

Overcoming Discouragement

2Corinthians 4:16

“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.”

What is discouragement?

Discouragement is the lack of courage or confidence. It's easy to become discouraged when we are disappointed or tired. At such times, we feel we cannot or do not want to go on.

What causes discouragement?

We become discouraged for many reasons. Oftentimes, the cause of our discouragement is a combination of emotional, physical, and spiritual challenges that make the situation seem impossible.

Some of the challenges that can cause discouragement include:

- Emotional challenges such as feelings of loneliness and abandonment, lack of self-confidence, fear of persecution, and personal loss and grief.
- Physical challenges such as illness, lack of sleep, a gloomy environment, and clinical depression.
- Spiritual challenges such as lack of prayer and unrepented sin.

But we can overcome discouragement in our lives because of God. No matter what obstacles we face in our lives, God is bigger than those obstacles

How to overcome discouragement:

1. Remember there are seasons to everything

Hebrews 12:10-11

Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it

2. Remember God will never leave nor forsake us

God will never leave nor forsake us in the midst of our trial. There is a popular Christian poem titled “Footprints in the Sand” that beautifully illustrates this truth.

3. Repent of our sin

Sometimes, when we are discouraged or feel distant from God, it is because there is something in our life that is hindering us spiritually.

4. Focus on Jesus

To overcome discouragement, you need to look to Jesus. It's easy to get discouraged when we put our trust in people or focus on our troubles. But if we keep our feet planted on the solid rock of Jesus, we can remain steady in the midst of life's storms.

5. Fan the flames

Everyone faces discouragement, but we can overcome discouragement through the power of God. Christians have the Holy Spirit that lives inside them and works in them, to change them to become more like Jesus.

Conclusion

Christians will experience times of doubt and discouragement, but we can overcome by remembering and trusting in the promises of God.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the emotional, physical, and spiritual causes of discouragement?
2. Why do you think God allows us to go through periods of discouragement? What are the benefits of going through these experiences?
3. Why do you think unrepented sin can cause discouragement? What is the effect of unrepented sin?
4. How do you feed your spiritual fire?