Daily Devotion #97

Overcoming Discouragement

*John 14:1 (NASB) 1 "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.”*

So many people are feeling the effects that discouragement causes. Some of you have become discouraged over what you will do with your children because of the questions about school. Some of you are discouraged because you don’t know what to do to make ends meet because you have lost your job. Many are discouraged about the state of our nation and the division that is happening between various groups of people. Whatever you are discouraged about, it is taking its toll on you.

Discouragement is a paralyzing tool of Satan. But as much as discouragement is used by him, it also comes as a result of the brokenness of our souls due to sin. So not only are we tempted to give in to discouragement, but we are also, by our sinful nature, prone to giving in to it willingly. And it really has a devastating effect on every part of us. It causes us to give up on the things and people we have worked hard to care for. It creates in us an unhealthy laziness to the point where we stop focusing on what we should be doing. It even causes us to recoil from life, so we want to hide under a rock, so to speak. Discouragement is powerful and hurtful.

But the good news is that our God is able to help us overcome discouragement. He knows what it is like, He knows the feelings it creates. He knows what it does to our joy. He knows how it keeps us from moving forward and how it causes us to get lost in our emotions and how it causes us to lose our focus from what we should be focused on, which is Him. He Knows! Why? Because He has felt the effects of discouragement. Like when the people didn’t catch on to His teachings. (Matthew 17:17) Or when His own disciples didn’t understand Him. (Mark 9:14-28) He felt the discouragement of life even while dying for us, when His Father turned His face away as Jesus took all the sins of mankind upon Himself. (Matthew 27:46)

In John’s Gospel, we find great help in times of discouragement. The context is as follows: Jesus is about to go to the Cross. And because He was leaving, the disciples were discouraged, too discouraged to help Him in His time of need. But true to form, the Lord gives them comfort that will replace any discouragement they feel.

He tells them to take their eyes off of their situation and put them on Him. He tells them to keep their faith in its proper place which is to remember that He is leaving to go to prepare a place for them so they can be with Him forever in paradise. His leaving was not for Him, but for them. He even encourages them with the great works they will do until they are with Him again. (John 14:12) He also tells them that whatever they ask of Him He will do. (John 14:13-14) He tells them also that He would send the Holy Spirit as a comforter for them. (John 14:16) He tells them that by His leaving He will give to them His peace. (John 14:27) He tells them that because He lives, they will also live forever. (John 14:19)

Think about that beloved! Let your mind dwell on those truths from our Lord. Those are just a few of the promises the Lord left His disciples. And by the way, those promises are for everyone who puts their lives in the hands of Jesus and obeys His commands.

Can you imagine the peace that Jesus must have? He is the Son of God, the Creator of life, the One who holds all things together. (Colossians 1:17) Can you imagine God living in your heart so that when troublesome times come, you have Him to help you, no matter the situation? And if that is not enough, you and I have His promise - that we will forever be with Him in His paradise.

I pray that you will be able to see the spiritual truths and the literal truths that God has made know to us through His Word. Step back today just for a few minutes and rejoice in what God has done for you, and watch your discouragement fly away.