

Discouragement, March 11, 2018, NUMBERS 21:4
GALATIANS. 6:9 Numbers 21:4-9, John 3:14-21

⁹ So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up.

Galatians 6:9

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Discouragement a loss of confidence or enthusiasm; a loss of spirit. While being delivered, led, and provided for by God, the people ***made a profession of complaining***. But now a generation of wilderness wanderers were called upon to grow up, cease their constant complaining, enter into the faith of Abraham, and hasten on their journey towards the fulfillment of the promises.

Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave His one and only Son, so that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:14-16).

Without the brazen serpent, there was no healing for the Israelite who had been bitten by a snake (Numbers 21:9) - and without the Cross, we remain trapped in our own wilderness, bitten as we are by the sting of spiritual death. Jesus was “lifted up” in the crucifixion, so that everyone who believes in Him, trusting not in themselves but trusting in Christ’s resurrected life, would have eternal life. This was, and is, the supreme act of God’s love.

Discouragement is an enemy of faith. Some of the most faithful were defeated because of it.

When we get discouraged we will:

I. PRAY THE WRONG PRAYER

Moses prayed to die -Num. 11-15 And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness.

II. Think the wrong thing.

(A) John in prison-Matt. 11

(B) Martha and Mary-John 11

Think God is being unfair. Get out of focus.

III. Do the wrong thing

Moses smote the rock -Num. 20

Take matters into our own hands, mess up and still blame God.

IV. See only the impossible instead of God's power:

Difficulties instead of the power of God –

Mark 5, ³⁵ While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher anymore?"

³⁶ Overhearing^[c] what they said, Jesus told him, "Don't be afraid; just believe."... After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. ⁴¹ He took her by the hand and said to her, "*Talitha koum!*" (which means "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). ⁴² Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. ⁴³ He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

VII. GET IN THE WRONG MOODS

(A) Spirit of defeatism (B) Spirit of murmuring

(C) Spirit of grouchiness (D) Spirit of criticism

The cure for discouragement is to face what we fear, resist what holds us back, stand strong against that

which blocks our way, patiently wait expecting God to act. Acting, preparing and going forward based on that patient waiting.

9 So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

Facing our situation in the faith of our resurrected Christ will defeat discouragement every time and twice today. Amen.