

Overcoming Discouragement

I. Introduction

- A. A tool Satan uses to hinder God's people from bearing good fruit is discouragement. Consider four examples of things that can tempt Christians to become discouraged, and some teachings of Scripture that can help us overcome this foe.

II. Immoral Surroundings

- A. One reason Christians can be tempted to become discouraged is the immorality seen in the world. While a certain abhorrence for evil is proper, we should be encouraged by the fact that no matter how wicked society is, *we* can each choose to please God. **Philippians 2:15; John 16:33**

III. Tribulations

- A. Because the world is filled with immorality, those who choose the path of light often face tribulation. While tribulations can discourage us (if we allow them), *encouragement* is gained by remembering God's promises and His *awareness* of all that we face. It is also helped by looking to Christ and others who have endured. **Revelation 2:9-10; Hebrews 12:3**

IV. Rejection from Others

- A. A specific type of tribulation Christians often face is rejection from others. While such can be discouraging, the Lord's faithfulness is *encouraging*. **Romans 8:31**

V. Past Mistakes

- A. Something else that can tempt us to be discouraged is past mistakes. It is encouraging to know that God's grace allows us to "turn over a new leaf." **Philippians 3:13-14**

VI. Be Grateful for God's Blessings

- A. Whatever the challenge, overcoming discouragement is aided when we concentrate on God's blessings. This calls for spiritual-mindedness. **James 1:2-3**
- B. Moreover, it involves being *grateful* to God for all that He has done and all He allows us to be. **Philippians 2:17; 4:4**

VII. Meditate on God's Word

- A. Overcoming discouragement is also helped by meditating on the beautiful truths taught in and promoted by God's Word. It is hard *not* to be encouraged when meditating on that which is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy. **Philippians 4:8**

VIII. Pray Ceaselessly

- A. Another key to overcoming discouragement is utilizing the privilege of prayer God provides us. It is encouraging to know that we can approach God anytime from anywhere with any problem that is tempting us to become discouraged. Much discouragement can be overcome when one utilizes this blessing. **Philippians 4:6**

IX. Trust the Lord

- A. Such prayer must be accompanied by fervently trusting God. Appreciating God's knowledge, care, and power is a tremendous source of encouragement. **1 Timothy 4:10**

X. Lay Up Treasure in Heaven

- A. Trusting God includes trusting His promises. While He does not promise to make life on earth a "utopia," He does promise that things work out well *eternally* for those who faithfully serve Him. Overcoming discouragement is greatly helped when we think about the eternal home promised to the faithful. **Galatians 6:9; Romans 8:28**