

# DEALING WITH DISCOURAGEMENT

Scripture Reading: John 16:31-33

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Introduction:

1. Everyone deals with discouragement from one time or another.
2. God does not want His people to be discouraged.

## **I. BIBLICAL EXAMPLES**

### **A. ELIJAH -1Ki 19:1-18**

1. Elijah just had a great victory at Mt. Carmel -1Ki 18:20-40
2. Now, Jezebel sought his life -19:2
3. He prays for death -vs. 4
4. He comes to Mt. Horeb, the Mountain of God -vs. 8
5. He believes he is alone -vs. 10
6. There are seven thousand who have not bowed to Baal -vs. 18

### **B. JOHN THE BAPTIZER -Lk 7:19-23**

1. He asked, "Are You the One or do we seek another?"
2. Jesus answered with power
  - a. The power would remind John of prophecy concerning Jesus.
  - b. It reveals that there is no one else like Jesus.

## **II. CAUSES OF DISCOURAGEMENT**

### **A. PHYSICAL ILLNESS**

1. Some of God's great people became ill.
  - a. Paul's thorn in the flesh -2Co 12:7-10
  - b. Timothy's stomach infirmity -1Ti 5:23
  - c. Epaphroditus -Ph 2:25-30
2. Remember, physical illness doesn't have to hinder us from serving God!

### **B. LOSS OF MATERIAL POSSESSIONS**

1. Example of Job -1:13-21
  - a. He lost 11,500 head of cattle; 7 sons and 3 daughters.
  - b. His attitude -Job 1:21
2. When we suffer loss of material things, remember...
  - a. All things belong to God -Ha 2:8
  - b. We must leave it all behind -1Ti 6:7
  - c. God still provides for our needs -Mt 6:33; He 13:5

### C. FRIENDS CAN TURN AGAINST US

1. Consider Jesus...
  - a. Many of His disciples turned away -Jn 6:66
  - b. Judas betrayed Him
  - c. All forsook Him in the Garden
    - 1) According to prophecy -Zech. 13:7
    - 2) Fulfilled -Mt 26:31; Mk 14:50
  - d. Peter denied Him three times -Mk 14:66-72
2. The apostle Paul
  - a. Demas forsook Paul having loved this present world -2Ti 4:10
  - b. All forsook Paul at his first defense -2Ti 4:16
3. The same can happen to us simple because we follow Christ.

### III. **THINGS TO REMEMBER IN OVERCOMING DISCOURAGEMENT:**

#### A. REMEMBER OUR STRENGTH

1. Reading the word -1Pe 2:2; He 4:12-14
2. Prayer -Mk 1:35; 1Th 5:17; Lk 18:1
3. Fellowship -Heb 10:24, 25

#### B. REMEMBER TO BE STEADFAST

1. God wants us to use the abilities He has given -Ep 4:11-16
2. Continue pressing on to the goal -Ph 3:12-14

#### C. REMEMBER WE ARE NEVER ALONE

1. Jesus never leaves us, nor forsakes us -Mt 28:20; He 13:5
2. No one can stand against us when God is with us -Ro 8:31
3. Jesus stood with Paul -2Ti 4:17
4. Remember what the Lord told Elijah -1Ki 19:18

#### D. DISCOURAGEMENT IS TEMPORARY

1. "...weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning." -Ps 30:5
2. One person's favorite passage is, "It came to pass..."

#### Conclusion:

1. Success belongs to those who do not quit:
  - a. Lincoln lost 8 elections before becoming our sixteenth President.
  - b. Robert E. Peary had 7 failures and 23 years of fruitless searching before discovering the North Pole.
2. Ultimate success is ours if we do not quit -Re 2:10