



“Courage to Overcome Discouragement” by Pastor Byron Stevenson February 19, 2018 – Morning Inspiration

“Courage to Overcome Discouragement” Joshua 8

Excerpts from *The Institute in Basic Life Principles*

Discouragement - *defined and described*

All of us deal with discouragement in one form or another, throughout our lives. “Discouragement” covers a broad range of concepts. The verb **to discourage** means “**to deprive of confidence, hope or spirit; dishearten, daunt.**” *Afflict, beat down, demoralize, depress, dismay, distress, frighten, intimidate, irk, and trouble* are synonyms of the word *discourage*.

Three Stages of Discouragement

Mild discouragement can occur when a person experiences minor problems or pressures that affect his emotions. For the most part, this level of discouragement goes unnoticed by others and is not long-lasting.

Strong discouragement can occur when we face major problems or pressures. This level of discouragement affects our spirits. In our words and actions, others can easily observe both physical and emotional indications of discouragement.

If we become overwhelmed by problems or pressures, we experience **disabling discouragement** (i.e., depression), which drains us of spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical strength. When this happens, our hearts “melt” within us, and we have no desire, energy, or ability to go on.

What Causes Discouragement?

A lie from Satan is the source of every discouragement. Fear, unbelief, self-pity, and self-condemnation are by-products of Satan’s lies. You become susceptible to Satan’s lies when you lose sight of God’s ways or do not put your confidence in Christ’s provision for your every need. (See Ephesians 6:16.)

What Are the Benefits of Discouragement?

Although discouragement is a form of attack from Satan, God can redeem any discouraging circumstances and bring blessing to a person who is discouraged as that individual seeks God for deliverance. The biggest benefit of suffering through a time of discouragement is that **it confirms our need for God.**

Discouragement can effectively produce deeper maturity in Christ, because through it God can destroy a believer’s delight in temporal things (see Philippians 3:7-11) and one’s confidence in human effort (see Romans 7:22-24). God has ordained that His strength be made perfect through our weakness. God told the Apostle Paul, “*My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness*” (II Corinthians 12:9). Discouragement effectively exposes our weakness and should always motivate us to seek the Lord’s strength.