



HELPING OTHERS FIGHT DISCOURAGEMENT

Discouragement is so incredibly powerful. It's a tool the enemy loves to use because very often it's discouragement that leads people to turn their backs on God. We see this happening in the book of Job. Hit with one catastrophic event after another, there seems to be no hope in sight. Even Job's closest friends told him to turn on God. Look at his wife's response,

"His wife said to him, 'Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!' He replied, 'You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?' In all this, Job did not sin in what he said." – Job 2:9-10

"Are you still trying to maintain your integrity? Curse God and die!" Now before you judge Job's wife too harshly, understand this: life's toughest temptations will sometimes come through those who love us the most. It's these people who genuinely care for us and who don't want to see us hurt. So, oftentimes, they urge us to take the easy way out – man's way. The devil knows this and enjoys using those who love us to lead us into temptation and out of God's will. Jesus, Himself, experienced this when Peter urged Him not to talk about going to the cross. But Jesus knew the source of Peter's thinking and responded angrily, "Get out of here, Satan!" That's why Christian spouses and friends have an incredibly important responsibility. When we see a brother or sister in Christ facing a crisis or temptation, we must avoid inadvertently becoming a pawn of the evil one. We must fight the temptation to encourage that loved one to simply take the easy way out, to give up, or to give in. Become your loved one's partner in his or her struggle and encourage them to do things the Lord's way – even when that's the hard way. Because God's way is always the best way in the end. Are you feeling discouraged this year? Don't give up. Give God your concerns, fears, and anxieties, and reach out to trusted friends and family. For others, perhaps you know people struggling this Christmas season. Look for ways to offer encouragement and support. From an unexpected gift to a supportive, listening ear – ask God how you can help others fight discouragement today. God does not tempt us.

- **Have you ever blamed God for things happening to you?**
 - Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. James 1:13
 - And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose Romans 8:28
- **Why do we get discouraged?**
 - Is it our expectations or God's?
 - For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. John 6:38

- „I hold the simple belief that if you live your life in the right way guided by values, God will take care of the rest. God’s plans will always be better than the ones we come up with ourselves.“ — Don Soderquist

- **We need to have Faith and Build up Each Other Up**

- Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. Ephesians 4:29
- Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, *1 Thessalonians 5:11*
- Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another. Proverbs 27:17