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## Hope Overcomes Discouragement

Pastor Charles Mendenhall

What destroys hope? What causes us to lose our hope? When we lose hope we have no sense of direction in life, without hope there is no faith. It is a very important ingredient to have in our lives. Hope will endure on through all the ages, beginning now, without hope we don't have any intent of a favorable outcome in life. There are so many people in the world today and in the church that are hopeless, but there is always hope for the hopeless.

1 Cor 13:13 "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." KJV

"There is hope for the hopeless, no matter how deep you may be, God can be that warming glow or the welcoming rain, just ask and He will set you free, so when the days are long and heavy and the dust has settled low, and because you cannot see the Son your worries begin to slowly grow, remember to turn your gaze on God you'll see He has His hand on you, showing you there is always hope through those dark and desolate lands, hold on the pain will end."  
(Special word given)

Pastor shared with the congregation a time in the 70's when holding a series of meetings in the Las Vegas area, he would walk out into the desert and pray, he began to see in the spirit, the hopelessness that people had in their lives, it was like watching them fall off into an abyss and he began to see the importance of ministering life and hope into their lives while they could still hear.

Matt 9:35-36 "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news (the Gospel) of the kingdom and curing all kinds of disease and every weakness *and* infirmity. 36 When He saw the throngs, He was moved with pity *and* sympathy for them, because they were bewildered (harassed and distressed and dejected and helpless), like sheep without a shepherd." AMP

Jesus was preaching the gospel of the kingdom which was different from what the scribes were teaching. He wasn't preaching religion or tradition, He said their tradition made the word of God of none effect and would not work for them. He always likens the people or the church as sheep, He was their chief shepherd, they just didn't know what to do, to come in or lay down someplace or graze, they had no direction in life, were totally bewildered and helpless.

Harassed means to be continually annoyed, until it is dealt with. To be troubled with repeated attacks, or to be plagued or pestered.

People are repeatedly being harassed today, cut the head off the giant and seven more come to

take its place. Many Christian people are sitting in church thinking that they are immune to satan's attacks, which is not true. Hearing what is being said, will show them how be resistant and be victorious. We are not off limits, but the greater one dwells within us, so we can overcome. Guardian angels have been assigned to believers but demonic beings have also be assigned to us, causing continual harassment repeatedly, this will cause us to be without hope and fall. Until we break the power and recognize the devils purpose for us, to lose hope, God cannot do much about it. The believers must take the authority that has been given to them in the name of Jesus and begin to stand against the enemy.

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." KJV

The Bible kind of hope is always associated with a favorable outcome, and hope is always in the future. Faith brings the promise now, but hope is future. First we hope, but as our minds become renewed and hear the word of God, faith takes what we have hoped for and brings it into the now, it is a done deal. Hope is a marker that we chart our course by, like a beacon light that guides to a safe harbor, it is anchor of our soul, it gives us something to hook on to, that everything will turn out alright. When we lose hope, we are governed by circumstances and begin to make wrong decisions.

Hope is that supernatural power that resists discouragement and swallows up despair. The bible kind of hope is as supernatural as faith is for healing. Dreams are part of the hope; if dreams are lost you have no direction. Jesus is our hope, the God of hope. Hope is associated with joy and peace and believing. No anxiety, frustration and wanting to quit.

Heb 11:1 "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." KJV

Col 1:27 "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:" KJV

Glory not defeat, never without a way, the riches more than enough, Christ being the hope of glory.

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

When hope is lost or deferred, our heart, emotions or soul become sick. We are spirit, soul and body, and if hope is lost long enough, it will begin to make our bodies sick. When hope comes to pass it becomes a tree of life, the soul is well, emotions are right and we are thinking right.

How is hope put off? Imagine the devil having a garage sale, lots of tools, things marked differently; hatred, jealousy, deceit, lying, pride, all expensive, but one well worn tool priced higher and used more than the others and marked discouragement. When asked about it, the devil would say that this was one of the more useful tools that he had, because so many Christians don't know that the tool belongs to him, they think that discouragement belongs to and comes from God and is for their benefit. Satan is never happier than when God's people lose hope and become discouraged.

Discouragement is very closely associated with despair, but they would be defined differently. Despair is to be utterly without a way or at lose or hopeless. Discouragement if not dealt with

will lead to despair. Discouragement means to neutralize, like putting a car in neutral, there is no power, power is available, but we don't have it in gear. This is what discouragement does to us, leaves us powerless, breaks us down, having no effect, and always causes us to be consumed with adversity or negative circumstances.

Basic dictionary definition of discouragement is; it undermines our hope, begins to chisel away, begins to hinder and depresses, always causes us to look at the negative aspect of things. Christian people don't realize that discouragement does not come from God; it comes from the devil and will leave us powerless, with no hope and no sense of direction. Hope is a supernatural power that swallows up discouragement and always has a favorable outcome.

As we begin to look into the life of Elijah and what God's plan was in the midst of the discouragement that Elijah encountered, we see in 1st Kings chapter 18 the story of Elijah's ministry, what he was faced with, how he overcame the situations and the many supernatural miracles that happened. He thought that he was the only one that God was using to come against all the idol worshipers, but God told him no, there were others standing with him. The event that caused him to become discouraged, was a woman called Jezebel sending him a message. Chapter 19 continues with the story, his wish to die and his deliverance, even after the experience that he had just gone through, he allowed Jezebel's words to cause discouragement to come on him.

1 Kings 19:2-12 "Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time. 3 And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. 4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. 5 And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. 6 And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. 7 And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. 8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God. 9 And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? 10 And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. 11 And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: 12 And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice." KJV

Did God disown him? Elijah ran into the wilderness, but God sent an angel to minister to Elijah, telling him to "get up" and preparing food and providing for him what he needed and laying out the future events, his ministry and with Elisha. God spoke to Elijah in a still small voice; his anointing was greater in his later years.

What does God want to do for us when we are tempted to be discouraged? Does He want to write us off and tell us that we are failures?

The message Elijah saw was like a video that we see in our mind, playing over and over of

failure, that we are no good, are losers, nothing works out for us.

God knows that the problems that we have are too much for us to handle, the load is too heavy, His grace and mercy come to us telling us that He will provide aid and strengthen us, that He is giving us the power we need through the Holy Spirit. That we will walk through the valley not allowing fear to come.

After we have a victory or "mountain top experience", having received a definite word from the Lord that everything will be alright, we will probably experience the enemy coming with discouragement against us to cause us to lose hope and begin to think that God has not answered us. This is the time that we will begin a "walk thru the valley". The death mentioned here is not necessarily physical death, can be, but can also be the death of your dreams and expectations, your hopes. You don't lose this on the mountain top, but you will lose it in the valley. God is your shepherd, you will walk through, not camping there, and you shall know that He is with you. Don't lose hope, the valley is a place of victory, it is a place of our faith being tried. Are we going to believe God's report or a negative report? We can always expect a visitation from God following discouragement. God will visit us supernaturally and give supernatural strength for the occasion. Christ in us the hope of glory.

Psa 23:1-6 "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." KJV

Don't allow yourself to become discouraged because of what has happened in the past or be in discouragement now. God is not writing you off; don't allow friends or other people to write you off.

What is man's responsibility in regards to dealing with discouragement? Principles for us apply to overcome discouragement. Get up and arise. When we realize that we have come to the end of our own strength, Paul tells us that we can rejoice and be glad that God's grace empowers us and we can become our strongest.

Pro 24:10 "If you fall to pieces in a crisis, there wasn't much to you in the first place." MESSAGE

Pro 24:10 "If you fail under pressure, your strength is too small." NLT

David spoke of seeing the goodness of God and believing what he saw. We must believe that God is coming to our aid, arise and rejoice. When we faint it is as if we were dead, and this is where friends come to our aid, trying to revive or help us get out of discouragement or hopeless situations. We must be willing to let them help and quit resisting them.

Psa 27:13 "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." KJV

Our mouth will determine a lot of things in life. Somewhere in the midst of the discouragement and hopelessness, we must determine and order what will come from our mouth making our conversations right. David said when he complained that his soul was overwhelmed. By not

yielding to what the enemy has said, about how tough things are, you have hope and life. Our mouth has something to do regarding the time we stay discouraged as part of our responsibility, we must guard our thought life, the video playing in our mind, over and over. Encourage ourselves in the Lord, friends may try to keep us in the situation, saying you have every right to stay where you are, but they can only suck you down further if you don't resist. Peter speaks of the things that vexed Lot's soul, his wife turned back yearning for the environment of her friends and former life. We cannot allow our friends, who might determine the length of time we spend in the "valley" to do this to us. Being around the right kind of people who love you, wanting to really help should be your choice of friends. Encourage yourself in the Lord.

2 Cor 4:16-18 "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 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." KJV

Pro 15:23 "A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!" KJV

Isa 57:10 "Thou art wearied in the greatness of thy way; yet saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast found the life of thine hand; therefore thou wast not grieved." KJV

1 Sam 30:6 "And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God." KJV

David went to the house of the Lord and encouraged himself. He recovered all that had been taken and much more beside. Job lost everything that he had and his friends said that he was through, but God restored double what he had possessed before. God says that our best days are ahead, so never give up.

"Arise from the depression and frustration in which circumstances have kept you. Arise to a new life, shine and radiant with the glory of the Lord for your light has come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you."

Hab 3:1-3 "A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, set to wild, enthusiastic, *and* triumphal music. 2 O Lord, I have heard the report of You and was afraid. O Lord, revive Your work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make [Yourself] known! In wrath [earnestly] remember love, pity, *and* mercy. 3 God [approaching from Sinai] came from Teman [which represents Edom] and the Holy One from Mount Paran [in the Sinai region]. Selah [pause, and calmly think of that]! His glory covered the heavens and the earth was full of His praise." AMP

Given by Margaret Mendenhall

"AM I NOT GOD? why do you set as though there were things on this earth that is impossible with me, for with me there is nothing impossible, change your focus from those impossibilities that you see and turn your eyes on what is possible with me."