

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: MOTIVE POWER: ~ Roger W. Babson says: "A man's religion may be strengthened by connection with a live church. But your religion must be part of you, something you feel in your heart and practice in your life." Then he adds: a small ineffective detached unit, into a part of a mighty whole. It makes him serve other, and this service is returned to him in kind."

DISAPPOINTMENT VERSUS DISCOURAGEMENT

Charles Stanley shared this story: *I remember one particular Sunday several years ago when I came to church feeling absolutely fantastic. But when I got through preaching, I was so sick that I went back into my study to lie down on the couch. I felt like I could not move, almost as if I were paralyzed.*

The ambulance came and carried me to the hospital. For three days, I was barely conscious. But when the doctor finally got my attention, I asked him, "What is wrong with me?"

He replied, "Well, being a pastor you'll appreciate this. This is what we call "the devil's grip!" it's as if you get caught in something and you can't do anything about it.

It's called discouragement. I want to show you from God's Word how you can deal with discouragement, because my deepest desire is that you would experience the very best of God in your life. But if you allow yourself to be caught up in the devil's grip, he will keep you discouraged as long as he can; his purpose is to destroy you and all you stand for as a child of God.

Let me begin by distinguishing between disappointment and discouragement. A disappointment is an emotional response to some failed expectation or desire. Maybe your plans didn't go the way you thought they would, and you were disappointed. Maybe you had a desire for something that did not happen—did not come your way, and you felt disappointed. Disappointments in life are inevitable, and there is nothing we can do to prevent them. But through God's help we will learn to move through them.

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 difference is that while disappointments come to all of us, we can CHOOSE, whether we are going to let these setbacks plunge us into discouragement.

Discouragement is a powerful tool of Satan. If he can get you discouraged in your relationship with God, on your job, in your finances—in just about anything- you can't be your best, you won't do your best, and you won't achieve your maximum potential. We must see the schemes of the enemy and enlist God's help to overcome them.

There are three simple, but important steps from God's Word that will help you guard against discouragement when disappointments arise. These steps can lift you out of discouragement when it tries to set in:

The FIRST step is to confess your trust in God and praise Him for His presence.

The SECOND step is to acknowledge God's total control of all things.

The THIRD step is to believe that God will turn challenging circumstances to your good.

In Psalm 43:6, the psalmist was in distress. He was battling discouragement, but notice what he said: *Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance.* Since God is ever present, you can put your hope in His awesome power to control the circumstances in your life. What the psalmist did was take a good look within at his situation, and then he looked to God in trust. We need to do the same thing when we are feeling down. Confess—lay it out before God-- *Father, I thank You that You are with me in this disappointment. Speak to my heart, God. Help me to hear what you say. Let me look at this situation through Your perspective and from Your view. Then I know that clarity will come.*

Believe that God will turn challenging circumstances to your good. In Psalm 43:8, *The LORD will command His loving kindness in the day time, and in the night His song shall be with me—a prayer to the God of ;my life.*

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, *Because You're a good God, I know You are going to turn this circumstance around for my good.*

I pray that the Holy Spirit will sink these truths deep into your heart as you read these words, and that your walk with the Lord will increase in power. I think many of us have the tendency to try and make the solution in God so complicated that we become overwhelmed; we lose sight of the simplicity of His answer. Our truth: Follow His three simple steps and be set free.

TRUST HIM

ACKNOWLEDGE GOD'S TOTAL CONTROL IN YOUR LIFE

BELIEVE GOD'S PLANS ARE FOR YOUR GOOD AND FUTURE

My encouragement to you is that you don't have to live in discouragement and despair if you're willing to take God at His Word and give Him the privilege of demonstrating His awesome power to move in your life.

Throughout the New Testament we are told that our battles do not take place in the temporal realm but in the spiritual realm. We are told in nearly every epistle, *Fear not, only believe* (Mark 5:36), *gird up the loins of your mind* (1 Peter 1:13), *Renew your mind* (Romans 12:2), and *put on the mind of Christ* (1 Corinthians 2:16). We are taught in Romans that *to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace* (Romans 8:6). We must realize that the Word tells us that every battle is won or lost in the arena of your mind.

Therefore, the first thing that a child of God needs to change is your thoughts about what God wants for you. Read His Word and know what He says as to His heart for your life. God does not want you to live under the bondage of disappointments and discouragements; God wants you to live a life of abundance. It is His desire to give you success and prosperity. A world of possibilities is waiting to be released in your future. Mark 9:23, Jesus said to him (the father of the sick child), ***If you can believe; all things are possible to him who believes.*** The father believed and the child was healed. Let us also release our faith.

You must purpose to think inspired thoughts. Inspiration is a God-thing. Inspiration is God Himself speaking into the heart of a human being. Inspirational thoughts can be thoughts of God finding expression for His will through the minds of ordinary men and women. Jeremiah 29:11, *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not evil, to give you a future and a hope.* I want to remind you that God is up to something good and He has YOU in mind! Amen!

KNOW YOUR TRUTH—WHO YOU ARE IN JESUS- WALK IN THAT TRUTH!