

DISCOURAGEMENT

Rev. Walter E. Isenhour

A few days ago we received the following tract on Discouragement which we are passing on to you, dear reader, with the hope and prayer that it may prove a great blessing to your heart, soul and life:

It was announced once that the devil was going out of business and would offer all his tools for sale to whoever would pay the price. On the night of the sale they were attractively displayed, and a bad looking lot they were. Malice, hatred, envy, jealousy, sensuality and deceit, and all the other implements of evil were spread out, each marked with its price. Apart from the rest lay a harmless-looking wedge-shaped tool, much worn and priced higher than any of them.

"Some one asked the devil what it was. 'That's Discouragement,' was the reply. 'Well, why do you have it priced so high?' 'Because,' replied the devil, 'it is more useful to me than any of the others. I can pry open and get inside a man's consciousness with that when I could not get near him with any of the others, and when once inside I can use him in whatever way suits me best. It is so much worn because I use it with nearly everybody, as very few people yet know it belongs to me.'

"It hardly need be added that the devil's price for discouragement was so high that it was never sold. He still owns it and is still using it.

"The devil would, if possible, rob Jesus of His royal family, but the seal of the Holy Ghost is upon them; but what is very sad and crucifies our Lord afresh and puts Him to open shame is the disobedience of God's children, that robs them of their rewards. Beware of the devil's power to deceive."

There is a great deal of truth in what we have just quoted. Look at it from different angles and see if it does not fit into most lives. There are many noble and heroic souls which the devil cannot tempt to steal, covet, lie, defraud, commit adultery, act dishonestly, desecrate the Sabbath day, mistreat one's fellowman, **tattle, drink, gamble, curse, use profane language, etc.**, but how few that he cannot discourage in some way or another. No doubt many blessed and noble-hearted Christians have failed simply through discouragement. No wonder God tells us in His Holy Word, "Be of good courage."

"Let's think back a little. Suppose Moses had become utterly discouraged when he stood before Pharaoh in Egypt time and again as he was endeavoring to get him to let the children of Israel depart, what would have been the consequence? Suppose he would have become discouraged when he reached the Red Sea, where there was no way to go, what would have been the outcome? They would have all been taken back into Egyptian bondage again, no doubt. Moses had courage. He was not to be daunted nor dismayed. He put his trust in God and went forward. God made a way for him where there is no way. Cannot He do the same thing for you and me? Indeed He can. It takes mighty faith in God. We have got to be fully resigned to His blessed and holy will. He must have control over our lives. We must be obedient and faithful. He can do much with one and for one who will stand firm and true amid every test, trial, difficulty and temptation of life, courageous and bold.

Suppose Gideon had become discouraged when God took all of his men from him but the little handful of three hundred, and him facing a vast multitude in warfare, what might have been the outcome? Not only would Gideon have

lost out, but Israel would have suffered unknown consequences. His failure through discouragement there might have changed the whole course of the world's history. And to how great an extent, suppose you, may our discouragement affect others, and those who may come after us?

No doubt men of great talents and brilliant minds have failed in life because they were easily discouraged. And there have been those of less talent and brilliancy who have graciously succeeded because they were men of dauntless courage. They looked upward from whom cometh all our help, and kept pressing forward and upward until the glorious goal was reached. They knew to become discouraged and quit meant failure, therefore they kept looking up, trusting, praying, hoping, believing, hence came out conquerors. They were mighty men of God. The world was made better by their lives.

One of the most talented men we ever knew was one of the most easily discouraged. He had wonderful knowledge, as he read and studied for years and years. His memory was marvelous and his mind brilliant. He could hold the interest of a congregation when he went before the public to speak. People listened that they might catch every word. However he was not a Christian and never knew what it was to really trust God. If things crossed his pathway he was ready to become "blue" and discouraged, give up and quit. The consequence is that he never accomplished anything good nor great. His life has been a failure so far as we can see. He could have been a mighty man of influence and power for God and his country if only he had given himself wholly unto God, and with courage gone forth to do and to dare.

If we are to develop into stalwart Christian characters we must be men and women of courage. There are many things to discourage and hinder us, but we must look above them all and trust the mighty hand of God to lead us and His divine power to keep. "Be of good courage." These words to Joshua from God are for us today. Let's accept them. Joshua was to go over into the land of Canaan and take it for a possession. He was facing much and was venturing with a mighty faith. God was with him, but he must not become discouraged. He must be courageous and obedient. And because of this he was given the goodly land of Canaan which flowed with milk and honey.

Thank God for the blessedness that comes to those who have mighty faith in Him, who are obedient and will not yield to grim discouragement. There is a milk and honey experience for every one who will get out of the wilderness of doubts and fears, discouragement and unbelief and go forward across the Jordan. Amen. Brother, go forward. Give yourself entirely unto God. Commit all your ways unto Him. Great things are in store for you. Get a deep work of grace wrought in your soul and you will be a man of courage. You can face the enemy on every battlefield and he will flee before you, or God will give your courage and **strength to overcome him.** Don't let the devil use his tool of discouragement to defeat you with. He will do it if possible. Just recognize that old tool and tell the devil you have found something better, or that you are looking up to God for something better. Trust God and He will bring mighty things to pass in your life. The way is better farther on to every brave, heroic, courageous soul of those who are travelling heavenward.

Have you fallen many times? Get up and try again. Have you stumbled over the discouraging things of life until you feel that you

are down at the foot of the hill? Just look up again, rise up and resolve by the grace of God you will climb. You know you are defeated if you stay where you are and never try to rise and climb. God will help you. We are told that He helps those who help themselves. When we do our little part then God will do His great part. He loves and blesses every one who will put their whole trust in Him and never doubt nor fear. The victory is not to those who are overwhelming in number, but to those who trust God and courageously press forward into battle. "One shall chase a thousand, and two shall put then thousand to flight." Be a hero. God needs you in His service.—The Wesleyan Methodist.

YOU MAY NOT BE AS BRILLIANT
AS SOME

But you are smart enough to:

Keep away from the company that is hellbound. Seek the praise of God before the praise of men. Be governed by duty rather than by a desire for pleasure.

Keep company with those who are bound for the City of God.

Expect evil consequences of every compromise position you take.

Expect a solid and useful Christian experience as a result of perfect obedience and devotion, to prayer, His Book, and to all the other means of grace.—Free Methodist.

How many self-satisfied people there are in the world! They tell of the bad things which they have not done, and of the good things which they have done. They boast. Sometimes they are loud about it, and sometimes very quiet and complacent. But they are sure that they are all right.

To such there has never come a knowledge of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. When one once sees his heart as God sees it, and when he sees his sins, including the things undone, he begins to realize now poor are all his merits after all, and looks for a Savior.

To the boastful Pharisees Jesus said, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." It is when one knows his need of the atoning sacrifice that he looks to Jesus and cries for mercy. To everyone who looks to Him and submits to Him there comes sweet peace. Not the peace of the self-righteous, the peace of one white-washed with his own poor deeds, but the peace of one washed white by the blood of Christ. The white-wash self-applied will one day wash off in the coming storm. The "washed white" condition will not rub off. The whiteness runs all the way through.—Free Methodist.

So the author of the famous "Hymn of Hate" of World War times is dead. They say that he lived to regret deeply the penning of those bitter words. The author of "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" is dead also. He never lived to regret those wondrous lines.

If we must speak, it is a good thing to speak those words which will stand sober afterthought when the day of passion is gone. If we must write—letters, stories, articles, songs—they should be those which will stand up well under the backward look.

Will Carlton warned: "Boys flying kites haul in their white-winged birds.

You can't do that way when you're flying words."

Say and write today what you want said and written forever.—Free Methodist.