

CHIEF MINISTRIES

May 2022

Greetings in the name of the Lord.

I have found in my journey with the Lord that there are times when God was all over the situation, the choices were right, the timing was right but still there was a sense of discouragement. Why does that happen? And even more how do I keep it from happening? First let's define what discouragement is and how it may look in our lives.

Discouragement is a loss of confidence or enthusiasm resulting from our doubting a certain desired outcome will happen. Discouragement is one of the "giants" we all face. Jerry Seville wrote a book in 1982 (yes, some of you weren't even born then) titled; "If Satan Can't Steal Your Joy..He Can't Keep Your Goods." In there he speaks about the plan of the enemy to kill, steal and destroy God's creation...that would be you and I. And a very effective way to do that is through discouragement. According to Galatians 5:22-23; *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.* Nowhere in this verse is discouragement, discouragement is NOT of God! Sometimes we allow the enemy to come in and steal our joy which will leave the void of discouragement in its place. So how can we keep this from happening? Here are some questions you can ask yourself when you are battling discouragement.

- **Are you taking care of yourself?** – Elijah was more than discouraged; he was suicidal in 1 Kings 19. Part of his remedy was to eat, drink water, and to rest. Often our discouragement will leave when we reprioritize the well-being of our physical body.
- **Are you highly visionary?** – A visionary is a person with original ideas about what the future will or could be like. The visionary often sees what shall be but still only experiences what currently is. As visionaries celebrate progress and "despise not the day of small beginnings" (Zechariah 4:10), they will be less prone to be discouraged.
- **What are you thinking about when you go to sleep?** – If we have the habit of going to sleep worried, disappointed, or angry, then we will most likely wake up discouraged. But if we go to sleep with thankfulness, remembering good things from the day, and receiving more of God's love, we increase the likelihood of waking up joyful.
- **What person of faith, compassion, and wisdom can you talk to, pray with, and receive help from?** – As we humble ourselves and share our emotional struggle with another person, grace will start to flow to us (1 Peter 5:5-6). And, as we hear the wisdom and perspective of a trusted friend or counselor, we are setting ourselves up for greater victory.
- **What ministries and messages do you need pouring into you right now?** – If we are having more output than input, we will eventually be weakened and discouraged. One of main inputs we are to have is faith and hope messages through books and community with other believers. Those who feed on Hope messages will be less prone to discouragement!
- **Have you experienced "hope deferred"?** – "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life" (Proverbs 13:12). Hope deferred means a promise or dream we expected to happen has not happened. When this happens to you, express your pain to the Lord, receive ministry from people of faith and compassion, re-engage with God's manifest presence, and reaffirm or clarify what God is saying to you about this.
- **What are the lies fueling this discouragement?** – Emotions don't validate truth; they just validate what we believe to be true. Jesus said, "The truth will make you free" (John 8:32). Truth first makes us free in our emotions and then in our circumstances. However, if we believe lies, the opposite will be true. As we identify the lies, we believe and then replace them with truth, we will replace discouragement with joy and hope.

- **What advice would you give someone who is battling discouragement?** – As we reflect on what we would tell someone else, we often will find the key for our own breakthrough. I have personally found it helpful to write in a journal and speak messages on what I would tell others in areas I am struggling with. After considering my own message, I gain forward movement in my own life.
- **Do you know what God is doing in your life regarding what you are discouraged about?** – If we can identify areas we can grow in as we consider what we are discouraged about, we will allow the emotional difficulty to work for us. Every long-lasting great influencer has had to become more focused on their own personal development than having good circumstances.
- **Do you know everyone battles some level of discouragement?** – Years ago, I sensed the Lord say, “You and everyone else, will always have something to be discouraged about.” This knowledge helped me. I used to think there was something uniquely wrong with me. I Corinthians 10:13 says, “No temptation has come upon you except what is common to man.”
- **How can you increase your connection with Jesus?** – If we are not maintaining regular prayer, worship, scripture, fellowship with others, and yielding to His leading, then we will be more prone to battle discouragement and other negative emotions.
- **Who can you encourage today?** – “Give and it will be given to you” (Luke 6:38). When we give encouragement away to others, encouragement will then be given to us. It is hard to stay discouraged when we are encouraging others.

Also keep in mind: Testing Comes Before Blessing, sometimes when we are tested, remember testing is a time to grow, and in that prayers, desires, promises or delay can lead to discouragement. Zechariah 13:9 says: *“I will refine them like silver and purify them like gold. They will call on my name, and I will answer them.”* Discouragement, is the result of what you want, desire, pray for doesn’t come in the way we think it should, WHY?, Because we are not trusting God in whatever it is and we are allowing the enemy to steal or joy, replacing that joy with discouragement.

Some prayers are answered immediately, but others take weeks, months, or even years. You probably know this all too well! But there’s good news: While you’re praying for God’s answer, you’re going to learn some things that you can’t learn any other way.

In the waiting, there is blessing. One of the blessings is that you learn more about yourself when you don’t instantly get everything you want.

For two of the most important prayers I’ve ever prayed, God took 10 years to answer one of them and 21 years for the other. But he answered! They were the most important prayers in my life at that time. Why did it take so long? Because while I was working on the prayer, God was working on me.

When you’re going through fire, do you ever wonder why you have to go through it? It’s for testing and purification. As you pray about something over and over again, you face tests that reveal more about you.

God says in Zechariah 13:9, *“I will refine them like silver and purify them like gold”* (NLT).

You test gold by putting it in a big vat and heating it until it gets so hot that all the impurities are burned off. How do metalsmiths know when gold and silver are pure? When they can see their reflection in them.

God can see his reflection in you when all the impurities have burned out of your life—after you’ve been through the fire. He says that, after he’s done the testing and purification, *“They will call on my name, and I will answer them”* (Zechariah 13:9 NLT).

Answered prayer comes *after* the test. Before every blessing, there is a testing. God tests you with stress before he trusts you with success. These are the principles of persistent prayer.

God is going to test you before he blesses you. And in that test, you’re going to learn a lot about yourself. If you give up praying, you’re never going to learn the lessons that help you become more like Jesus. Keep praying with persistence each day. And remember that after the testing, the blessing will come.

Four Ways God Answers Persistent Prayer *“Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers.” Ephesians 6:18 (NLT)*

There is no such thing as unanswered prayer. God may not always answer the way you like, but He always answers prayer in one of four ways:

When your request is not right, God says, “No.”

God is not going to give you something that’s harmful for you. He only gives you His best! He sometimes says “no” because your request does not match His best for you.

When you’re not right, God says, “Grow.”

Maybe God wants to give you something—maybe even a blessing so big you can’t imagine it—but you’re not ready for the responsibility. It could even cause stress in your life if He gave it to you now. Don’t stop praying! Keep reading God’s Word and making Christ your first pursuit.

When the timing’s not right, God says, “Slow.”

Habakkuk 2:3 says, *“The time approaches when the vision will be fulfilled. If it seems slow, do not despair, for these things will surely come to pass. Just be patient! They will not be overdue a single day!”* (TLB) It’s coming, but it’s not here yet. God wants to take it slow, until you’re ready to handle it. Growth often needs to be paced. And it always takes time.

When your request and the timing and your character are all lined up, God says, “Go.”

Ephesians 6:18 says, *“Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers”* (NLT). You don’t pray persistently because you’re trying to convince God. You pray persistently so that you’re ready when God says, “Go.”

Which of these questions most speaks to you?

What are the most important action steps you can take?

Who can you encourage today?

Closing thoughts:

- “For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls” (Hebrews 12:3).
- “Let us not grow weary *or* become discouraged in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap, if we do not give in” (Galatians 6:9).
- ““In my distress, I called to the LORD, and he answered me.” (Psalm 120:1).

He is so faithful, and His desire is to have such a deep intimate relationship with each one of us so we become more like Jesus. Trust and keep on keeping on. Say NO to discouragement!!

Praying for you always,

Ms. Chief (aka Ms.G)

If you want to know more about CHIEF Ministries or would like to be a part, please go to www.chiefministries.com

Christ’s Heart In Every Felon