



POWER OF DISCOURAGEMENT

Prov 4:23 (NLT) – “Guard your
heart above all else, for it
determines the course of your
life”

Psalm 119:165

THE “PANDEMIC” OF DISCOURAGEMENT

- Have you ever been discouraged while doing the work of God?
- Has someone criticized you and that made you to discontinue the task that was presented to you?
- Have you been frustrated and feel like giving up?
- Discouragement is the biggest tool that the devil uses to defeat us. It makes us feel that we are unworthy, hopeless and it steals the joy of our heart.
- **The problem**: It can lead to worse problems like doubt, depression, loneliness, anger.... **Protect your heart from discouragement.**

WHAT IS DISCOURAGEMENT?

- The verb *to discourage* means “to deprive of confidence, hope or spirit; dishearten, daunt.”
- Synonyms: Afflict, beat down, demoralize, depress, dismay, distress, frighten, intimidate, irk.*

WHAT ARE THE COMMON CAUSES OF DISCOURAGEMENT IN THE LIFE OF A BELIEVER?

Nehemiah 4:1-21

Ezra 5:1-15

WHY DO WE GET DISCOURAGED?

- **Fatigue**

- When you're physically or emotionally exhausted, you're a prime candidate to be infected with discouragement. Your defenses are lowered, and things can seem bleaker than they really are. This often occurs when you're halfway through a major project and you get tired.

- Sometimes discouragement stems from a physical cause. We are simply tired and worn out from working too long and too hard without a break. Nehemiah 4:6-11

WHY DO WE GET DISCOURAGED?

- **Frustration**
- When unfinished tasks pile up, it's natural to feel overwhelmed. And when trivial matters or the unexpected interrupt you and prevent you from accomplishing what you really need to do, your frustration can easily produce discouragement.
- **2 Cor 11:5-21** Paul was frustrated with the Corinthian church.
- **Numbers 21:1-6**

WHY DO WE GET DISCOURAGED?

- **Failure**
- Sometimes your best laid plans fall apart, what you worked so hard to sustain falls apart, the project collapses, the deal falls through, no one shows up to the event or you don't pass that exam you worked so hard towards. How do you react? Do you give in to self-pity? Do you blame others?
- As one man said, "Just when I think I can make ends meet, somebody moves the ends!" That's discouraging!

WHY DO WE GET DISCOURAGED?

- **Fear**
- Fear is behind more discouragement than we'd like to admit. The fear of criticism (*What will they think?*), the fear of responsibility (*What if I can't handle this?*), and the fear of failure (*What if I blow it?*) can cause a major onset of the blues.
- Fear of what you hear is the worst problem.
- Nehemiah 4, 6; Deut 1:26-34

WHY DO WE GET DISCOURAGED?

- **Disappointment**

- Discouragement often comes when people disappoint us. We were counting on someone who let us down. We had high hopes for a person (or a relationship) who turned against us or failed spiritually and morally.

- It's not hard to hear the discouragement in Paul's lonely voice from prison, "Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica" (2 Tim. 4:10); Matt 26:56.

WHY DO WE GET DISCOURAGED?

- **Being too idealistic or perfectionistic**
- We can become too idealistic or committed to achieve – greatness or a set goal and we put our all into it. We want it perfect or we want it done in our particular way or we want our children or spouses to be perfect.
- Warren Wiersbe said, “The pastor, if he is dedicated at all, is a man of ideals; he wants to achieve for the glory of God. Yet, no matter how hard he prays and works, it seems that his goals forever elude him.”

WHY DO WE GET DISCOURAGED?

- **Constant criticism**
- When you are the object of criticism and slander. If you don't keep your focus on the Lord, laboring for His "well done," you can get discouraged.
- **Constant criticism.** Frequent put-downs can make us think, *What's wrong with me?* Yet unless God reveals truth in such comments, learn to let them go. Eph 6:4; Col 3:21

WHY DO WE GET DISCOURAGED?

- **Disappointment with God or ...**
- **Unresolved disappointments.** This could be letdowns caused by our own failed expectations or someone else's.
- You prayed and worked for something, but it did not happen. As far as you could tell, it would have been for God's glory if it had come about, but it fell apart. You even had claimed a promise from the Bible as you prayed and worked, but from your perspective, God didn't keep His promise. You begin to wonder whether you should ever try again to do anything for the Lord.

OTHER CAUSES OF DISCOURAGEMENT

- **The feeling that no one's listening.** This can leave us with a sense of rejection.
- **A sense we aren't appreciated after doing our best.** We at times get so tied to our work that someone's failure to acknowledge our efforts can feel like a personal rebuff.
- **Bad working conditions.** Many believers enjoy what they do but pick up on coworkers' cruelty, bitterness, or refusal to recognize their investment of time, energy, or creativity. This can make it extremely difficult to get motivated about going to work each day.
- **Lacking opportunities to shine.** A job that doesn't make the best use of one's gifts and abilities can wear a person down. So can tight-fisted management that limits freedom to make innovations.

DANGERS OF DISCOURAGEMENT

Numbers 11:1-15

1kings 19:10



DANGERS OF DISCOURAGEMENT

- **LEADS TO DOUBT AND UNBELIEF (1 KINGS 19 – ELIJAH AND JEZEBEL)**
 - When discouragement sets up home in our hearts it leaves us temporarily blind to many of the truths of God. We lose sight of his goodness, kindness, generosity, sovereignty and love. We begin to doubt the very things that the day before we would have confidently spoken about.
- **LEADS TO SELFISHNESS (MATT 11:1-6)**
 - When we are discouraged it is like we have put on blinders and all we see is our circumstance and nothing else. We become useless to those around us. We are locked in our own little world of hopelessness and dejection and end up with a "poor-me" attitude.

DANGERS OF DISCOURAGEMENT

- **LEADS TO AWEAK WATCH AGAINST TEMPTATION**
- There is much in our lives that wants to steer us in the wrong direction: the world with its temptations, the devil with his sneaky schemes, and the human heart with its fickle love and desires. We need to be on our guard, but if we fall prey to the influence of discouragement, we will end up very distracted, weak, and dull.
- **LEADS TO CARELESSNESS WITH OUR TONGUE.
(NUM 21:1-6)**
- The discouraged will be much more apt to be careless with their tongue. It will be much easier to lash out at someone, complain, or even use inappropriate words because of a heart that is consumed with our circumstances. Discouragement weakens our self control.

DANGERS OF DISCOURAGEMENT

LEADS TO ANGER. WE BEGIN TO PRAY THE WRONG PRAYERS – Moses / Elijah

- We have a tendency to get angry after a period of discouragement.

- LEADS TO GIVING UP (LUKE 24:21; NUMBERS 20:7-11)

- We begin to see our problems look much bigger than they really are. Discouragement sucks the energy out of a person. Instead of working hard it makes you want to lay around.

- Discouragement says, “why bother” and depending on our level of discouragement we listen to it and give up, at least for a little while. How many of us have quit exercising, given up on memorizing scripture, stopped disciplining the kids, or slowed in our attempts to strengthen our marriage due to discouragement?

DANGERS OF DISCOURAGEMENT

- **LEADS TO BECOMING A DISCOURAGER.**
- Someone who is discouraged will, in turn, become a discourager by making negative and pessimistic remarks to others. Instead of speaking words of joy, comfort, and encouragement they leave those around them disheartened.
- We cannot afford to let discouragement take over our lives. There is too much damage it can cause.

DANGERS OF DISCOURAGEMENT

- Discouraged people will end up in the wrong places.
 - 1. Jonah wound up in the belly of the whale.
 - 2. Abraham found himself down in Egypt.
 - 3. Elimelech and Naomi took their family to the heathen land of Moab.
 - 4. Peter warmed himself at the enemy's fire.
 - 5. Thomas missed Sunday night church and missed seeing the resurrected Christ.

DANGERS OF DISCOURAGEMENT

- They will develop the wrong spirit.
 - 1. A spirit of murmuring and a critical spirit.
 - 2. Note: **Ps. 119:165**
 - 3. A spirit of defeatism...ready to give up and quit.
 - 4. Our will needs to be broken, but not our spirit.
 - 5. Bitterness will destroy us. "Looking diligently...lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled."
Heb. 12:15