

Discouragement - A Tool of the Devil - Pastor Mike Callis

1 Peter 1:3-9 (*we must have courage and confidence in the one who saved us*)

Once upon a time a man went to visit the devil's workshop; once inside, he saw all the tools of evil work. Lying out on his workbench were Envy, Jealousy, Hatred, Malice, Deceit, Sensuality, Pride, Idolatry, Anger, and Lust.

But over in the corner, the man noticed another tool; it was a harmless looking wedge-shaped tool and he noticed it had a lot wear on it. The man asked the devil what it was, and he answered, "That is Discouragement." The next question came quickly, "And why is it worn much more than the other tools?"

Because replied the devil, "It is more useful to me than all these others.

I can pry open and get into a man's heart with it, when I cannot get near him with any other tool. Once I get inside, I can use him in whatever way suits me best. It is worn well because I use it on everybody I can, and few people even know it belongs to me."

The man asked how he could avoid having it used on him, the devil replied, "if I told you that, then I wouldn't be the devil, now would I?"

~Author Unknown

Discouragement –the state of being discouraged

Discouraged - to deprive of or to be absent of courage or confidence

dis - do the opposite of, to deprive of, or to be absent of

ment – a state of, or a concrete result, or an instrument of

Without being saved you **cannot** overcome the devil and his ways!

Without the indwelling Holy Spirit you are **powerless**, and victory is unobtainable!

To be absent of courage or confidence renders us ineffective. We find ourselves in a depressed state of being, and we convince ourselves it is useless and hopeless to even try.

The Christian should not find themselves in this condition, the Christian should always acknowledge the fact that they are bought with a price and that through faith they are sealed for eternity. (1 Corinthians 6:20, 7:23)

1 Peter 1:3-9 (*our trust in God helps keep our problems from dragging us down*)

v.3 – God's mercy assured eternal life through the resurrection of Jesus Christ

v.4,5 – our place in heaven and our inheritance is secured because of our faith in Jesus

v.6,7,8 – even though difficult times may arise, we are to rejoice in our salvation to God's honor

v.9 – overcoming the world and persevering the trials of Satan is worth it, for our faith is turned to sight and we receive the promise of eternal life with Jesus Christ in our heavenly home

When you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you are not just entrusting him with your present life, but with your eternal soul.

Discouragement does affect each one of us, but as we mature in the Lord we must learn to cast all of our cares on Him and believe it will be all right. (1 Peter 5:7)

Romans 8:28 should be a verse we turn to on a regular basis and reaffirm our confidence in our Savior. If we truly believe God's word and believe He will keep us for eternity, then we must be willing to give Him control of our daily lives, our problems, and our worries.

Discouragement is real, but it is not too big for Jesus Christ. Greater is He in you, then he that is in the world (*1 John 4:4b*).

Only the unsaved should live in fear. As the redeemed of Christ, we should walk in the newness of life (*Romans 6:4*).

CAUSES And CURES For DISCOURAGEMENT

1. Cause - **FATIGUE** : Just as when your body is weak you are susceptible to sickness or infection; when you are physically or emotionally drained you are a good candidate for discouragement. As your defenses lower, you tend to see things worse than they are and that wedge of discouragement is driven in.

Cure – **REST** : Not just physical and emotional rest, but spiritual rest is needed. (*Psalm 37:7*) Those who are active in the work of the Lord are most vulnerable to fatigue; we are always looking to help and to prepare for others, that we forget we must feed on God's word for our own well-being and that we must rely on God's power to sustain us.

2. Cause – **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.

Cure – **REORGANIZE** : Discouragement doesn't necessarily mean you are doing the wrong thing. It may just be that you are doing the right thing in the wrong way or at the wrong time. Try a new approach or take a fresh look. (*Galatians 4:4*) You and I do not have perfect timing and we do not know all things and therefore we get frustrated at the work of our hands or at the works of others, and unless we reorganize our thoughts as God would have them to be, then we fall prey to the devil's tool of discouragement.

3. Cause – **FAILURE** : Sometimes, your best laid plans fall apart -- the project collapses -- the deal falls through -- no one shows up to the event. 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!"

Cure – **REMEMBER** : Falling down is hard and sometimes just laying there feels better than getting up; but remember you and I that are born-again, are called to something higher. (*Psalm 86:7, Jeremiah 33:3*) Just ask Him. He can give you new energy. There's incredible motivating power in faith.

4. Cause – **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 discouragement and depression.

Cure – **RESIST** : Fight back! Discouragement is a choice. If you feel discouraged, it's because you've chosen to feel that way. No one is forcing you to feel bad. Do what's right in spite of your feelings. (*James 4:7*) We must be determined to be aware of the tricks and tools of the devil. He will bring blindness to our eyes and hardness to our hearts, and his ways are so subtle we do not realize the danger until we are in too deep.

The greatest weapon you and I can have in this war with the devil is Jesus Christ. Those that are unsaved or out of fellowship, are limited to their own efforts.

We that are redeemed and walking in fellowship with the Lord, and have the ability to freely commune with God.

Guilt and sin has hindered our prayers nor has it caused us to shy away from our Lord.

This is why the most important step you can take in defeating discouragement or any other tool of the devil is to - **Return Unto The Lord**.

Discouragement and depression draws us away from God. It effects the saved and sinner alike.

This wedge shaped tool convinces us of no hope and causes us to give up.

Matthew 11:28-30

This call is for everyone. The unsaved and the born-again are encouraged to come unto the Lord. The born-again do not have to go it alone and can take comfort in the shelter of the Lord; as for the unsaved, you can stop carrying your burden of un-forgiven sin, stop being fearful of the coming judgment of Christ, and simply surrender your life to a loving and all powerful God (*John 8:36 Romans 8:2*).