

Michael Brown: God Is Not Discouraged

The Scriptures often speak of God being grieved or angry. But they never speak of Him being discouraged.

That's because discouragement is not an "emotion" that exists within the Godhead. How could it? Discouragement would imply despair. Or hopelessness. Or defeat. And all of these emotions—to speak of the creator in human terms—are totally foreign to Him. Ultimately, in Jesus, they should be foreign to us as well.

Of course, it is only natural that, as human beings, even human beings who have a close relationship with the Lord, we will pass through seasons of discouragement.

The burdens of life overwhelm us. Or our hopes and expectations are not realized. Or our lofty dreams come crashing to the ground. Or things take much longer than expected. Or it seems that there's just too much suffering and pain. Or we disappoint ourselves, convincing us that we will always be failures. Or ... you can fill in the blank. There are countless reasons for discouragement, and, in the moment, all of them seem valid.

But in God, there is no discouragement. No sense of hopelessness. No fear of a dark future. No despair that His purposes will not come to pass.

As the Scriptures declare, He knows the end from the beginning (Isa. 46:10) and He sees tomorrow more clearly than we see yesterday. And He knows that His purposes will prevail and that, in the end, the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of God and His Messiah (). Why, then, should He be discouraged?

He knows that, one day, “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea” () and, “The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them” (Isa. 11:6).

He knows that the day will come when “He will wipe away every tear from [our] eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away” (Rev. 21:4).

He knows that, one day, “the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isa. 35:10).

With this reality firmly in His gaze, with full assurance that Satan will be forever vanquished, and with the understanding that His will triumph perfectly for the eons to come, how can He possibly be discouraged?

Discouragement sets in when we are uncertain about the outcome of a thing, when we feel that our efforts have been in vain, when we conclude that there’s no use trying.

None of these mindsets are found in the Lord, given that He is totally certain about the final outcome, that He knows our efforts are not in vain and that He knows that our perseverance will pay eternal dividends.

If you knew for a fact that your team was going to win and win big, would you be discouraged during a bad part of the game? Instead, you’d be looking with anticipation and excitement for the reversal that was sure (and soon) to come.

That’s why Paul exhorted us to overcome our discouragement writing, “be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not

in vain" (1 Cor. 15:58).

And that's why Peter encouraged us, even in the midst of persecution and hardship to keep our eyes firmly focused on the glorious future prepared for us, writing, "Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:13).

That's also why John reminds us of the transformation that awaits us when the Lord returns: "Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as He is pure" (1 John 3:2-3).

Not only is this an incentive to faith, courage and hope. It is also an incentive to holiness.

Psalm 2 paints the picture of the kings of the earth rising up against the Lord and His anointed one, determined to break free of their yoke. In its original context, the "anointed one" most likely spoke of King David. But in its ultimate context, it applies to King Jesus. And, according to the New Testament, it applies to the crucifixion, the world's ultimate attempt to rid itself of the rule of God.

And how does He respond? Psalm 2 records, "He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. Then He will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, 'As for Me, I have set My King on Zion, My holy hill'" (Ps. 2:4-6).

Yes, God laughs at these futile human attempts, declaring, "I have appointed My King on My holy mountain, and no one will defeat Him." We could further imagine Him saying, "Go ahead and kill Him. I will raise Him from the dead and exalt Him to My right hand."

So much for discouragement!

That's why, when Sennacherib, the mighty king of Assyria, threatened to destroy Jerusalem and exile the Jewish people, the prophet Isaiah sent Hezekiah, the king in Jerusalem, a word of encouragement, from the Lord. To paraphrase, he said, "King of Assyria and all your armies, My people shake your head at you in scorn as you flee!" (See Isa. 37 for the details.)

That's why Paul wrote that, in Jesus, we are more than conquerors, come what may (including persecution, trials and even death; see Rom. 8:35-39). And that's why John said that, in Jesus, we are overcomers (1 John 5:4).

And that's why, with the Lord's help, setting our face to worship Him, meditating on His promises and determining to rejoice in Him no matter what, we can cast discouragement out of our hearts and minds. In reality, if we are truly leaning on Him, discouragement is a lie.

Yes, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:5). You can be assured it never will.
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Curt Landry: The War in Israel People Aren't Talking

About

For Rabbi Curt Landry and Curt Landry Ministries in Israel, the conflict between Israelis and Hamas has become a personal one.

The animosity between the Jewish and Palestinian people over centuries is certainly no secret, and that animosity has escalated into armed conflict in the Gaza strip over the past week. More than 3,800 rockets have been fired with 13 Israelis being killed and 1,800 innocent civilians wounded.

But Landry says there is another war brewing in Israel that could be devastating. It's one that has already affected his ministries there.

Landry's ministries in Israel employ Jews, Arabs, Muslims and Christians. For the first time in 73 years, Landry says Israel is experiencing a civil war that has not entered into the mainstream conversation.

"The relationship with Israeli Arabs has been molded into the sense that you have Israeli Arabs attacking and killing their Jewish neighbors," Landry told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. "You also have radical Jewish groups, of course, defending themselves and firing back—and that's the civil war side. That's what people aren't really talking about.

"The government and our ministry and everyone else is obviously against the shedding of blood and we pray for all sides. We pray for the Palestinians, the Arabs and the Jews, the Druze; all of the people in the region.

"So this civil war, I'll give you an example of what I know," Landry continued. "You have Arab Israelis who are Israeli citizens, they all strike in one day. These are doctors to plumbers to hotel workers, grocery store clerks—everybody goes

on strike and they won't go to work. So their employers say, 'If you're not going to go to work, we will hire somebody else.' Then, they sue Israel. It's very complicated.

"So they're backing up the court system. It's just terrible. But the biggest problem with this is that—and this is a story I know of—where you have Arab Israelis and they go to their Arab neighbor in a neighborhood. They ask, 'Which one of the cars out here belongs to Jewish people?' The Arab neighbor, a grandmother, says 'Those are the ones.' She's been their neighbor for years. She points out the cars and then they go out and torch the automobiles. I've been to Israel 45 times and have been in and out of Israel for 30 years. Like I say, I have Arab Israelis on my payroll. So it's not something we're used to. We've never experienced anything like this."

For more about the civil war happening in Israel, listen to the entire podcast with Curt Landry. {eo}

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Google Docs Updates Auto-Correct Algorithm to Be More 'Inclusive'

Alphabet—the parent company for Google—announced this week it is updating its auto-correct algorithm to be more "inclusive."

The app will now correct sex-based language. For example, rather than using words like "mailman" or "chairman," Google Docs will auto-correct to phrases like "mail carrier" and

“chair” or “chairperson,” according to the Daily Mail.

The company announced Tuesday, during its I/O Developers Conference, that it will give users suggestions on ways to avoid “offensive” and gendered language.

Google CEO Sundar Pichai also said he wants to make social justice a priority for the technology company.

This shift comes a few years after Google stopped suggesting sex-based pronouns as part of the predictive text function for its Gmail platform. At the time, the feature stopped suggesting words like “he,” “her” “or “she.” {eoa}

Read the rest of the story from our content partners at Faithwire [here](#).

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Israel Announces Ceasefire as Hamas Conflict Reaches 11th Day

Israel has announced a ceasefire with the Palestinians and Hamas as the attacks over the Gaza strip reach into the 11th day.

Multiple news outlets report the Israeli security cabinet voted late Thursday an Egypt-brokered bilateral, "mutual and unconditional" halt of hostility per the Prime Minister's office.

Reuters reports the truce is set to go into effect 2 a.m. Friday. One official from Benjamin Netanyahu's office said the truce would stand on the basis of "quiet in exchange for quiet."

Hamas told CBS News Wednesday that they would only cease rocket launches if "Israeli forces and police agree to never again enter the al-Aqsa mosque, as they did earlier this month, and that Palestinians living in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in disputed east Jerusalem not be evicted by

Jewish settlers from homes their families have lived in since the 1950s.”

The move comes just one day after President Biden encouraged peace from the White House during a call with Netanyahu’s office and only days after Republican senators pledged to support Israel as a U.S. ally. A ceasefire is certainly welcomed by all affected by the conflict, especially as antisemitic attacks spike across the world. {eoa}

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Title X Battle to Defund Planned Parenthood Rages on in Supreme Court

This has been a pivotal week in the battle to defund Planned Parenthood. The Supreme Court dismissed three cases challenging the Trump administration’s “protect life regulations,” defunding millions from Planned Parenthood. At the same time, we filed a new formal public legal comment urging the Biden administration not to reverse the current pro-life rule.

As we explained earlier, the protect life regulations prohibit the use of Title X money “to perform, promote, refer for, or support abortion as a method of family planning.” Title X is a federal program dedicated to providing preconception family planning services to the nation’s neediest citizens.

The regulations barred grant applicants from providing

abortion counseling and referrals, and required them to have financial and physical separation from any abortion provider. Under the prior regulations, physical separation was not required, and abortion clinics exploited this loophole. For example, the National Abortion Federation created an information packet on Title X, instructing abortion clinics that “[i]f a facility receiving Title X funding is itself an abortion provider, it may make what is known as a ‘self-referral.’”

In 2019, we helped rectify this situation, filing formal public comments supporting the Trump Administration’s Title X regulations that created a “bright line rule” preventing abortion providers from receiving a dime of taxpayer-funded Title X money. This rule was in direct alignment with the express language of Title X, which states: “None of the funds appropriated under this title shall be used in programs where abortion is a method of family planning.”

Because the protect life regulations cut off the federal funding gravy train for abortion mills, Planned Parenthood and 21 pro-abortion states challenged the regulations. As we told you, the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit upheld the regulations but the Fourth Circuit issued an injunction against their enforcement in the state of Maryland. Because there was a split in the Circuits on the enforceability of the protect life regulations throughout all 50 states, the Supreme Court granted review.

Why, after deciding to hear the cases, did the Supreme Court dismiss them this week?

The short answer is that the Biden administration asked the Court to dismiss the cases because President Biden is determined to restore funding to Planned Parenthood. The full answer is a little more complicated. After the Biden administration asked the high Court to dismiss the cases, a group of states and Christian medical groups asked the Court

for permission to intervene and defend the protect life regulations. Before ruling on the requests for intervention, the Court required the Biden administration to file a letter brief informing the Court whether it would continue to enforce and defend the protect life regulations until they are repealed (President Biden promised to repeal the protect life regulations within days of taking office). The administration represented to the Court that it would enforce the status quo, the current pro-life rule, until it repealed it. The Court then granted the administration's request for dismissal. But significantly, to ensure that the Biden administration would honor its word, the Supreme Court added a proviso to its order. It stated that if the Biden administration fails to enforce and defend the protect life regulations while they remain in force, any affected parties can ask for relief in the lower courts and, if necessary, in the Supreme Court.

The upshot is that for now at least, Planned Parenthood continues to be denied access to taxpayer funding under Title X.

But that is not likely to last very long. As we explained, the Biden administration's department of health and human services (HHS) has proposed new regulations imposing an abortion referral mandate on all participants of the Title X program, even those fundamentally opposed to abortion.

The ACLJ is not giving up the fight; and on the same day that the Court dismissed the protect life regulation cases, the ACLJ filed formal public legal comments on behalf of itself and over 557,000 of our members who do not want taxpayer-funded Title X grants going to abortion providers, like Planned Parenthood. {eoa}

Read more of this story at .

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A Humble Heart Comes Only Through Healing Hurt and Helping Others Do the Same

In an emotional teaching, Pastor Mike Signorelli of V1 Church has a message for Millennials: the way to rise is through humility. He acknowledges that millennials have gone through trauma, including abuse, church hurt, abandonment and mentors' failures. Signorelli says that this has caused a generation who knows the Lord to grow cold to the Lord.

Millennials know the truth, yet the combination of past experiences and their access to a social media platform, where they can air their opinions, has created a root of pride when God calls us to humility. Signorelli calls each of them to look at themselves and challenges them with the idea that they have turned into something worse than what hurt them because of this pride.

However, there is hope if we allow God to humble us. He challenges us to go back to a place where we say, "Not my will, but thy will;" to put aside our own agendas and opinions for those of God. Pastor Mike encourages us that we must decrease so that God can increase. We decrease when we come before God solely with a broken and contrite heart, and that is when He can mold us into all that He has called us to be.

For more teachings download the V1 Church app or follow Mike Signorelli on Facebook or Instagram.

Republican Senators Sign Resolution Affirming Support for Israel as US Ally

Florida Sen. Rick Scott led a group of senators in signing a resolution that supports Israel's right to defend itself against the barrage of attacks from Hamas.

Sen. Scott and 18 Republicans affirmed that the United States has previously designated Hamas as a terrorist organization (Oct. 8, 1997) and that they seized power of Gaza in 2007, where they have since levied other terror groups to attack Israeli civilians while refusing to recognize Israel, or negotiate peace.

The resolution connects Hamas to their Iranian benefactors and the funding of the missile attacks targeting Israeli civilians and cities, including Jerusalem.

The senators reaffirmed that since its reestablishment in 1948, Israel has been a key ally and strategic partner of the United States. As the United States Senate, they are resolved to oppose the escalating attacks by Hamas against Israel and mourn the loss of innocent life caused by Hamas' rocket attacks. They urged continued and steadfast support, reaffirming their unwavering commitment to Israel and the right that it has to defend itself and its civilians against terror by whatever means necessary. They also reaffirmed Israel's right to peace and security.

Arkansas Sen. Tom Cotton, one of the co-signers of the resolution, said on Monday that "Israel is our strongest ally. President Biden should unapologetically reaffirm U.S. support

of Israel and its right to defend itself. The left's moralistic calls for a ceasefire are little more than a propaganda win for Hamas."

After joining the resolution, Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas) commented, "Israel has not just the right but the obligation to defend its citizens and its territory against the Iran-backed Palestinian terrorists who are attacking its citizens and using civilians in Gaza, including journalists, as human shields.

"The United States must make it clear that it stands shoulder-to-shoulder with Israel, and the Biden administration has no place pressuring Israel to use restraint or equivocating Israel and Hamas," Cruz continued. "I am proud to join Sen. Scott on this resolution to ensure Congress is clear about our support of the State of Israel as they defend their people and their sovereignty." {eoa}

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Anointed Writer Says He's Privileged God Allowed Him to Write 'The Chosen'

As a *New York Times* bestselling author, Jerry Jenkins is well aware of the numerous books (besides the Bible) published about the life of Jesus, and he's seen many, many movies and television shows about our Lord and Savior.

For that reason, Jenkins wanted to write something that would portray Jesus in a much different way—a way that would show his humanity and everyday life. He wanted readers to see Jesus through the eyes of those who actually met Him, and to be changed and impacted in the same way they were.

That became a much easier task when his son, Dallas, a filmmaker, produced the highly-acclaimed crowdfunded television series, *The Chosen*. Jerry Jenkins, the co-writer of the *Left Behind* book series with Tim LaHaye, said he watched each episode of the first series of *Chosen* 20 times to help him write the book.

“Some of those movies and television shows are hard to relate to,” Jenkins told Dr. Steve Greene on a recent episode of *Greenelines* on the Charisma Podcast Network. “So, Dallas said let’s hone in on the humanity of Jesus, His sense of humor, the way He interacted with friends and how they were changed to be something they never were before they encountered Him.

“It’s turned out to be a very emotional experience to watch to see how it’s rendered. There is some artistic license, and obviously we never want to add or take away from the gospel. But we didn’t know what these things might have looked like before they were rendered in Scripture. This series has been seen 140 million times and in almost every country of the world, and I was as moved by it as much as anyone else.”

Jenkins says that his son is planning on producing seven seasons of the television show and that he has the good fortune of being contracted by Focus on the Family and Broadstreet Publishing to write the first three books for it. Of course, he says he’ll do more if he’s asked to, depending upon the success of the television series.

For more of Jerry Jenkins’ work with *Chosen* and his story as a lifetime writer, listen to this entire episode of *Greenelines*.
{eoa}

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