



Freedom from Discouragement

Adapted from “Freedom from Condemnation” series by Brett Allen.

“Have you have been discouraged about something in the last week? Discouragement can stop a man in his tracks. Men have experienced the discouragement of broken dreams, unfulfilled promises, failing health, financial crisis, and many others. There are so many things that happen in life that seem to let the air out of our balloons.

“What keeps a man going when he is discouraged? It is easy to fixate on circumstances and forget that your circumstances are not necessarily permanent. Have you ever heard the statement, ‘*You can’t see the forest for all the trees?*’ It is so easy for a man to lose sight of things in life when he stands in the midst of discouraging times.”¹

¹ Jeffery Anselmi, “Freedom from Discouragement 1,” Sermon Central, November 22, 2003, <https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/freedom-from-discouragement-1-jeffery-anselmi-sermon-on-disappointment-63526?ref=SermonSerps> (accessed July 20, 2017).

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Discouragement is a weapon the enemy uses against men because it works. Possibly more men have been lost to the cause of Christ over this issue than any other. It's simple. Men get so discouraged, tired, worn out, and overwhelmed that they quit. Paul's words are great advice to help a man push back the effects of discouragement.

COURAGE Level Questions

Exercise #1: Describe a time in your life when you were discouraged.

Exercise #2: What are three things discouragement leads to in your life?

1.

2.

3.

Exercise #3: On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being *very likely* and 4 being *not very likely*, rate yourself on how strong your vision is, how strong your desire to quit is, and how strong your desire to isolate yourself is.

Strength of my vision for the future:

Strength of my desire to quit:

Strength of my desire to isolate:

Now, write out a plan to improve.

Exercise #4: Read and answer the following.

Romans 8:18–27 (ESV) For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit,

because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

C1: From these verses, what can you learn about walking free from discouragement?

Exercise #5: On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being *very well* and 4 being *not very well*, rate yourself on how well you are dealing with discouragement.

My rating:

Now, thoughtfully write out a prayer asking God for help in this area.

STRENGTH Level Questions

Exercise #1: Read and answer the following.

Romans 8:18–22 (ESV)

S1: In these verses, Paul deals with pain and suffering. What do you learn from these verses about condemnation?

S2: Why do you think Paul mentions Creation in the middle of a teaching on freedom from condemnation?

Exercise #2: Think about all the hurt and trouble going on in our world. Read and answer the following.

Romans 8:20 (ESV)

Genesis 3:17 (ESV)

Jeremiah 12:4 (ESV)

² Peter 3:10–13 (ESV)

S3: From these verses, what two things do you learn about Creation?

1.

2.

S4: Why do you think Paul would tie them into freedom?

Exercise #3: Deep inside every believer is a hunger to be finally delivered from the sin nature and become perfected with God. Read and answer the following.

Romans 8:23–25 (ESV)

¹ Corinthians 15:44–54 (ESV)

S5: From these verses, what do you learn about a believer's hunger (sometimes described as a *groan* in the Bible)?

Exercise #4: On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being *very high* and 4 being *not very high*, rate yourself on how strong your hunger (or groan) is for freedom from sin.

My rating:

Now, take a moment to meditate and pray about this. Pray a prayer of regret and repentance of sin. Conclude with a time of worship.

ENDURANCE Level Questions

E1: How do you as a believer define *hope*?

Exercise #1: Read and answer the following.

Romans 8:24–25 (ESV)

E2: From these verses, how does the *hope* Paul mentions help us live free from discouragement?

Exercise #2: On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being *not very discouraged* and 4 being *very discouraged*, rate yourself on how discouraged you are (about anything, or in general) right now.

My discouragement rating:

Now, tell another Christian man about his and ask if he will pray with you about it.

If you are studying this in a group, take turns describing your source(s) of discouragement and pray together.

Exercise #3: Sometimes the struggles of life become so heavy we just can't bear them. Read and answer the following.

Romans 8:26–27 (ESV)

Ephesians 6:18 (ESV)

E3: From these verses, what do you learn about the Holy Spirit's role in helping us to overcome discouragement?

E4: How important is it to pray in the Spirit always?

Exercise #4: On a scale of 1-4 with 1 being *very well* and 4 being *not very well*, rate yourself on how well you pray in the Spirit on all occasions.

My rating:

If you don't pray in the Spirit, or even understand what that means, read Acts 2. Next, spend time in persistent prayer asking Jesus to baptize you in the Holy Spirit like He did the believers in Acts 2.