



How Can I Overcome Discouragement? - Message 6 DISCUSSION GUIDE

OVERVIEW

This message taught us how to overcome discouragement and be filled with faith.

DISCUSSION

- Share a time when you failed to learn a new skill or hobby. How did you overcome your discouragement? Did you keep trying?

In 1 Samuel 30, we learn how David overcame discouragement on one of the darkest days of his life. ***...the Amalekites had made a raid into the Negev and Ziklag; they had crushed Ziklag and burned it to the ground. They had carried off the women and children and everyone else but without killing anyone. When David and his men saw the ruins and realized what had happened to their families, they wept until they could weep no more. ...David was now in great danger because all his men were very bitter about losing their sons and daughters, and they began to talk of stoning him. But David found strength in the Lord his God.*** 1 Samuel 30:1-6

David not only loses his home, his wife, and his children, but now his own friends are blaming this all on him. But the Bible says that amid all that discouragement, “David found strength in the Lord his God.” There are moments in our lives, and sometimes even longer seasons, where discouragement can try to get the best of us. But when we dive in God’s Word, we can be filled with faith and equipped to find strength in God and overcome discouragement.

Three Keys to Overcoming Discouragement:

1. Process your pain.

1 Samuel 30:4: *they wept until they could weep no more.* Having faith in a trial doesn’t mean you pretend like you’re not in a trial. Faith is not a denial of reality. Many of us tend to swing to two extremes when in a trial: we are led by our emotions or stuff our emotions, and both are unhealthy.

Emotions aren't bad, but they are bad at leading you. They are meant to be indicators, not dictators. On the other hand, if you stuff your emotions and pain, it doesn't mean it will go away. Oftentimes, it just festers and gets worse. Like David, we must process our pain.

- How do you process your pain?
- What does it look like to find strength in God?

2. Get a new perspective.

David was discouraged, deflated, and surrounded by negative people and circumstances. But he decided to fix his thoughts on the victories of God. We have to stop sitting around telling God how big our problems are and start telling our problems how big our God is. God always wins, overcomes, and turns things around for good. When we see life from God's perspective, our discouragement will be replaced with faith and courage.

- Why do you think it can be so easy to focus on our problems instead of on God—the Problem Solver?
- What are some practical ways we can gain a new perspective?
- How do you think daily reading God's Word impacts our perspective?

3. Decide to praise.

One of the things David was known for was his ability to praise God. If you are going to overcome discouragement, you have to learn to praise amid pain. In 597 BC, God's people were taken captive by the Babylonians. Psalm 137:1-4 says because of their situation, they "hung their harps in the willow trees." The willow trees represent weeping and sorrow. It is often in seasons of discouragement that the enemy comes and tells us to hang it up. Stop praising God. The devil would love to use your pain to silence your praise. They allowed their praise to become tethered to their external circumstances.

When we want to praise God the least, we should praise Him the most. David says in **Psalm 103:1-2: *Bless the Lord, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits.***

We can praise Him in the middle of a storm because we know the end result according to **Romans 8:28: *And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.***

- What are the benefits of living a life of praise?
- Share a time when God turned your circumstance around for your good and His glory.
- What are you currently experiencing discouragement in? How can you overcome discouragement and be filled with faith?

LIFE CHALLENGE

This week, choose to focus on God instead of your challenges. Turn to Him anytime you feel discouraged, and pray for your group members to overcome their discouragement.