

BE OF GOOD CHEER

Int.

1. Aim: To discuss how we can overcome discouragement and despondency and really be happy as a child of God.
2. Jn. 16:33 "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."
 - a. Tribulation = trouble, burdens, pressure, persecution, affliction
 - b. Cheer = to have courage, be bold, have confidence, NIV, Take Heart
3. We say that we have the blues or blahs, or being down in the dumps, or being down and out.
 - a. Some of the finest people in the Bible had periods of discouragement
 - b. That's part of life on earth. Life has valleys and peaks, ups and down, highs and lows.
 - c. But there is a problem of getting down and not getting out and depression sets in.
 - d. God does not want us to become discouraged, frustrated and despondent.
4. His message is "Be of good cheer" - Jn. 16:33
 - a. "A word for courage in the face of danger" Robertsons Vol. II P. 273
 - b. "To be of good courage, to be hopeful, confident." Thayers, p. 283
5. Sometimes we get discouraged or depressed. But the Bible gives a remedy for discouragement and depression. There is more involved than just saying: "Be of Good Cheer" or "Have a good day".

Discussion

I. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Discouragement** = A temporary feeling of disappointment or disheartenment resulting from a disadvantageous turn of events - either physical, material, social, emotion, or spiritual. This is temporary. If we do not solve the problem of discouragement then it can evolve into depression
- B. **Depression** = A protracted period of despondency that greatly curtails or even destroys, one's ability to function as a healthy and happy child of God.
1. If depression lingers and the solution is not found in the Bible then it can result in spiritual stagnation, falling from the faith, and sometimes even suicide.
 2. Depression is real. It is second only to marital problems in counseling.
 3. Depression hampers our relationships with those with whom we live most closely - husband or wife, family, the church.
 4. Sometimes those "Monday morning blues" lingers for days, weeks or even months, and life becomes almost unbearable.

II. IT IS NOT A NEW PROBLEM TO HAVE DEPRESSION

- A. Saul in the O.T.
1. First King of Israel - started out real good.
 2. But he disobeyed God and he was informed that the kingdom would be taken from him.
 3. 1SAM 16:14 "But the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him." - The word "troubled" is translated "terrorized" in the NASV. "Tormented" in the NIV and RSV. In the ASV the fn says "terrified"

4. King Saul was given to prolonged periods of depression and he attempted to kill David. Finally he took his own life.

B. Judas in the N.T.

1. Judas was depressed because he betrayed the Son of God.
2. Mt. 27:3-5 -- he committed suicide

C. Job in the O.T.

1. He lost everything - children, wealth, and his health
2. Three friends came to comfort him.
3. In Job 3 he states that it would have been better if he had not been born. - He was very much depressed.
4. JOB 7:3-4 "So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me. 4. When I lie down, I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? and I am full of tossings to and fro unto the dawning of the day."
5. But he was able to overcome this depressed state.

D. David -

1. PS 31:9. "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my belly."
2. PS 31:10. "For my life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed."
3. PS 31:12-13 "I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel. 13. For I have heard the slander of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life."

E. Jeremiah

1. Jer. 20:14. "Cursed be the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my mother bare me be the blessed."
2. Jer. 20:18. "Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?"

F. Moses

1. Once he was so depressed that He asked God to take his life
2. NUM 11:15. "And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness."

G. Most of these were great Godly men. They had times of discouragement. So we should not be surprised if we have times of discouragement. But we can overcome depression with God's Help.

III. CAUSES OF DISCOURAGEMENT

A. ILLNESS

1. Some of the best people suffer the loss of their health
2. Paul 2 Cor. 12:7 "Thorn in the Flesh"
3. Timothy - 1 Tim. 5:23 -- stomach trouble
4. Job 1 & 2 - Some become discouraged and bitter when they are sick
5. Why not be patient, pray and ask others to pray for you
6. Jas. 5:14. "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: 15. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

B. Death of loved ones

1. We will all experience this loss
2. It happened in Bible times
 - a. David's son 2 Sam. 12:18
 - b. Mary and Martha Jn. 11:14
3. We must remember that God is a God of comfort and will comfort us as a mother
 - a. Ps. 147:3 "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds."
 - b. I sa. 66:13 "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem."
4. God took care of Mary and Martha and the friends of Dorcas

C. Because of material losses

1. Job lost 11,500 head of cattle and 3 daughters and 7 sons
2. "And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Job 1:21
3. The loss of material things will either make us bitter or better
4. If we loose our possessions remember:
 - a. It was not ours in the first place - Hag. 2:8 "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts."
 - b. We are going to leave it all here - 1 Tim. 6:7 "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out."
 - c. God will provide for material needs - Mt. 6:33

D. Because of Friends turning on you

1. One of the friends turned against Christ and betrayed him - Ps. 41:9 "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me."
2. Demas forsook Paul - 2 Tim. 4:10 "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia."
3. But they did not give up in despair and discouragement
4. Remember that Christ is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Prov. 18:24 "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."
5. Also count the many friends who have not turned on you

E. Because of ruined dreams and hopes

1. Your business may have failed or lost your job
2. Your greatest desire and dream of life has faded away and you get discouraged and despondent
3. You can turn disappointments into HIS appointments
4. Paul was set to go into a certain area and preach but was not able to do so.
Because of this he went to another place and established the church in Europe

IV. HOW TO OVERCOME DISCOURAGEMENT

A. Help some-one else

1. Elijah did this - 1 Kings 19:4-15 & 21
2. Often discouragement comes in an over-active mind and an under-active body.
3. Ten rules for getting rid of the blues is to go and do something for someone else
4. Jesus said we find life by losing it - that is losing it in a cause beyond and bigger than self - Mt. 10:39
5. Happiness comes as a by-product of making others happy!

B. Beneath the burdens are blessings

1. Flooding of Mississippi seems to be a catastrophe but it brings unbelievable fertility to the soil
2. There are blessings attached to our burdens
3. Rom. 8:28 "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."
4. ROM 8:31 "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

C. Use your burdens as bridges

1. Ants use a straw to lay across a crack in a rock to cross over. He uses his burden as a bridge.
2. Phil. 1:12 "But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;"

3. 2 Cor. 4:17-18 "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 18. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."
4. Use your burdens as opportunities then you will not be so easily discouraged.

D. Come ye apart and rest awhile

1. Mark 6:31 "And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat."
2. Physical and emotional exhaustion will result in despondency and discouragement
3. Satan will use a tired man to get him to give up serving God.
4. God rests a tired man and inspires him to work!
5. When Elijah was tired and exhausted he became discouraged and even wanted to die
- 1 Kings 19:1-4

E. Understand that you are needed and valuable

1. Mt. 9:20-22
 - a. She wanted to touch his garment - She might have said "I've tried hard. I've been deprived Nothing avails. There is no God."
 - b. Don't discourage yourself. Don't tell yourself that nobody cares, that you are not appreciated, that you are a nobody.
 - c. But tell yourself that you are not a failure, that people do care, that you are appreciated.

2. To those who are discouraged and despondent saying "I'm of no value to anyone" --- "Nobody cares anything about me." -- "nobody knows I'm alive" -- The Lord's message is:
 - a. Mk. 11:3 "The Lord hath need of thee."
 - b. Mt. 11:31 "Ye are of more value than many sparrows."
3. In the body of Christ every member is important -1Cor.12:13-27

F. Be perpetually optimistic

1. Two shoe salesmen went to Africa
 - a. One wired back "No market - no one wears shoes."
 - b. The other one wired back: "Market is unlimited. No one has shoes over here."
2. The difference was optimism
3. Let's look for the opportunities instead of problems - Phil. 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

G. Don't forget that we are never alone

1. 1 Pet. 3:12-14 "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. 13. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? 14. But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;"

2. 2 Tim. 4:17 -- God took His stand by Paul - God never overlooks anyone

"Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion."

CONCLUSION

1. Jn. 16:33 "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."
2. Trying times are no time to quit trying.
3. The love of God will not let us down., will not let us go, nor will it let us off.
4. "He thanked God and took courage." Acts 28:15b
5. A Merry Heart
 - a. Prov. 15:13 "A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken"
 - b. Prov. 15:15 "All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast."
 - c. Prov. 17:22 "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones."