

When You Feel Discouraged, These Truths Straight From Scripture Will Sustain You

(Editor's Note: This is part 2 of a two-part series. Find part 1 [here!](#))

Lesson 3: Choose Gratitude

It has been said (tweeted and posted) that to be thankful is to be grateful, and to be grateful is to be happy. But I submit to you that the Scriptures foretold this truth long ago. Because it is just that. Truth. “All the days of the afflicted are bad, but a cheerful heart has a continual feast” is what we read in Prov. 15:15 (NASB). Consider the value of this Scripture. It plainly lays out the difference between a miserable life and a wonderful life. We can choose the negative, bad feelings and live afflicted by them, or we can consider that a continual feast is an option, one that is within the reach of every believer.

When the Scriptures say in Psalm 23:5 (MEV), “You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies,” I believe it talks about God imparting to us the thankful, grateful and cheerful attributes of His own nature. You see, when we choose gratefulness and express it in our worship, the happiness and kindness of our happy God are measured to us and become our portion. We can have as many helpings as we desire.

And this joyful feast satisfies us and sustains us in hardship. It is served right before the eyes of our enemy, and he can do nothing about it—except hate it and retreat far away, for it renders him useless and of no effect in our lives.

Lesson 4: Pray for Others

There is an excellent example in Scriptures of what we often call “intercessory prayer”—praying for someone other than ourselves. We find this example in the life of Job when the Lord restores the fortunes of Job after he prays for his friends (see Job 42:7-10).

One thing we see in that passage is the example of a man interceding on behalf of his friends and God taking it very seriously. But the most significant of all is that Job was not yet healed or restored when he prayed. This passage is helpful in understanding the power of intercession for others and is setting an example for us to take during our own hardships.

I have experienced times when I have been under tremendous pressure, depressed, overwhelmed and exhausted, and someone prayed for me. This steadied me, strengthened me, upheld me and enabled me. Likewise, there have been times when I have been privileged to pray for others who were in need. And when I have done this, I have found it to be like a medicine for my own soul, because praying for others has been an effectual tool that has kept me from being focused on myself.

What could transpire if we all took the same posture as Job? Job’s actions of praying for his friends in this story are remarkable—to not only be able to take his focus off himself, but to do it in humility, willingly and obediently is a tried and true lesson for all of us indeed.

Lesson 5: Proclaim It on the Rooftops

I don’t know much, but one thing I do know: I was blind and now I see (John 9:25, paraphrased). In other words, I don’t care what you think, I don’t care what you believe; this is the irrefutable truth: I was blind and now I see, and Jesus Christ the Son of God is responsible for it! This man was facing the rage of the leaders of that day. He knew not what would ensue, yet he was sure of one thing: the way the miracle-working power of God had affected his life.

Talk about the Lord's goodness with others. Share His Word, His promises, His miracles; the ones He has done for you, the ones you read about, the ones He has done for others and the ones you are believing Him for! Talk about them, write about them, sing about them, shout them aloud—but whatever you do, make them known (Deut. 11:18-20, paraphrased).

And lastly, because we overcome “by the blood of the Lamb and the word of [our] testimony” (Rev. 12:11), I believe the greatest battle we face in difficult and trying times is trying to avoid accusing God and living offended. Accusation and offense draw us away from Him. Perhaps practicing these simple steps in prayer and conversation might help us find our safe place hidden in God, under the shadow of His wings.

Hold on. Stay steady. Don't quit. God is for you. May you find His grace to help in your time of trouble (Heb. 4:16). May you experience God granting you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in your inner man (Eph. 3:16).

What are you currently experiencing that could use one of these five lessons? {eo}

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