

Dealing with Discouragement - Lesson

Lesson Summary: We will all face times of discouragement in our lives and we need to be prepared to deal with them to prevent the devil having his way in our lives.

1 SAMUEL 30:6 (NIV)

David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But David found strength in the LORD his God.

1. **Try to identify your emotions** – They bring tunnel vision, so all you can see is the immediate situation, and become hopeless.
 - a) Writing things out and expressing your emotions helps to clear your mind of them.
2. **Don't make any decisions when you are feeling intense emotions.**
 - a) Emotions are poor faculties to base decisions on.
3. **Develop good habits of the mind**
 - a) Winning or losing takes place in the mind.
 - b) All champions have first been champions of the mind.
 - c) They always believe they can get back up and improve.
4. **Beware the cloud of lies** that say you're no good, you're stupid, and things like that.
 - a) Identify them as lies and you have won most of the battle.
 - b) Then confront each lie with truth.
5. **Don't allow worry** to come into your heart, focus on Jesus
 - a) Worry leads to ungratefulness, which leads to justifying sin in your heart.
6. **Pray** whatever you can pray
 - a) Sometimes prayers in weakness and hard times **are** just "Jesus, tell me how much You love me, and what you paid for me." God is okay with that.
 - b) You can always turn to Jesus. Do it.
7. **Don't beat yourself up** for feeling discouraged, be honest about yourself
 - a) It is much worse to pretend you feel fine to everyone, than to admit the truth and deal with it.
 - b) Sometimes we all get overwhelmed. It's okay.
 - c) Determine the next steps of what you need to do and focus on just doing that.

Douglas MacArthur was a brilliant general from World War II. He was stationed in the Philippines when Pearl Harbor was hit. He became overwhelmed with the news of the tragedy and couldn't function or make good decisions. When he first heard about it, he grabbed his Bible and started reading it.

That day, December 7th, was one of the most confusing days of his career because he didn't act at all like the normal MacArthur. He just sat there, and the only explanation was that he had input overload. The Clark landing strip was destroyed because he didn't get his bombers into the air and attack the Japanese airstrip at LaMosa. He had nine hours to do it before the planes attacked Clark field.

Source: *American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur 1880–1964*, by William Manchester

Sometimes the best of us get input overload from discouraging things hitting us. We need to mourn over our losses, give them to God, and recognize there is an end to every trial and trouble. Thank God for what He is doing in you through this.

The times of hardship and suffering are the best times of growth we ever go through.