

When You Want to Quit

Everyone at one time or another has wanted to give up! Even Jesus wanted to give up when He faced the cross. Knowing His footsteps would soon lead Him to agony and shame, He asked the Father “‘O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me'” (Matt. 26:39, NKJV).

In essence, He was saying, If there is another way to accomplish Your will, Father, could we go with plan B? Jesus was faced with the choice of giving up or pressing on.

It is the same choice we have all faced when circumstances have brought us to a place of giving up. We know that if we give up, we will be relieved of the pressure of the moment. And if we press on, we will continue to face all the obstacles that brought us to that point.

The problem with giving up is that you have already chosen the outcome of your situation. Failure is always the result of quitting. You trade possible victory for momentary relief.

Successful people are those who have learned to turn crisis moments into stepping stones to future victory. Thomas Edison is a good example.

On his quest to invent the light bulb, Edison tried more than 3,000 theories and tested more than 6,000 elements to find the perfect filament. Think of it this way: If he had tried one theory a day and was able to work every day of the year, it would have taken him around nine years to come up with the best and final solution to his problem.

What if he had stopped the fifth time things didn't work? What about the 100th? What about the 1,000th?

Seemingly impossible situations face each and every one of us. The question is: How will you deal with yours?

What impossible situation are you facing right now? Is it your marriage? A doctor's diagnosis? Your finances? Your children? Giving up may seem to be your only solution, but I believe God's plans for you are for prosperity and success.

UNRESOLVABLE SITUATIONS

It is often the tedious, day-to-day situations that seem to never change that make you want to give up. The Bible says that hope deferred makes the heart sick. Discouragement develops into despair, and we lose our hope.

The loss of hope is a deadly condition for the believer. Without hope faith cannot operate. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1, emphasis added).

The nature of faith is to believe the impossible and see the invisible. We give up because we put our faith in what we know and see in the natural.

Think about the situations in your life that make you want to quit. Do you use words such as "never" and "always" when you describe your circumstances?

Sometimes we believe we will never be able to overcome because of words spoken over our lives for a prolonged period of time. I had this experience.

Being overweight was common on both sides of my family. As a child, I was constantly reminded of my size through comments about my weight. During those early years, I believed I would "never" be the right size and I would "always" struggle with my weight.

I continually tried to diet but would give up because I could not see a permanent solution. Finally, with the Lord's help, I realized that dealing with my weight issues would require an ongoing commitment to good health—and for the last five years I have lost about 10 pounds a year.

Don't give up because there seems to be no answer. If you truly believe that "all things work together for good to those who love God" (Rom. 8:28) then you know that the situations you face are resolvable with God's help.

WRONG PERCEPTION

The Bible says that "as [a man] thinks in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). If you do not see yourself as victorious in a given situation you will inevitably give up.

You know the Old Testament story about the spies who went into the Promised Land. The land was full of great blessing and abundance, but it was also full of giants.

Ten of the 12 spies were fixed on the enemy's size. When they compared themselves to the giants they perceived themselves to be grasshoppers. Their perception caused them to believe they could not be victorious so they gave up.

Two of the spies fixed their eyes on the abundant fruit and determined that they were well able to take the land (see Num. 13:30). Because Joshua and Caleb saw themselves as victors, they received their promises.

A grasshopper mentality will always rob you of your promise. The Israelites were on the edge of the Promised Land, but they allowed fear to delay the gift of God.

WEARINESS

In Daniel 7:25, an angel revealed the enemy's end-time strategy. "And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High" (KJV).

The enemy of your soul has an assignment to wear you out—to make you so tired you lose your motivation to fight! The intimidation of the enemy is specifically designed to overwhelm you and stop you from making forward progress.

When we become overwhelmed, we lose our strength to resist. I

know many parents who have lost their place of authority in their children's lives because the responsibilities overcame them.

When our two girls were small, we made decisions regarding our philosophy of child training. We did not allow them to eat sugar or watch TV programs about witches and sorcerers.

We also did not allow them to date until they were 16. They had curfews and accountability.

Everyone in our lives thought we were being too hard on our kids. It was very difficult to enforce our beliefs because of the lack of support.

All their friends were dating earlier. They were constantly being ostracized by their peer group because they did not fit in. Sometimes I felt so overwhelmed by the pressure to conform, I considered compromise.

When you go against the tide, your strength will be tested and you must resist the desire to give in. I'm glad God gave me the grace to stand firm. Our daughters are now married to godly men, are serving Jesus and are raising their own children in the fear of the Lord.

FEELING ALONE

There is no question that our power is multiplied when we join others in agreement. That's why one of the enemy's favorite tactics is to divide and conquer.

About 10 years ago, at the Lord's direction, I moved with my family to Lakeland, Florida, from Tulsa, Oklahoma, after serving for four years as a campus pastor at Oral Roberts University. We established a new headquarters for our ministry, joined a great church and started forming new relationships.

Unfortunately, because of our travel schedule, it was

difficult to develop a circle of friends. Several months after relocating, our youngest daughter had a physical crisis. We took her to the emergency room, and the doctors told us she might not live through the night.

After the initial shock, my husband and I tried to think of someone we could call to be with us for support. Sadly, we realized we were alone. All our family and friends were in Texas and Oklahoma.

The darkness of that night was so deep and heavy I didn't think I could take the next breath. As the sun rose the next morning, we received the good news that our daughter had received a miracle and would be perfectly restored.

Though we rejoiced in God's goodness, the effects of that lonely night eroded our commitment to obey God. We immediately began to make arrangements to move back to Texas. We had given up.

Before we left, I called one of my few friends in Florida, Joy Strang. Although she lived more than an hour away, Joy had always been an encourager in my life, and I greatly appreciated her wisdom and insight.

When we met for lunch, I began to tell her about our ordeal and our decision to go back "home" where our support system was established. She laid down her fork and asked me one simple question: "Has the Lord finished with you here?"

With those words, the sword of Truth pierced my lonely and disappointed heart. I had given up the vision and purpose of God because I believed it was too hard to obey, and I needed someone to help me see where the shipwreck had occurred.

We need each other as brothers and sisters in the Lord. We are destined to succeed in the kingdom of God together. If we distance ourselves from one another we lose the strength to finish the course.

As a result of Joy's piercing question, we remained in Florida and went on to establish a facility for leadership restoration and training, a school of ministry and a local church. Thousands of lives have been touched and changed through our decision to obey and not give up.

Many opportunities are presented to us on a daily basis to give up. However, God's plan for us is always to succeed. So when you feel like giving up, use these tools to help you fight the giant of defeat.

COME INTO AGREEMENT WITH GOD'S WORD

When we are faced with overwhelming challenges our thought life goes into overdrive. We can think of every reason why we can't and why we shouldn't.

As negative thoughts flood our minds, we begin to agree with them, and then we find ourselves speaking them. Before we know it we have convinced ourselves that what we think is so.

Agreement is a powerful kingdom principle. Jesus told His disciples, "'If two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven'" (Matt. 18:19).

The Bible tells us that man will have to give account for every idle word he speaks (see Matt. 12:36). That word "idle" is very significant. It means inactive, useless and barren.

Whether we realize it or not, as we speak out words in relation to our situations we are coming into agreement with something or someone. Once the agreement is made a plan is set into motion for success or failure. That's why it is imperative to know what God has to say about our situations and to come into agreement with Him.

I do not know what you are facing today, but I can promise you that God has something to say about it. I want to encourage

you to go to His Word and come into agreement with it.

If, when you do this, the opposition increases, remember that when Jesus was in the wilderness He faced much opposition and discouragement. But the Bible says that as He continued to speak the Word of God, agreement was established, and after a season Satan departed from Him.

There is a dynamic of human nature that is proved time and again; we rise to the level of demand that is placed on us. Difficult circumstances make a demand on us to excel and exceed our limitations. We never know what is in us until we are faced with a demand for greater.

Human nature always chooses the lesser and would settle for simple comfort. But just as the mother eagle stirs her nest to nudge the eaglets into flight, God allows and uses our difficulties to teach us how to fly.

We all face moments when we want to give up. As believers we must be willing to face these moments with courage, faith and utmost trust in God's ability to bring us to victory.

Read a companion devotional.

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