

DEVOTIONAL

DISAPPOINTMENT VERSUS DISCOURAGEMENT

Discouragement is a widespread problem and many people are feeling the crunch of various "Losses" connected with life situations. Let me show you how you can deal with the discouragement, because I know that God's heart is that you would experience His very best for your life. We know that Satan hates it when he is exposed and he has to let go and release his shackles. He hates to see His chains fall to the ground and people set free. On the other hand, Jesus is rejoicing as He sees His people set free. So read on, and let's throw out discouragement and bring in encouragement.

First, I want to begin by distinguish between disappointment and discouragement. A disappointment is an emotional response to some failed expectation or desire. Maybe your vacation did not go as planned, and you were disappointed. Or maybe you had a desire for something that did not come your way, that promotion, and you felt disappointed. Disappointments in life are inevitable, and there is nothing we can do to prevent them from happening.

But, discouragement is different because discouragement is a *choice*. Here's a simple definition: Discouragement is losing motivation for something in life that brings us fulfillment and purpose. The key differences is that while disappointments come to all of us, we can *choose* whether we are going to let those setbacks plunge us into discouragement.

Now the truth is that all of us go through those situations in life where we find ourselves discouraged.

Discouragement is a powerful tool that Satan uses against the believers. If he can get you discouraged in your relationship with God, on your job, in your finances-with your children, in your church, or in just about anything, you can't be your best, you won't do your best and you won't achieve your maximum potential.

Here are three very simple steps from God's Word that will help you guard against them.

1. Confess your trust in God and praise Him for being with you when difficult times come. Read Psalm 42. The psalmist was in distress, but notice what he said: *Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him for the help of His presence* (5) The psalmist looked within and realized his situation. Then he looked to God in trust. We need to do the same thing when we are feeling down. Confess, *Father, I thank you that You are with me in this disappointment. Speak to my heart, God. Help me to hear what You say.*
2. Acknowledge God's total control of all things. The psalmist went on to say in Psalm 43: *Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him for the help of His presence* (5). Since God is ever-present, you can put your hope in His awesome power to control the circumstances of your life.
3. Believe that God will turn challenging circumstances to your good. In Psalm 43:8 we read: *The LORD will command His loving kindness in the daytime; And His song will be with me in the night.* (v.8).

No matter how difficult the situation, God can turn it into a testimony of His unfailing love and put a song in your heart. So confess to the Father, *Lord, because You're a good God, I know You are going to turn this circumstance for my good.*

I pray that the Holy Spirit will sink these truths deep into your heart and spirit as you begin throughout this year in your walk with the Lord. My encouragement to you is that you don't have to live in discouragement and despair if you are willing to take God at His Word and give Him the privilege of demonstrating His awesome power to free you.

You can only be one thought away from living the life of your dream. One decision away from your destiny. Your life moves in the direction of your thoughts, therefore, your life is what your thoughts make it. Dare to think and dream big. Dare to reach out for the goals you get go and take them back. Dare to think powerful thought. Unclutter your life with nonsense things. Unclutter your mind and make your thought line up with God's heart. Above all else, guard your heart, for it will affect winning the battle in your thought life.

Pray daily and think upon the truths found in Scripture, studying diligently to show yourself approved and become an earnest and life-long student of the art of spiritual warfare.