

# Lifting Up The STANDARD

“When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him” (Isaiah 59:19).



Challenging And Encouraging God's Remnant To Remain Faithful

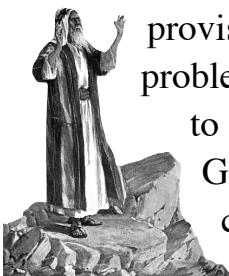


## Fighting Discouragement In The Small Church

### Good People Get Discouraged

Moses was giving his life to help God’s people, however, God’s people criticized, condemned and complained so much Moses finally got so discouraged he wanted to die. Numbers 11:14 says Moses prayed, “*I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me.*” He continued, “*kill me, I pray thee.*”

### Moses Had A Wrong Perspective of Things



From Moses’ perspective the source of discouragement was people and a lack of provisions. The real source of the discouragement; however, was a personal problem. Like Elijah and Jonah, who also prayed to die, Moses allowed himself to become discouraged. He allowed his problem to become bigger than his God. This in turn changed his attitude about things. Moses started out very confident about his ministry. Discouragement, however, brought him to the place of confusion.

### Why Me???

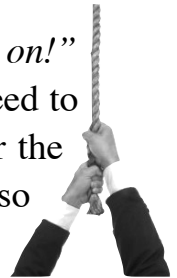
His prayer revealed the condition of his heart had changed. The tone of his prayer was angry and irreverent! His question was, "Why me?" When we get discouraged instead of asking “*why me?*” we should ask “*Why not me?*”

Jesus said, “*In the world ye shall have tribulation*” (John 16:33). Did he mean everyone but me? Job 14:1 says, “*Man that is born of a woman is...full of trouble.*” Does that mean everyone but me?

First Thessalonians 5:18 says, *“In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”* Did he mean everyone but me should give thanks for, *“every thing”*? **Note:** It says, *“In every thing,”* not *“for everything.”* Sometimes adversity is a better friend than prosperity. When the Lord allows trouble into our life, we must remember that it is part of His plan for us, Romans 8:28 says all things, *“work together for good.”* The verse continues it is, *“...according to his purpose.”* We should not ask, *“Why Me?”* Our prayer should be, *“Lord, what is your purpose? What is the lesson that You want me to learn?”*

### **Let Go And Let God**

Someone has said, *“When you get to the end of your rope tie a knot and hang on!”* That advice might be alright for unsaved people, however, what Christians need to do is *“let go and let God take care of the situation.”* Part of the purpose for the pressures of life is simply God working at getting us to the end of our rope so we will let go and trust Him to do the impossible.

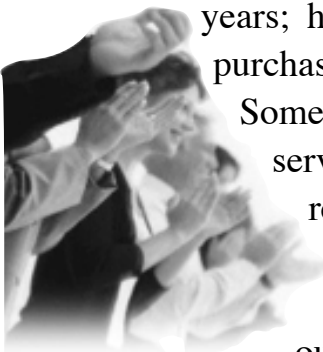


### **Moses Had A Pity Party**

Moses had a little self-centered pity party instead of having a heart for the people he was responsible for. (It was a *“little”* pity-party because the people who discouraged him didn't come. They didn't even know there was a party). Discouragement is caused by unmet expectations! If we expect we are going to be involved in the work of the Lord and not be criticized, we are living in a dream world. If we expect everyone to appreciate our efforts we will soon be discouraged.

### **Do You Actually Expect To Be Appreciated?**

Many times Paul referred to himself as, *“...a servant of Jesus Christ.”* The word servant in the Greek refers to a bond slave. An Israelite could sell himself as a slave for seven years; however, the law demanded at the end of that time the one who purchased him was to release him and give him supplies to start a new life.



Sometimes the slave grew to love his master and wanted to remain a servant. That servant would then be a bond slave for life. Unlike a regular slave, the bond slave had no rights whatsoever! We do not have the right to anything since we are bond slaves of Jesus Christ. As bond slaves we should not be discouraged when we do not get our expectations because we have no rights to have any expectations.

The only thing we have a right to expect is the will of our Master.

### **The Price Moses Paid**

The account in Numbers chapter eleven shows us that Moses ended up having to share his leadership with seventy other men. If we get to the place where we are so discouraged we can not carry out the responsibilities given to us by the Lord, He will find others to do His work. When God anointed the seventy elders He took some of the ability He had given to Moses and gave it to others!

In Numbers 11:17 God told Moses, *“I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them.”* Obviously, Moses already possessed all he needed to get the job done for the Lord; however, he lost the privilege because he allowed discouragement to prevail in his life. As a result, he had to share his leadership with seventy others. It is an interesting fact that this group of seventy grew into the Sanhedrin that had Jesus crucified.

Moses, like some pastors today, got discouraged. His *discouragement* led to a *dissatisfaction* with the situation and a *distrust* in God *“...working all things together for good.”* Moses simply wanted God to find someone else to take the heat. Discouragement has brought many pastors to want the same thing. Discouragement led Moses to have an attitude of ingratitude for the privilege of being used of God, and a heart of indifference concerning the will of God for his life and the lives of the adults and the children that God had given him the responsibility to help. Some pastors have quit their ministry with no concern for the children in the church that were not giving him any reason to be discouraged. Our young people can be a real source of encouragement.

### **We Decide What To Focus On**

A few years ago several families left our church. I was very discouraged. Someone said, *“cheer up things could be worse.”* I cheered up and sure enough things got worse. Another family left.

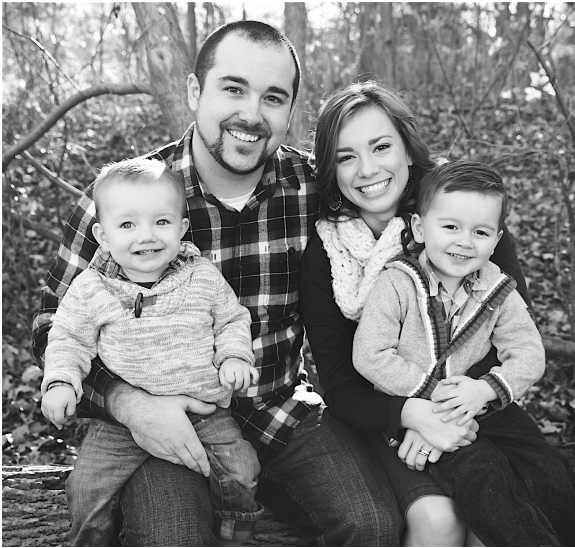
That same week a thirteen year old girl from our church who attended a public school gave a testimony in church. She was excited about having the opportunity to witness to her friends and her teacher. Two teachers checked out our website as a result. The next day, I received the following email from this teenager.

*Hello Pastor Kirkland:*

*“I am so happy to be serving the Lord. I am dropping notes to the teacher all the time. And for some reason while we were at Church, Sunday night, The Gospel Hall called...I*

*think it might be because I showed a friend your book about drinking, and he probably told his parents, and his parents told the church. But I am praying for his parents, and my teacher. Please continue to keep them in your prayers. Your messages on Nehemiah are wonderful! And you really made that song mean so much to me. 'I am happy in the service of the King, I am happy oh so happy... I have peace & joy & blessing in the service of the King.'*

That thirteen year old little girl is now married to a fine young Christian man, and they have two little boys named Jed and John. They are actively involved in the work of the Lord at our church, and they are a major encouragement to this pastor.



Mitch - Chynna - John - Jed Carpenter

### **Have A Pity Party or Encourage Ourselves!**

Getting discouraged or getting encouraged is a choice. If we focus on what the Lord is doing in the hearts of sincere Christians, we will be encouraged. If we focus on the ones who probably wouldn't listen even if Jesus was the pastor, we will be discouraged. First Samuel 30:6 says, "*David encouraged himself...*" Judges 20:22 says, "*the men of Israel encouraged themselves.*" They made a decision!!!

### **How David Encouraged Himself**

In First Samuel chapter thirty, David and his men found their city on fire. The Bible says, "*...the Amalekites invaded.*" The city was, "*...burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives.*" Let us put ourselves there! Our houses are on fire and terrorists have taken our families! We read, "*David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep.*" Then, it got worse for David! We read in verse six that. "*David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him.*" Can you imagine what David was going through? Your house is burned to the ground, terrorists have taken your family and the your closest friends are planning to stone you.

- **First**, David made a conscious decision to be encouraged.
- **Second**, he received the encouragement from the Lord. "*David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.*"
- **Third**, "*David enquired at the LORD.*" The result of David's decision was a complete victory in an impossible situation.

**When the discouraging circumstances come, do not focus on the circumstance.** Look to God for wisdom! The things we consider to be problems, God considers to be projects. Ask God for the wisdom to handle the project, and thank God that He trusts you with the project He has allowed to come your way. Discouragement, if not dealt with, will lead to compromise. One reason pastors quit preaching Bible standards concerning modesty, music and messing around in the world is they get discouraged to the point that they begin to compromise.

### **A Yoke And A Burden**

Matthew 11:28-30 Jesus said,

*“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”*

Discouragement is a reality and Jesus knew we would have problems fighting it. Jesus said, *“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”* Christ also referred to His *“yoke”* and His *“burden.”* Jesus commands that we be yoked up with Him. He is the one who gives direction. If we try to go our own way while yoked up with the Lord, it will result in a real pain in the neck! Jesus offers to make the burden bearable. (See Jeremiah twenty-eight for an interesting comparison on a *“yoke of wood”* and a *“yoke of iron”*).

### **Discouragement**

The dictionary meaning of discouraged is, *“to deprive of courage or confidence.”* As previously mentioned, like Moses, most pastors start out very confident in the work of the Lord.

- **Hebrews 10:35**, *“Cast not away therefore your **confidence**.”*
- **Hebrews 3:14**, *“hold the beginning of our **confidence** stedfast unto the end;”*
- **First John 2:28**, *“And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have **confidence**, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.”*

### **Do Not Let Anyone or Anything Discourage You From Finishing What God Wants You To Do**

We like to read Hebrews chapter eleven. It is the great *“faith chapter,”* however, reading about those men and paying the price to be listed in “God’s Hall of Fame” are two very different things.

**Hebrews 11:7** says,

*“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”*

Noah had more than a little opposition from a few church members, he stood against the world. He had nobody outside of his family to encourage him. There were no Bible conferences he could go to and be encouraged by preachers of like faith. He didn't have a list of great preachers of the past to listen to by recorded messages. He didn't even have a Bible!!! What Noah did have was faith in God, and the character needed to finish what God had sent him into this world to accomplish! Genesis 6:22 tells us, *“Thus did Noah; according to ALL that God commanded him, so did he.”*

When Paul the Apostle left this world he could honestly say, *“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith”* (Second Timothy 4:7). Be sure when life's journey is over that you can say, *“I've finished my course, I have kept the faith.”*

**Hebrews 12:1** says,

*“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”*

Notice the word "also" This verse is not referring to people in Heaven looking down at us as we work for God. In Hebrews chapter eleven God named those who finished the course. The chapter begins saying they, *“obtained a good report”* (V.2). The chapter concludes with, *“And these all, having obtained a good report”* (V.39). When people talked about them they did not talk about quitters!!!

- **Hebrews 12:1** says, *“...we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.”*
- **Matthew 5:16** Jesus said men will, *“...see your good works.”*
- **Acts 9:36** tells us Dorcas was remembered for her, *“...good works.”*
- **First Timothy 5:10** speaks of being, *“Well reported of for good works.”*
- **Titus 2:7** says we are to be, *“In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works.”*
- **Titus 3:8** says, *“...be careful to maintain good works.”*

**LITTLE IS MUCH WHEN GOD IS IN IT!**

“Does the place you’re called to labor Seem too small and little known?  
It is great if God is in it, And He’ll not forget His own.  
When the conflict here is ended And our race on earth is run,  
He will say, if we are faithful, ‘Welcome home, My child—well done!’  
Little is much when God is in it! Labor not for wealth or fame.  
There’s a crown—and you can win it, If you go in Jesus’ Name.”

When your life’s work is ended be sure you can pray before you leave and say,  
“I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do” (John 17:4).

The graphic features the word "Outreach" in large blue letters, with "Ministry" in a cursive font below it. To the left is an icon of an open book with musical notes, and to the right is a calendar icon showing "NOVEMBER 18". Below these is the text "Strength For Today" and "A Message In Song". At the bottom is a music player interface for the song "He Hideth My Soul" with a progress bar and a timestamp of 06:22. Below the music player is a quote: "Admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (Colossians 3:16).

**God-honouring Music Is Getting Difficult To Find.**

We have begun a daily, few minute program entitled, “**In Time Like These,**” with a message in song that is honouring to the Lord.

[\(Click Here For Today's Message In Song\)](#)