

## Care Giving For The Discouraged

We as Care givers must learn that the first thing that we give individuals in need is pity, then prayer, then a partnership, that is we must develop a relationship with them. The next thing we are in need of is patience! It takes a lot of patience in dealing with people and the situations in life that they find themselves in. The last thing that we give to them are principles to live by from God's Word.

We often want to jump right to giving someone some counsel by saying, "I know exactly what you need..." When the first thing we need to do is give them pity, a listening ear.

*Prov 15:28 The heart of the righteous studieth to answer:*

*Prov 18:13 He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.*

Pity, Prayer, Partnership, Patience, and finally we get to Principles.

What happens when you cross paths with a discouraged person?

As stated above, we need to study, to be able to answer people's needs.

How do we minister to a discouraged person?

Let's look at how or why people get discouraged and then come up with some solutions.

*Deut 1:38 But Joshua the son of Nun, which standeth before thee, he shall go in thither: encourage him: for he shall cause Israel to inherit it.*

Joshua is about to start a new venture as the new leader of the nation of Israel. At this time of the beginning of his ministry he needs some encouragement to help get him started.

Almost anybody before they approach a large task in their lives needs some kind of encouragement as they get started.

I am trying to encourage you in this Care Ministry! Don't be afraid, get acquainted with our visitors, listen to them, and ask to pray for them. Be a friend, *Prov 18:24 A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly:* Be interested in them, be patient with them and familiarize yourself with these booklets to be able to teach some of these Biblical principles to them that they need.

Church, I know you can do this!

*Deut 3:28 But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him: for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see.*

We know that as Moses went off the scene that Joshua did indeed get the encouragement he needed and became a great leader and a man of God.

The Lord will have come across our paths those that are discouraged.

What are the things that can cause discouragement?

### **1. Because of hopelessness:** (Or at least what they perceive as hopelessness.)

There are those who feel that success has passed them by, so why should they try any longer?

There are those who look at life and say, "It's just too late, I've blown it, I'm too old!" And they look at life as hopeless!

Perhaps they made a big blunder or mistake in life, and feel that the opportunity will never be there to start afresh and do right again. Maybe you have been divorced or have had a baby out of wedlock and feel that God has given up on you or placed you on a shelf never to be used again.

Maybe you feel that your reputation has been tarnished, and you don't see the possibility of the situation ever changing or able to clear yourself.

Some people feel hopeless because they don't see the possibility of a certain matter ever changing. "My husband will never get saved." "My wife will never get right with God and come to church." Or, "I'm going to have this health problem the rest of my life."

Yes, hopelessness can and does lead to discouragement, and if not corrected or put in check, can lead to dependency and ultimately suicide. I know some believers in Christ who have gone down this road in their lives and have attempted suicide. Folks, can I say this? "We are never hopeless as long as there is a God in heaven!"

### **So how do we help this type of person?**

a. First and foremost, point them in the direction of God. He is the answer. Make them to understand that God's power is not limited to our outlook on life. Nor is it limited by the odds that are against us. God has given us a Book full of stories, and of people whom all odds were against! But they had God on their side!  
*Rom 8:31 If God be for us, who can be against us?*

Our God is a God of hope! It is one of His titles that He has given himself. *Rom 15:13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.*

b. It also helps to show people some faith building Bible verses.

*Mark 9:23 Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.*

*Phil 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

*Jer 32:27 Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?*

*Jer 32:17 Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:*

We must give people hope! They are often misguided by their perception that today is it, and that there is no tomorrow. But there is a tomorrow as long as there is a God. He said, *Rev 22:13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*

c. The person should study their Bible.

I think of Abraham & Sarah who after receiving the promise, actually got discouraged and stepped outside the will of God for a while and took matters into their own hands, having a son by Sarah's handmaid, Hagar.

The discouraged person needs to be pointed to the Book of hope and the God of all hope.

d. No matter what you have done in your life, remember God loves you and wants to use you. Look at the life of the Apostle Paul! Anyone and everyone can do something for God. Everyone can win another soul to the Savior! Maybe your relationship to others may never be repaired, but your relationship with God can be great!

Your relationship with the church can be great! You can have a great ministry, full of inheritance and rewards for the next life.

## **2. Self-Centeredness:**

*Rom 7:18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.*

Did you ever read this chapter? It is a pretty discouraging chapter while the Apostle Paul focuses on himself.

Look how he continues on in this chapter...

*Rom 7:19-24 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

When we are self-centered, there is not too much to enjoy there. All we do is focus on that which is no good, and there doesn't seem to be anything at all to enjoy in life. Till the Lord transforms our hearts!

The Apostle Paul got discouraged while he was focusing on himself. But he finally got to *Rom 7:25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

A self-centered person not only gets discouraged with himself but with the success of others. Kids say, "I didn't make the team, I didn't get picked, or I got picked last, or I didn't get the award." "Nobody noticed me!" "Why can't you be like so-n-so?"

They are self-centered and as a result get discouraged.

This kind of person will often be critical and negative, tearing down others while trying to build yourself up.

**The SOLUTION** is very simple to say and not necessarily simple to do.

a. You must first acknowledge that you are being too negative. Confess that negative spirit and ask God to renew a right spirit within you.

*Ps 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.*

Did you know that God can do that?

David had a bad spirit. If you are a negative, critical or prideful person, it is possible to change that thing right away. But you have to go to God about it. He is the only one that can make a real change in your life.

(Ex. If I start to get a negative or a critical spirit, and I do on occasion, I have got to get on my face before God and get it dealt with right away.)

If you want to live that self-centered life, there is not a lot there to enjoy.

I think of Ahithophel who said, If your not going to do things my way, I'm going to kill myself!

*2 Sam 17:23 And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.*

b. Don't be proud, learn humility.

*Ps 34:1-3 I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the LORD: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.*

When someone boasts in the Lord, a humble person will be glad at the success of others. A humble person can really enjoy life.

### **3. Impatience will lead to discouragement:**

There is an old saying that says, "Good things come to those that wait."

I know a couple who never were married before. They waited for the right person to come along and while in their 40's when they met at one of our home Bible studies and fell in love and were married. They have been married now maybe 12 years?

Don't you think it would be better for you to have 12 good years of a marriage than 20 or 30 bad years of marriage because you wouldn't or couldn't wait to be married and move out of mom and dads home. After all, you were almost an old maid by the time you were 18.

You got impatient and didn't wait, you got discouraged thinking, and "I'm going to be an old maid."

*Prov 13:12 Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.*

"When we don't get what we expect, we get discouraged!"

Now what is the **SOLUTION**? Don't plan your expectations.

*James 4:13-15 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: 14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your*

life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. 15 For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

### **Don't plan your expectations and God will pleasantly surprise you when things come to pass.**

This is not to get mixed up with having a vision or goals for your life. When you have strong expectations and they don't come to pass, you will get sick and discouraged as a result. Hope deferred maketh the heart sick. There are people who have sick hearts today. They get discouraged. They see somebody else's husband get saved, somebody else's church grows, somebody else's business flourishes, somebody else gets healed and I'm still sick! Somebody else gets a financial miracle and I'm still sitting here in poverty. Somebody else has a better testimony, somebody else bought a new car and I'm driving around this old piece of junk! Somebody else gets an answer to their prayer.

Impatience can discourage a person. How many times have you heard somebody say, "I tried that but it didn't work for me!"

*James 1:4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*

### **SOLUTIONS:**

- a. Be flexible in your expectations. "We are going to get married and if it rains that day, so what, we are going to have a wonderful life together."
- b. Give God time. *Eccl 3:11 He hath made every thing beautiful in his time:*
- c. Mind your own business. When Peter questioned what John was doing...  
*John 21:21-22 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? 22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.*  
*1 Thess 4:11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;*
- d. Be Patient. *James 1:4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*
- e. Don't compare yourselves with others. *2 Cor 10:12 For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.*

### **4. Lack of purpose: No purpose for living!**

They just go through the motions of life. Get up and go to work and come home and go to bed. Get up the next day and come home, eat and go to bed. They make a paycheck to buy food and gasoline in their care so they can get up and go to work, come home eat, and go to bed.

Life is one revolving emptiness. Life is like a "merry-go-round" without the merry! There is no plan or purpose, rhyme or reason for living.

A lot of people live this way, they simply have no direction. Their philosophy might be "eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die!"

They often ask the question, "Isn't there more to life than this?" **And the answer is a resounding YES! THERE IS!!**

Jesus said, *John 10:10 I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*

God has an abundant, vibrant life planned for every single one of us. So get people to Christ, get them involved in something of eternal purpose.

My friend, you will start to feel great when you find out that God has a plan and purpose for your life, and you find out what it is and then get doing it. You will look at life with a whole new meaning! You will feel as if this world needs me!

Do you want to feel needed? Get this person to start serving God! According to Rom. 12:1-2, God has a perfect will for your life! He did not create us just to exist.

Get the focus off yourself, off the temporal and on the eternal.

*2 Cor 4:18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

*Col 3:2 Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.*

*Rev 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.*

You can work for rewards, because He is bringing them back with Him.

## **5. Difficulties:**

*Num 21:4 And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way.*

*Num 32:7 And wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD hath given them?*

*Num 32:9 ...they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel,*

*Deut 1:28 Whither shall we go up? our brethren have discouraged our heart,*

The Apostle Paul said, *Acts 14:22 ...that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.*

We must prepare people for some trials and tribulations in life.

*2 Cor 2:14 Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, And gives us the victory!*

*Isa 42:3-4 A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. 4 He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.*

It is against God's nature to be discouraged. And I don't believe that, that is what He wants for us.

**When all else fails:** *1 Sam 30:6 ...but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.*

When his own people were distressed and thought of stoning him to death, David encouraged himself in the Lord. We must learn to encourage ourselves in the Lord.

When you come across someone who is greatly discouraged and in need of some help, you won't have to say, "Let's go make an appointment with Pastor O'Dell, you can take this lesson, review this tape, and go and help, and encourage that individual along, caring for them and making a difference in their lives.

Father, Help us to be able ministers of the New test. Use us to make a difference in other people's lives. Teach us to encourage ourselves and in turn to be able to encourage others.

Use us for thine honor and glory...