

DEVOTIONAL

Hollywood Prayer Network

DISCOURAGEMENT
& DESPAIR

Discouragement and Despair are two emotions with which the enemy attacks all of us. This week spend time asking the Lord to deal with both your own discouragement and also the discouragement and despair of those who create our culture in the entertainment industry. The enemy attacks with isolation, discouragement/despair and fear. So, let's start now to tackle discouragement and despair. Are you ready?

DAY 1

BATTLE DEFEAT

“TRANSFORMATION IS A PROCESS, AND AS LIFE HAPPENS THERE ARE TONS OF UPS AND DOWNS. IT’S A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY -THERE ARE MOMENTS ON MOUNTAINTOPS AND MOMENTS IN DEEP VALLEYS OF DESPAIR.”

-RICK WARREN

New International Version

2 Corinthians 4:8-10

We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body.

DAY 1

PRAY: Lord, I want to be honest with You about what I'm going through; I know You can take it. You know that I am in process and that I feel fear, discouragement and sometimes even despair. Please show me that You are near when I am hard pressed on every side, when I feel persecuted, abandoned, and struck down. Could You remind me that You are holding me up and that You will never let me be destroyed. I thank You that Jesus' eternal life is in my body, giving me strength. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

REFLECT: Think through the times when you honestly felt hard pressed on every side, crushed and in despair. Have you felt abandoned and struck down? Have you ever even felt destroyed or close to death? Now reflect on how you can focus on Jesus and His resurrection life that is within you. It may be through prayer, meditation, or praising Him – find what works for you and change your focus from defeat to believing His promises for you. This may be a lifetime commitment but start now and never give up, never surrender!

DAY 1

ACT: Start thanking the Lord for everything that doesn't go your way! Thank Him for the job you didn't get, the bills you can't pay, your discouragements and disappointments. Thank Him that He will NOT let you down or allow you to be destroyed, for He is alive in you. Make this a daily habit and it will change you into someone who can handle anything, through Christ in you. You will see that you will not be in despair, you will not feel persecuted or abandoned, and you will not be struck down or feel death, because as you thank Him for ALL things you will feel victorious, regardless of your circumstances.

DAY 2

PERSEVERE IN GOD

“DESPAIR IS A NARCOTIC. IT LULLS THE
MIND INTO INDIFFERENCE.”

-CHARLIE CHAPLIN

New International Version

Hebrews 10:35–36

So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised.

DAY 2

PRAY: Dear God, please fill me with confidence in You, in Your promises, Your love, protection, wisdom, and Your perseverance, so that I will be fulfilling Your will every hour of every day of my life. Thank You for Your rich rewards when I am faithful and that I will receive what You have promised me, because Your word is true and never changing. I don't want to throw away my confidence, but persevere through any storm, set-back or disappointment, because I have put my faith in You. Amen and Amen.

REFLECT: Where does your confidence come from? Do you struggle with insecurity? If so, maybe that's because your confidence is not in God, but in yourself, and you can never feel that you are good enough, strong enough, smart enough, or wise enough. Most people struggle with insecurity. And those who don't know the Lord are left to persevere through their own strength, which is exhausting and discouraging. The brokenness and poor choices of many people is because they don't know how to embrace the will of God. What a gift we have as Christians to be able to focus on building our confidence in Him so that we can see how He is richly rewarding us for our trust and dependence on Him.

DAY 2

ACT: Do not throw away your confidence for it will be richly rewarded. Ask the Lord to help you persevere so that you will receive what He has promised. In what area of your life do you need more confidence? Tell the Lord how you want to grow and ask Him to help you to persevere in achieving it, overcoming it or being healed from it. In order to not lose your confidence you must turn to Him. Then expect to receive what He has promised!

DAY 3

LET GO OF FEAR

“DO NOT ABANDON YOURSELVES TO
DESPAIR. WE ARE THE EASTER PEOPLE
AND HALLELUJAH IS OUR SONG.”

-POPE JOHN PAUL II

New International Version

2 Chronicles 20:15 & 17

He said: ‘Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the Lord says to you’: ‘Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God’s...You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the Lord will be with you.’”

DAY 3

PRAY: Heavenly Father, would You show me where I am afraid and discouraged, so that I can identify the battles and ask You to fight them for me. I want to take up my position of prayer and praise, stand firm in my belief, and trust in You, and then watch the deliverance that You will bring. Thank You for how You take care of me so that I don't have to be afraid or discouraged! Father, prepare me to "go out and face them" today, tomorrow and the next day, knowing that You will be with me! Amen and Amen.

REFLECT: Sit quietly with the Lord and ask yourself – "What am I afraid of?" Then ask the Lord to reveal to you what you're not trusting Him for. And when you see those issues, can you imagine giving them to God and knowing that He is fighting those battles for you? What does it mean to stand firm and take up your position? Is that physical or emotional? Reflect on the practical meaning of this scripture.

ACT: Be vulnerable and jot down the things that bring you fear, anxiety, or worry. Is it your finances, relationships, job, education, or your insecurities? Choose one area of struggle and focus on giving that to God every day. Stand your position! Decide what you are going to do when that fear overtakes you and press into the fact that God wants to fight that battle for you. You have to give it to Him and walk away – both mentally, physically and emotionally. It is like developing a new muscle; it takes exercise, focus, prayer, and commitment.

DAY 4

YOU ARE NEVER ALONE

"THE FRIEND WHO CAN BE SILENT WITH
US IN A MOMENT OF DESPAIR OR
CONFUSION, WHO CAN STAY WITH US IN
AN HOUR OF GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT,
WHO CAN TOLERATE NOT KNOWING...
NOT HEALING, NOT CURING...
THAT IS A FRIEND WHO CARES."
-HENRI NOUWEN

New International Version

Joshua 1:9

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and
courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be
discouraged, for the Lord your God will be
with you wherever you go.

DAY 4

PRAY: Oh Jesus, help me to be strong and courageous! I don't want to be afraid or discouraged, for YOU are my God and You will be with me wherever I go. Thank You that I can turn to You when I'm feeling weak and discouraged. And thank You that You are ALWAYS there for me, for You are with me wherever I go. Oh, Jesus, help me to understand how to apply Your commandments and promises to my daily life. In Your name I pray. Amen.

REFLECT: Think about God's commandment to be strong and courageous. If He gave us that command, then it must be possible to accomplish. But how do you actually do that? Try focusing on the fact that Jesus is always with you; You are NEVER alone, even when you are by yourself. Moments of feeling weak are when you need Him desperately. Call out to Him. He will answer and give you strength, for He is with you wherever you go.

ACT: Memorize Joshua 1:9 so that it is in your mind and in your heart the next time you are discouraged. Say it over and over and let the truth of God's promise fill you up. Write the verse on an index card and start collecting a stack of cards to read over until they are a part of your very being. You will feel less and less fearful or discouraged when this verse becomes a part of your DNA! Let this be the beginning of a lifetime of scripture memorization.

DAY 5

HE RENEWS YOU

"THE BRAVE MAN IS NOT HE WHO FEELS NO FEAR, FOR THAT WERE STUPID AND IRRATIONAL; BUT HE, WHOSE NOBLE SOUL ITS FEAR SUBDUES, AND BRAVELY DARES THE DANGER NATURE SHRINKS FROM."

-JOANNA BAILLIE, POET & DRAMATIST

New International Version

Psalms 42:5-6a

Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

DAY 5

PRAY: Oh, God, don't let me despair! Would You keep renewing my soul with Your Holy Spirit and don't let me get disturbed. Help me to hope in You for I want to again praise You for Your help, Your love and Your constant presence in my every breathing moment. Why should I be downcast? For You are my Savior and my God! Selah! Amen.

REFLECT: Have you ever thought about your SOUL? What is it? How do you access it, understand it, change it, fill it, redirect it... He tells us that if we hope in God, we will again praise Him and experience His presence. So, it must be true that if you put your hope in the Lord and praise Him you will experience His presence in your soul, your mind and your emotions. So, "why are you downcast, O my soul?"

ACT: Praise God right now. Praise Him for His character, His promises, protection, His omniscience, His love, and for how He has given you life. And remember that praise is different than thanks. Today you are just praising and worshiping your Savior and your God. And whenever you are in despair, remember to start praising God for who He is. It will lift you out of that dark place and fill up your soul, giving you a hope that will not disappoint you. Try to commit to just praising God every day for a few minutes until it becomes not only a part of your day but a part of your nature.

DAY 6

ENCOURAGE OTHERS

"THE PRAYER POWER HAS NEVER BEEN TRIED TO ITS FULL CAPACITY. IF WE WANT TO SEE MIGHTY WONDERS OF DIVINE POWER AND GRACE WROUGHT IN THE PLACE OF WEAKNESS, FAILURE AND DISAPPOINTMENT, LET US ANSWER GOD'S STANDING CHALLENGE, 'CALL UNTO ME, AND I WILL ANSWER THEE, AND SHOW THEE GREAT AND MIGHTY THINGS WHICH THOU KNOWEST NOT!'"

-J. HUDSON TAYLOR

New International Version

2 Corinthians 1:8-9

We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead."

DAY 6

PRAY: Hello Lord, I'm here with You again and I want to tell You openly about my troubles. I acknowledge that when I am under great pressure, You are here. Right now, my fears seem beyond my ability to endure, yet I don't want to despair because You promise me that I should rely on You, my God who raises the dead! Please remind me that I have no need to worry about anything. You want me not to rely on myself but on You alone. I praise You! Amen.

REFLECT: As in Corinth, Christians in Hollywood often feel very alone, even to the point of despair, as they work and live in this spiritually dark and challenging environment. We don't want you to be uninformed that these people need to express their struggles to Christians outside Hollywood who will pray. We would see more breakthroughs in the media if the Christians working there had more supporters on the outside. Do you know Christians who are on the mission field in Hollywood? Can you encourage them through prayer to rely on God?

ACT: Are you connected to anyone in entertainment whom you can touch base with, pray for, encourage, or even save their life? If so, reach out to them and let them know you're praying for them. If not, pray for the Lord to connect you with a Christian in media so you can be their prayer partner and intercede as they live that difficult mission field. We'll match you as a prayer partner with an industry professional through HPN by clicking on:

<https://hollywoodprayernetwork.org/prayer> or emailing us at info@hpnemail.org.

DAY 7

DON'T BE DISCOURAGED

"NOW, GOD BE PRAISED, THAT TO
BELIEVING SOULS GIVES LIGHT IN
DARKNESS, COMFORT IN DESPAIR."
-WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

New International Version

Ephesians 3:20-21

Now to him who is able to do
immeasurably more than all we ask or
imagine, according to his power that is at
work within us, to him be glory in the
church and in Christ Jesus throughout all
generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

DAY 7

PRAY: Lord, I know that You can do immeasurably more than anything I can do on my own. So, help me not to get discouraged. I need to trust You completely with my thoughts, my words, and my actions, so that I experience Your power that is at work within me. When I feel despair, I want to give You the glory both personally, and in the church, and pass on my praise and thanks to You to future generations, forever and ever! Amen.

REFLECT: Reflect on what it means to believe in the absolute power of God. Do you believe that He really is able to do far more abundantly than anything we ask or think? Our thoughts are pretty wild and yet He can do immeasurably more than even that. And He does it in us and through us because of His power at work within us. How much of God's power do you really feel within you? It should be enough to make you shake off discouragement if you understand and embrace it fully. And would it be enough to pass it on to future generations?

ACT: PRAY for Christians you know across the world to be informed and prayerfully involved in what God is doing in their lives. Ask God to lift up people in churches all across the country to connect with your friends and family members and to stay informed about their needs and what they are doing—their struggles, victories, and battles. Your prayers for the Christians you know invite God in to do immeasurably more than all you can ask or imagine, according to His power! And your prayers have an impact through the generations!