well done.
- Offer to do something for or with your parent(s).
- Look for a way to help out a neighbor: Bring in their mail while they're away; help with some yard work; watch their child(ren) for an afternoon.

When you encourage someone else, it does more for you than it does for him or her.

CHAT QUESTION

Is it hypocritical to encourage someone else when you are feeling discouraged yourself? Why or why not?

In this passage we find another principle from Paul:

2 Corinthians 4:16-17:

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

PRINCIPLE: Focus on eternal values and Jesus' return!

2 Corinthians 11:23 – 28:

Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. ²⁴ Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus

one. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, ²⁶ I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. ²⁷ I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. ²⁸ Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.

What were Paul's "light and momentary troubles?"

Been in prison	In danger from false brothers
Been flogged	Labored and toiled
Beaten	Known hunger
Stoned	Been cold and naked
Shipwrecked	Faced the daily pressures of the churches
In danger from rivers	In danger from bandits

2 Corinthians 4:8-9:

We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.

The Apostle Paul was able to look beyond the temporary and see the eternal. This is one of his greatest secrets in dealing with the discouraging situations and people which he continually encountered.

Colossians 1:16:

For by him (Jesus) all things were created; things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

These invisible unseen things are not figments of our imagination. The spiritual unseen world is real. Jesus created it.

CHAT QUESTION

What does it mean to fix our eyes on what is unseen?

Forever Eyes bring changes

Forever Eyes change your life's priorities. Forever Eyes see those discouraging things in your life in a totally different perspective.

/refuse to let what will rot, rule the eternal.

What Will Rot?

- My physical body
- My job
- My things
- Television
- My accomplishments
- My money
- My problems

What is eternal?

- My spirit
- My calling
- People's souls
- God's Word
- Servanthood
- Treasures in heaven
- Joy, peace, hope, faith,
love

A man is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep
to gain that which he cannot lose.

Jim Elliott

When we wear Forever Eyes and fix our gaze on the invisible, unseen things, we are achieving for ourselves an eternal glory that far exceeds anything we can acquire through temporary eyes. Forever Eyes renew us on the inside day by day - they are like a spring of water bubbling up inside of you, keeping you going. Therefore, the Apostle Paul says, we do not lose heart.

Often the people we think will encourage and help us don't come through like we expect them to. That's just life. But we can learn to be our own encouragers, and Forever Eyes is certainly one sure fire way to become your own encourager!

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18:

Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. ¹⁴ For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. ¹⁵ According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Therefore encourage each other with these words.

Encourage yourself and others by intentionally reminding yourself that
Jesus is coming back.

Revelation 22:20: He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Suggested Assignment: Memorize this passage.

Proverbs 11:25: A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.



Lesson One

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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.

THE CHRISTIAN
WorkingWoman

1

Lesson Two

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Psalm 142:1-2

I cry aloud to the Lord; I lift up my voice to the Lord for mercy. I pour out before him my complaint; before him I tell my trouble.

THE CHRISTIAN
WorkingWoman

2

Lesson Three

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1 Samuel 2:2

There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.

THE CHRISTIAN
WorkingWoman

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Lesson Four

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Psalm 62:1

Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him.

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Lesson Five

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Psalm 103:13-14

As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust.

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Lesson Six

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Proverbs 4:23

Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.

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