



New Life Christian Growth Series
“Discouragement”
Booklet #21

Mountain State Ministries
P.O. Box 217
Springfield, WV 26763
www.mountainstateministries.org

Today's Date: _____

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

General Instructions:

1. Please fill in the blanks on the following pages using a King James Version of the Bible. Please read the detailed instructions for the individual lessons on page 6 before you begin to put pen to paper. NOTE: The individual lessons are designed to be completed daily so you can meditate on the material.
2. When you are done, return the **Review Section (Pages 33-36) of this booklet** to the address provided below. Keep the rest of this Booklet (Pages 1-32) for your own use. Review Sections returned less than 30 days from the time it was mailed, will not be accepted. Please spend time with the Lord in prayer and ask Him to help you learn the material.
3. As soon as we receive your completed review pages, we will grade it (Pass or Fail) and send a letter confirming your status, along with Booklet #22.
4. You will also receive a Certificate of Completion for this Booklet.

Please mail the completed Review Section to:

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Mountain State Ministries was started in January of 2017 to continue the legacy of Country Wide Prison Ministry. CWPM's purpose was to proclaim the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to prison inmates and their families, and to edify them through the teaching of the Word of God through Bible correspondence courses. MSM will continue this legacy and expand the Bible correspondence courses to anyone in world via the internet. This will provide anyone the opportunity to study God's word, become more closely imitate with Jesus, and be more sensitive and obedient to God's Holy Spirit. Our goal is to Exalt the King and to Expand the Kingdom!

Ray Witmer Jr., author of this Bible study curriculum, founded Country Wide Prison Ministry in 2003. His New Life Christian Growth Series has been administered to thousands of prison inmates throughout ever state in the Union. Mr. Witmer retired due to heath issues on 1 January 2017 and has provided Mountain State Ministries all rights to continue his legacy.

We are very grateful and appreciate Brother Ray's heart for God and his willingness to let us use this resource to spread God's Word among this generation of people.

“Verily, Verily, I say to you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” John 12:24

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******* INSTRUCTION SHEET FOR BIBLE LESSONS *******

- A. The Bible verses used in this study are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.
- B. Before doing each lesson, take time to ask God to open your understanding and show you the truth.
- C. For the best results, do only one lesson each day. Meditate on each day's lesson (there are four weeks of lessons per book).
- D. Keep in mind that these lessons are based on what the Bible says, and not on man's opinion.
- E. These lessons are designed to help you to know the truth, to know the Lord in a personal way, and to trust what the Bible says and teaches you.
- F. Remember, it is not what you, I, or any preacher says, but what the Bible says.
- G. You must learn to stand on what the Bible says to "study to show yourself approved unto God, workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15).
- H. Who wrote the Bible? (II Peter 1:21).
- I. All Scripture is inspired by God (II Timothy 3:16).
- J. Regardless of what man says, the believer (Christian) has direct access to the throne of God and is responsible directly to God. This access is through Jesus Christ and Him only (I Timothy 2:5).
- K. These studies are to help you have peace of mind (Isaiah 26:3-4).
- L. These studies will help you know if you are going to Heaven or Hell (Romans 10:13).
- M. These lessons will help you with assurance and security; these are not the same. The securing of the believer is God's work. It is a part of God's great work of salvation depending solely upon His infinite grace. Assurance is the believer's acceptance of the security provided for him in Christ. It is the result of the human soul resting in what God has promised in His Word to accomplish. This is why it is important to know what the Bible says (I John 5:11-13).



TAKE TIME TO READ BELOW BEFORE
DOING THIS LESSON

Meditate on the Scriptures of this Lesson and Ask Yourself These Questions:

1. What do these verses teach me about God and myself?
2. Is there an example here to follow or avoid?
3. Is there a command, a promise, or a warning that I need to apply?
4. What action do I need to take to align my life with this truth?



The Bible is the Word of God

GOD DOES NOT DESERT US DURING DISCOURAGING TIMES

New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement

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Lesson #1

This week's verse to memorize: Psalm 36:7

How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

David felt like God was far away from Him; he felt like a young deer seeking water. His tears mocked him saying, "Where is thy God?" When you are discouraged, you don't see things truthfully. Everything seems worse.

As the hart (deer) panteth after the water brooks, so panteth _____,
O God. My soul _____, for the living God: when
shall I _____?

My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, where is thy God? (Psalm 42:1-3).

You must remember that God does not change. If he was near you in happy times, He is near you in hard times, too.

Let your _____ covetousness; and be content
with such _____: for he hath said, I will never leave thee
nor _____. So that we may boldly say, The Lord _____
_____ and I will not _____

_____. Remember them which have rule over you, who have spoken unto
you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ is _____
_____, and to day, and for ever (Hebrews 13:5-8).

When you're discouraged, many times, you're looking inwardly; this is sinful. Looking inwardly will only bring disappointment; you must hope in what you cannot see — the living God. Faith in Him drives away discouragement.

Why art _____, O my soul? And why are _____
_____? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet _____
_____ of his countenance. O my God, my
_____:

therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar (Psalm 42:5-6).

The end of this verse says that you should continue to praise Him in the midst of discouragement. God will not desert you; His face is upon the child of God even when you feel alone. Praise drives away discouragement. Praise looks upward; it can be in the form of singing or thanking God for His character (His mercy, almightiness, justice, etc.), and it is lifting God up for all He has done for you. You can praise Him for big and small things. When He was discouraged, David remembered the victories God had given him in life. He was a shepherd and a king.

Can you think of times the Lord helped you that encourages your heart? Please take time to write it down below:

Today's Bible reading is Psalm chapter 42.

FIGHTING DISCOURAGEMENT (PART I)
New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement
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Lesson #2

This week's verse to memorize: Psalm 36:7

How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are _____
_____. Yet _____
_____ his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song _____
_____, and my prayer unto the _____ (Psalm 42:7-8).

David felt like he was at the bottom of the ocean, much like Jonah must have felt like when he was in the belly of the fish. Even in the fish, though, God remembered Jonah, and even if you feel like you are sinking low, God remembers you. David turned his heart around; he believed that God would show His lovingkindness.

I will say unto God _____, Why hast thou _____
_____? Why go _____ oppression of the enemy? As with a
_____, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me,
_____? (Psalm 42:9-10).

When you are discouraged, you have a choice to make. Do you believe that God loves you and has a plan for you that you can trust, or do you continue to dwell on the apparent hopelessness of your situation? David allowed God's song to be with him; he sang in his heart to the Lord. David prayed to the God of "my life"; this was not a prayer of discouragement, but rather, a prayer of hope and trust. Whining to God is not trust; you should pray believing God, and not challenging Him.

Why art thou _____, O my soul? And why art thou _____
_____? Hope thou in God: for I shall _____
_____, who is the health of my countenance, and my God (Psalm 42:11).

Once again, David asks discouraging questions that may seem very familiar to you. Can you answer these questions?

Why have you forgotten me, God? _____

Why am I upset because of my enemies? _____

Where is my God? _____

David's answer must be our answer; it is repeated from verse 5. His answer to discouragement is:

Hope in God (believe He will deliver you from your troubles). Do you believe? Yes _____ No _____

Praise Him. Lift up the Lord in FAITH, even though you can't see Him. Praise Him and believe that He is working in your life and has not forgotten you. Do you believe this? Yes _____ No _____

Today's Bible reading is Psalm chapter 43.

FIGHTING DISCOURAGEMENT (PART II)
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Lesson #3

This week's verse to memorize: Psalm 36:7

How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

Psalm 27 is full of truth for the believer who feels forsaken, afraid, or confused about details of life. The Lord wants to be your light — He is the one who wants to guide you through darkness.

The Lord is my _____;
whom shall I fear? The Lord is the _____
_____ ; of whom shall I be afraid? (Psalm 27:1).

The Lord wants to be your salvation — He is the one who can deliver you from your sinfulness, and then from trouble in your life even if you may not like His method of deliverance. He allows scars for sin and wrong choices, but he does not abandon you. He is the strength of your life. Are you trusting in yourself or in God to be your strength? If you are trusting in yourself, you will certainly fail and fall. If you are trusting in the Lord, as verse one says, you shall fear no one.

When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, _____
_____. Though an host should encamp against me,
_____ : though war
should rise against me, in this will _____ (Psalm 27:2-3).

Discouragement can come when you feel that life's problems are too great for you; it indicates that "you have lost your courage." Verses 2-3 teach that your courage in life does not come from being tough or prideful; true courage comes from trusting the Lord when enemies come against you. In verse three, the word "host" means an entire army.

One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after: that _____
_____ of the Lord _____, to behold
the _____, and to enquire in his temple.
For in the time of trouble _____ in his pavilion:
in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me upon _____ (Psalm 27:4-5).

In times of trouble, David desired to go to the house of the Lord. He wanted to get close to the Lord and see God's "beauty." In times of discouragement, it is important that you are faithful to the Lord and read His word to try to draw close to Him. You need to see His beauty and not your own troubles. Verse five has great promise for those discouraged or in trouble. God will hide you in His pavilion. This means that God will protect you and bring you near to Him. Scripture says that He will set you on a rock; a rock is solid and stable and doesn't move or sink. Jesus is a solid rock that you can stand on in discouraging times.

What does God do to wicked enemies that come against his innocent children? _____

Today's Bible reading is Psalm chapter 27.

DISCOURAGEMENT COMES WHEN YOU TAKE YOUR EYES OFF GOD

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Lesson #4

This week's verse to memorize: Psalm 36:7

How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

And now shall _____ above mine
enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, _____
_____ (Psalm 27:6).

David chose to take His eyes off his discouragement and place them on the Lord. He comes to the Lord with joy; he sings to the Lord because He has his eyes set on praising the Lord instead of focusing his own troubles.

Hear, O Lord, _____: have
_____, and answer me. When thou saidst,
Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, _____
_____. Hide not _____ far from me; put not thy
servant away in anger: _____;
leave me not, neither _____, O God of my salvation (Psalm 27:7-9).

You can see several truths about God from these verses; they were written during David's discouragement to teach you how to react during your discouragement.

God will be merciful to you and answer you if you ask for His mercy in humbleness. When you feel God tugging at your heart to seek Him, you had better immediately seek His face. God will not hide His face from His child, and He will not put you away in anger. God will not forsake you, because He has saved you.

When my father and my mother _____, then the _____
_____. Teach me thy way, O Lord, and _____
_____, because of mine enemies. Deliver me not over
_____: for false
witnesses are risen up _____, and such as breathe out cruelty (Psalm 27:10-12).

People will fail you. Discouragement often comes because people let you down and do not come through for you as you may expect. In the Bible, David says that even when His Father and Mother forsake him, the Lord will take him up.

If you are discouraged because of others failing you, please know that the Lord understands, and He will never fail you as people on this earth will. Even the hard things He allows to come into your life are for your best and for His glory. Look what God tells you in the following Bible verse:

And we know that _____ to them that love God, _____
_____ according to his purpose (Romans 8:28).

Today's Bible reading is II Corinthians chapter 9.

THE KEY TO DISCOURAGEMENT
New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement
Booklet #21

Lesson #5

This week's verse to memorize: Psalm 36:7

How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

Even when you feel like you are at your wits' end, you can be encouraged knowing that the Lord will be good to you in this life. He will have mercy; He will help you through your discouragement.

I had fainted, unless I had believed to _____
in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord: _____,
and he **shall strengthen thine heart**: wait, I say, on the Lord (Psalm 27:13-14).

Here are the major keys to fighting discouragement:

- Wait on the Lord; Give God Time to Work
- Be Courageous During Dark Times; God has not Forgotten You
- Trust in God
- Depend upon God

God's grace is sufficient for all things you will face in life. And God is able to make _____
_____ toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, _____
_____ : As it is written,
He hath dispersed abroad; _____
_____ : His righteousness remaineth for ever (II Corinthians 9:8-9).

God is able to do more than you ask or imagine. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above _____
_____ according to _____
_____, unto him be glory in the church by Christ
Jesus throughout all ages, _____ (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Jesus is your hope and an anchor for your soul. Which hope we have as _____
_____,
and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, _____
_____, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec (Hebrews 6:19-20).

The Lord wants you to cast all your cares upon Him because He cares for you. Humble yourselves therefore under the
_____ that he may _____
_____ in due time: Casting _____ upon
him; for he _____ (I Peter 5:6-7).

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by _____
_____ let your request be made known unto
God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep _____
_____ through Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6-7).

Today's Bible reading is Hebrews chapter 6.

ENCOURAGING A TROUBLING HEART
New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement
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Lesson #6

This week's verse to memorize: Psalm 36:7

How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

God lays out the road to encouragement:

1. Refuse to be full of worry
2. Pray
3. Thank God

When you truly cast your burdens upon the Lord, He will bring you peace. You've probably experienced one of those days when nothing seemed to go right. In fact, you may have gone through a season of weeks, months, or even years when nothing seemed to turn out as planned. No matter how strong you are, you will experience discouragement. During those times, you may feel alone; that's when you realize how weak you are.

Blessed _____, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the _____
_____, and the God of _____; Who
_____,
that we may be able to _____ which are in any trouble, by the comfort
wherewith we ourselves are _____ (II Corinthians 1:3-4).

Many people in the world want to say that Christianity — and even God Himself — is a crutch for the weak. However, it is in your weakness that you discover God's strength and the incredible encouragement He offers.

And he said unto me, _____:
for my strength is made perfect in _____. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my
_____, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take _____
_____, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses _____
_____ : for when I am weak, then am I strong (II Corinthians 12:9-10).

God never says, "You're going to be defeated." Instead, the Bible reminds you that you are conquerors through Christ.

Nay, in all these things we are more than _____
_____. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor
life, nor angels, nor principalities, _____, nor things present, nor things to come, nor
height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to _____
_____, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:37-39).

When things go wrong in your life, you need to turn to God and ask Him for help. Relief may not be immediate or even quick according to our standards, but God is ready to lead the charge to help you come through those difficult times in your life with rock solid faith in Him. Recognizing your weakness allows you to depend on the source of true strength.

What steps will you take to encourage yourself? _____

Today's Bible reading is II Corinthians chapter 12.

HANDLING OUR DISCOURAGEMENT
New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement
Booklet #21

Lesson #7

This week's verse to memorize: Proverbs 14:6

A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.

At some point, each of us will experience feelings of discouragement. A sudden change can leave us feeling unsure about the future. However, there is never a time when God is unsure. He is in control even when your life becomes fractured by the pressures of the world.

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought _____, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on it. Is not the life _____, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly father _____. Are _____ than they? (Matthew 6:25-26).

The Bible clearly tells you what you are to do when worries and concerns arise: “Do not be worried about your life. . . .” Also, the Bible says that you are to “[cast] all your discouragement (cares) on Him, because He cares for you.”

_____ therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may _____ time: _____ upon him; for he careth for you (I Peter 5:6-7).

Discouragement comes when you feel that your circumstances are beyond your control; but nothing is beyond God’s control. When discouragement approaches, do you wonder what happened to your peace? Jesus Christ is your source of true peace. When sorrows come, He calms your heart. When financial difficulties increase, He provides for each need.

Be sober, be vigilant; because _____, as a roaring lion, walketh about. Seeking whom _____: Whom resist _____, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world (I Peter 5:8-9).

The Bible says, “Cease striving and know that I am God. . . .” Be still within your heart, and allow Him to do for you what you cannot do yourself—calm your fears. God cares for you. His love is unconditional, and His Word promises that He will meet all your needs.

Be still, and _____: I will be exalted among the heathen; I will be exalted in the earth. The _____; the God of Jacob is our refuge (Psalm 46:10-11).

But my God _____ according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever (Philippians 4:19-20).

Name one thing from this lesson that you can use to fight discouragement: _____

Today's Bible reading is Hebrews chapter 12.

ARE THE STORMS OF LIFE GOD'S PURPOSE?
New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement
Booklet #21

Lesson #8

This week's verse to memorize: Proverbs 14:6

A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.

God is a God of purpose, which means that even the storms of life have a purpose. So what does God have in mind for the discouragement you encounter?

Before I was afflicted _____: but now I have _____
_____. Thou art good, and doest good, _____
_____. The proud have forged a lie against me: but _____
_____ with my whole heart (Psalm 119:67-69).

Through your difficulties and hardships, discouragement, ungodly attitudes, and habits will surface. Some of these feelings will surprise you, while others will be sins that you are struggling to eliminate or that you are ignoring.

King David experienced this truth when the prophet Nathan confronted him about his sin. Take time to read about this in 2 Samuel 12:1-15, and list sins that you have been ignoring in your own life: _____

Now, list the way you plan to get rid of these sins in your life: _____

Their heart is as fat as grease; but _____ . It is good for me that _____ ; that I _____
_____ thy statutes. The law of thy mouth is better unto me than _____ (Psalm 119:70-72).

If you were to ask the Lord, "What do you want from me most of all?" He would reply, "I want an intimate relationship with you. I want you to experience My love, and I want to experience your love in return. I want you to surrender yourself to Me, so that we can walk closely together all your life. I want to reveal Myself to you as God."

Thy hands have _____ : give me understanding, that _____ thy commandments. They that fear thee will be glad when they see me because _____ in thy word (Psalm 119:73-74).

You would probably prefer to learn the lessons of the Christian life through pleasant times, wouldn't you? But God, Who knows you well, permits just what you need, so you might walk in purity at His side. Look to your Heavenly Father and trust His purpose.

Today's Bible reading is Psalm chapter 119.

THE STORMS OF DISCOURAGEMENT — GOD’S PROVISION
New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement
Booklet #21

Lesson #9

This week's verse to memorize: Proverbs 14:6

A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.

At some point in your life, you will hit great turbulence. You may have already experienced some and can see that more is to come. Your situation may even be so serious that you think to yourself, “How am I going to make it through this?”

And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to _____, and to go before him unto the _____, while he sent the multitudes away. And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went _____ apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was _____. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, _____: for the wind was contrary (Matthew 14:22-24).

Consider the time the disciples found themselves by themselves in a storm on the Sea of Galilee. The Bible says that the boat was being battered by waves, and the wind was against them.

And in the fourth watch of the night _____, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, _____, saying, it is a spirit; and they cried out _____ (Matthew 14:25-26).

In the midst of the storm, the disciples thought they saw a ghost walking toward them. These grown men, some of whom were seasoned fisherman, cried out in fear. They remained afraid until they became aware of the fact that it was Jesus walking toward them. What happened when the men recognized Jesus?

But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, _____; it is I; be _____ And Peter answered him and said, _____; bid me come unto thee _____. And he said, _____. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, _____, to go to Jesus (Matthew 14:27-29).

The disciples received a sense of comfort. “Oh, it’s Jesus. We aren’t helpless and alone anymore. He is here.” They received courage to face their trial. Peter even had enough courage to obey Jesus and step out of the boat in the midst of the storm. The men also received confidence for their future because they realized that Jesus’ presence could not be driven away by the severe winds. The same is true today.

But when he saw the wind boisterous, _____; and beginning to _____, he cried, saying, _____. And _____ Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of _____, wherefore _____? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased (Matthew 14:30-32).

What waves and winds are battering you in life? Are you afraid? Ask the Lord to reveal His presence in your situation and then fill your senses with that awareness. Close your eyes and picture Him at your side, holding you tightly. Let your ears hear Him whisper reassurance and love. Fill your mind with the knowledge of His promises, and draw upon the strength, comfort, and courage He offers.

Today's Bible reading is Matthew chapter 14.

CONFIDENCE TO FACE DISCOURAGEMENT
New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement
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Lesson #10

This week's verse to memorize: Proverbs 14:6

A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.

Do you love the trials, difficulties, and discouragements that fill your life? Of course not! Nobody likes to go through hard times; yet you know without a doubt that these hardships will come and go throughout your entire life no matter how much you may try to avoid them. The question is, how can you face these impending troubles?

By _____ Moses, when he was born, _____
_____ of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were _____
_____ of the king's commandment. By _____ Moses, when he was come to years,
_____ the son of Pharaoh's daughter (Hebrews 11:23-24).

Moses is a wonderful example of how to confront difficulty head-on. He grew up with all the privileges and honors of a true prince of Egypt. However, he obeyed God's call to leave that life of luxury, and instead, submitted himself and assumed the position of an outcast.

Choosing rather to _____ with the people of God, than to enjoy the
_____ for a season; Esteeming the _____
_____ than the treasures in Egypt: for he had _____
_____ (Hebrews 11:25-26).

Do you think this decision was easy for Moses? He knew troubles would come; however, he kept his eyes on the goal and followed the direction of the Lord. You may ask, "Does this mean God intentionally leads us into hardship?" The answer may shock you: YES, sometimes He does.

_____ he forsook Egypt, _____ the
wrath of the king: _____, as seeing him who is
invisible (Hebrews 11:27).

Every trial is an opportunity for you to take a step forward in your Christian growth. This is why the Bible can make such a seemingly outlandish statement: "Consider it all joy... when you encounter various trials."

My brethren, count it all _____ when _____
_____; knowing this, that the _____
_____. But let patience have her perfect work,
that ye may be perfect and entire, _____ (James 1:2-4).

When you face a trial head-on and conquer it, you build endurance. As that endurance builds over time, the result is a dramatic step forward in your spiritual maturity. Simply put, God does not want you to walk around your discouragements and difficulties. He puts them in your path for a reason: within them lie opportunities for growth and new insight. What might He be trying to teach you in the midst of your current struggles?

From this point on, will you count it all joy when you fall into troubles? Yes _____ No _____

Will you, like Moses, take a stand against the pressures of this world? Yes _____ No _____

Today's Bible reading is Hebrews chapter 11.

AN ANCHOR FOR THE TIMES OF DISCOURAGEMENT
New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement
Booklet #21

Lesson #11

This week's verse to memorize: Proverbs 14:6

A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.

What do you do when the storms of life come? To whom do you turn? Where do you seek comfort and security during such difficult times? You know that storms come and go unexpectedly all throughout your life; yet, even though life tries to keep you off-balance, Scripture assures you that you can maintain a steady footing, regardless of the circumstances. How can you do that?

Let your conversation be without coveteousness; and be _____
_____ : for he hath said, I will never _____
_____. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my _____,
and I _____ what man shall do unto me (Hebrews 13:5-6).

There is an amazing truth in the Bible, that once you take hold of, will keep you steady during the most trying of times in life. Your anchor for the storms of life is simply this: Jesus Christ never changes.

Remember them which _____, who have _____
_____ the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus
Christ the _____ yesterday, and today, and _____ (Hebrews 13:7-8).

Why is this truth so vital, and what does Scripture mean by "anchor"? Think about this: every single thing in your life —your career, relationships, and finances — is in a state of constant change. You yourself are even growing and changing every minute of every day; there is nothing you can do to stop this continual change.

Be not carried about with _____ . For it is a
good thing that the heart be _____ ; not with meats, which
have not profited them that have been occupied therein (Hebrews 13:9).

If you try to hold tightly to things of the world during your hardships, you cannot keep from being pulled one way or another. Why? Because you have affixed yourself to something that is moving. You chose a foundation that isn't stable.

God is our _____, a very present _____
_____. Therefore will _____,
though the earth be moved, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar
and _____, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof (Psalm 46:1-3).

When you anchor your hopes in Christ, you can be sure that the anchor will hold. He isn't moving, changing, or leaving. He is the same as He always has been. He is the only sure footing in a world of movement, and He can keep you steady.

Be still, and _____ : I will be exalted among the heathen; I
will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts _____ ; the God of Jacob
_____ (Psalm 46:10-11).

Today's Bible reading is Hebrews chapter 13.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES AND DISCOURAGEMENT

New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement

Booklet #21

Lesson #12

This week's verse to memorize: Proverbs 14:6

A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.

Nothing is impossible for the Lord. No obstacle confuses or poses a challenge for God. Though He is sovereign over every situation, you may have trouble having this perspective when you hit difficulties and discouragement.

Abide in me, and _____, as the branch _____
_____ of itself, except it _____; no more can
ye, except _____. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth
in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth _____; for _____
_____ nothing (John 15:4-5).

Experience a shift in focus. During trials, you will tend to take your eyes off the Lord, and instead see only your problems. The longer you look at your circumstances, the larger they seem. As you dwell on it, your mindset can become very discouraged. Though God still has a direction for you to take, you are no longer concentrating on His purposes.

If a man _____, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and
men gather them, and _____, and they are burned. If
_____, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and
_____ (John 15:6-7).

Develop an incorrect assessment of resources. During troubled times, you may start taking inventory of your strength and abilities. When they prove insufficient, you will easily become discouraged. The truth is that you don't have what is needed to handle life's trials—Jesus Himself told us that; but God's capabilities are unlimited, His power is never-ending, and His wisdom is complete. You need to take stock of His resources, and not your own.

Henceforth I _____; for the servant knoweth not what
his lord doeth: but I have _____; for all things that I have
heard of my Father I have made known unto you. Ye _____,
but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you _____ and bring forth fruit,
and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it to you. These things
I command you, _____ (John 15:15-17).

View obstacles as barriers. For the believer, impediments represent opportunities, and not problems. The Lord can demonstrate His awesome power through your difficulties. At such times, you grow in your faith and learn more about your Father. If you view hardships simply as troubles, then you can miss demonstrations of God's love, power, and wisdom.

Start each day with a Christ-centered focus and with a dependence on His resources; have an "opportunity" mindset.

List some obstacles that you will give to God to help you overcome: _____

Today's Bible reading is John chapter 15.

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR A DISCOURAGED HEART
New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement
Booklet #21

Lesson #13

This week's verse to memorize: Proverbs 14:6

A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.

How would you describe God? Would you use words such as "holy," "loving," "omnipotent," "wonderful," or "almighty"? What is your concept of God? Do you think of Him as your encourager? The way you view God influences the way you relate to Him and to others.

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, _____,
and the God of _____: Who comforteth us in all our tribulation,
that we may be able to _____ which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith
we are _____ (II Corinthians 1:3-4).

The Bible describes God as the God of comfort. Comfort is another word for encouragement; it can change your outlook, attitude, and feelings of discouragement. All of us go through difficult times. A specific situation or hardship may trouble your heart. When your heart is troubled, where do you turn for comfort? When your world feels as if it is falling apart and you feel discouraged, what do you do?

For as the sufferings of _____, so our consolation (comfort) also
aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your _____
_____, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer:
or whether we be comforted, it is for your _____.
And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall _____
_____ (comfort) (II Corinthians 1:5-7).

Every believer should have assurance of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit,—the Comforter, Helper, and Encourager.

When facing darkness, look for God's light. Pray and search God's Word, and He will begin to lighten the way. Though circumstances may be the same, and pain still exists, your spirit will feel revived and your perspective will change. Your focus will be on God instead of on the difficulty.

For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of
measure, above strength, insomuch that _____:
But we had the sentence of _____, that we should not
_____, but _____ which
raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from _____, and doth deliver:
in whom we trust that he will _____ (II Corinthians 1:8-10).

What are you facing today? Whatever happens in your life, God is always there.

Do you believe that God will deliver you? _____ How will He do this? _____

How do you describe God? _____

Today's Bible reading is II Corinthians chapter 1.

PREPARATION TO BATTLE DISCOURAGEMENT

New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement

Booklet #21

Lesson #14

This week's verse to memorize: Isaiah 41:10

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Spiritual warfare is real. Everyday, an unseen battle rages around and in you. To fight victoriously, you need to dress properly and carry the right weapons. It sounds simple enough, and the Word of God even tells you what to wear and what to fight with. However, the problem is that all the equipment is spiritual in nature and must be utilized by faith.

Finally, my brethren, _____, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to _____. For we wrestle not against _____, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against _____ in high places (Ephesians 6:10-12).

Here are some suggestions for how to slip into your spiritual uniform:

Wherefore take unto you the _____, that ye may be able to _____ in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about _____, and having on the breastplate of _____; And your feet shod with the shoes of _____; Above all, taking the shield of _____, wherewith ye shall be able to _____ all the fiery darts of the wicked (Ephesians 6:13-16).

And take the helmet of _____, and the sword of the _____, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all _____ for all saints (Ephesians 6:17-18).

PRAY: "Lord, I choose to put on the **helmet of salvation** today to guard my thinking. I desire to have godly thoughts, ones that please You and keep my identity with Christ. And be not _____ to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your _____, that ye may _____ what is the good, and acceptable, _____, will of God (Romans 12:2).

Thank you, Father, for the **breastplate of righteousness**, which helps to protect my heart and emotions from the influence of the Enemy. Keep thy _____; for out of it are the issues of life. (Proverbs 4:23) Enable me to establish godly affections. But the _____

_____ is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, _____, meekness, temperance: against such thing _____ (Galatians 5:22-23). Thank you also for the **girdle of truth**. I desire my whole life to be encircled with Your truth—I want to know it, live by it, and share it with others.

Help me to set aside time each day to meditate on the Bible. Father, wherever You send me, I want to wear the **sandals of peace** and be a peacemaker. Blessed are the _____: for they shall be called _____ of God (Matthew 5:9).

Your spiritual preparation makes it possible for you to stand firm in the Lord.

Today's Bible reading is Ephesians chapter 6.

FACING THE MOUNTAIN OF DISCOUAGEMENT

New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement

Booklet #21

Lesson #15

This week's verse to memorize: Isaiah 41:10

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

The Bible uses the word "mountain" to mean different things:

- Yet have I set _____ of Zion — *A geographic location (Psalm 2:6)*
- Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to _____: thou didst hid thy face, and I was _____ — *An example of stability (Psalm 30:7)*
- Who art thou, _____? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone with shoutings, crying, _____ . — *A barrier, hindrance, or obstacle (Zechariah 4:7)*

As a disciple of Christ, you are not guaranteed an easy life. You may face many mountains (trials, difficulties, and hardship) throughout your life. How do you respond when facing what appears to be an overwhelming obstacle, problem, or dilemma? Do you panic? Do you feel discouraged? Do you feel like giving up?

Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is _____ unto Zerubbabel, saying, not by might, nor by power, _____, saith the Lord of hosts (Zechariah 4:6).

What do you feel is looming before you like an impossible mountain? Work conflict, relationship problems, finances, bad health, or an uncertain future?

Fear thou not; _____: be not dismayed; _____; I will strengthen thee; yea, I _____; yea, I _____ with the right hand of my righteousness (Isaiah 41:10).

Behold, as the _____ look unto the hand of their masters, and the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so _____, until that he have mercy upon us (Psalm 123:2).

What are some "mountains" you have in your life now? _____

How will you face and overcome these mountains? _____

No matter what you are facing or how easy or difficult the task may be, always look to God.

Today's Bible reading is Psalm chapter 123.

MOLDED BY THE MASTER — YOU ARE NOT WORTHLESS

New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement

Booklet #21

Lesson #16

This week's verse to memorize: Isaiah 41:10

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Discouragement can really overcome you if you allow yourself to entertain thoughts of worthlessness. If you constantly think things like, "I can't do anything right," or "I'm not loveable," you have placed yourself on a defeatist track.

The word which came to Jeremiah from _____, saying, Arise, and go down to the _____ house, and there I will cause thee to _____.

Then I went down to the potter's house, and behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in _____ of the potter: so _____

_____ another vessel, as seemed _____

to make it. Then the word of the Lord _____, saying. O house of Israel,

cannot I do with you as _____? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's

hand, so are _____, O house of Israel (Jeremiah 18:1-6).

God never considers you to be worthless. When He sees you, He beholds an individual with potential and great value. To you He says, "Behold, like the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand."

Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that _____, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose _____ from the Lord. For he shall be like the _____

_____, and shall not see when _____;

but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that

_____, and whose hope the Lord is (Jeremiah 17:5-7).

A shapeless lump of clay may seem useless, but in the hands of a master potter, it can become a rare and precious treasure. You may wonder about the trials you are undergoing that make you feel discouraged. Why does life seem so hard?

For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out _____ by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not _____

in the year of drought, neither shall _____

_____ (Jeremiah 17:8).

The heart is _____, and _____

_____: who can know it? I the Lord _____; I try

the reins, even to give every man _____, and according to

_____ (Jeremiah 17:9-10).

Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction (Isaiah 48:10). He is forming your character into something that will last eternally.

When you are in God's hands, He is making you into something priceless. You have worth because you are His priceless treasure.

Today's Bible reading is Jeremiah chapter 17.

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR DISCOURAGEMENT
New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement
Booklet #21

Lesson #17

This week's verse to memorize: Isaiah 41:10

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath _____,
_____, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have _____,
that thy _____: and when thou art converted,
_____ (Luke 22:31-32).

Christ's battle was not against Rome — it was against sin; He saw the truth of the situation, whereas Peter had a limited view. Jesus understood that in the stressful events leading up to the crucifixion, the disciples would be filled with sorrow and confusion; Jesus knew that Peter would fail.

And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready _____, both into
prison, and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt _____
_____ (Luke 22:33-34).

Jesus knows there will be times when you fail like Peter. Things will arise in your life—distresses, discouragement, pain — that will be extraordinarily difficult to stand against, and you will flounder. However, Jesus is interceding for you.

Then took they him (Jesus), _____, and brought him into the high priest's house.
And Peter _____. And when they had kindled a fire in
the midst of the hall, and were set down together, _____
_____. But a certain maid beheld him (Peter) as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said,
_____. And he denied him,
saying, Woman, _____. And after a little while another saw him,
and said, Thou art _____. And Peter said, Man, _____
_____. And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, of a truth this fellow also
was with him: for he is a Galilaean. And Peter said, Man, _____ what thou sayest. And
immediately, _____, the cock crew. And the Lord turned and
_____. And Peter _____
_____ of the Lord, how he had said unto him, before the cock crows, thou shalt
deny me thrice. And Peter went out and _____ (Luke 22:54-62).

Nothing is really lost by a life of sacrifice; everything is lost by a failure to obey God's call. When you fall, do not be afraid of God. He always accepts you with open arms. Focus instead on His forgiveness and on honoring Him with your life.

Today's Bible reading is Luke chapter 22.

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR TIMES OF FAILURE
New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement
Booklet #21

Lesson #18

This week's verse to memorize: Isaiah 41:10

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee;
yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

*Have you failed? Are you discouraged? Are you bothered by emotions of embarrassment and remorse? **Then, be encouraged!** Simon Peter, one of the great disciples, failed and experienced the same things you may be experiencing. During Christ's trial and crucifixion, it was crucial that the disciples stayed together and kept their faith strong. Instead, they fled; Simon Peter went as far as denying his beloved Friend, Jesus, three times. However, when they met again after the resurrection, Jesus held no malice for Peter.*

So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, _____
_____? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that _____
_____. He saith unto him, _____ lambs (John 21:15).

Jesus did not chastise Peter; rather, he stressed that for Peter to truly show his love, he would have to take on the commission, "Tend My lambs."

He (Jesus) saith to him (Peter) again _____ Simon, son of Jonas,
_____? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that _____
_____. He saith unto him, _____ (John 21:16).

The same is true for you. God does not desire for you to remain ashamed. His direction is that you renew your commitment and take up the purpose for which He called you.

He (Jesus) saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, _____
Peter was grieved because he said unto him the _____, Lovest thou me? And
he said unto him, Lord, thou _____; thou knowest that
I love thee, Jesus saith unto him, _____ (John 21:17).

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou _____,
and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shall stretch forth thy hands, and another shall
_____, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what
death he _____ God, and when he had spoken this, he saith unto him.
_____ (John 21:18-19).

Your greatest glory is never in being discouraged, but in rising each time you fall. You have no reason to live in shame. Rise again, and take on the Godly life to which God called you. You may find that your biggest discouragement was only the beginning to your greatest victory.

Discouragement is from Satan; what are you doing to overcome it? _____

Today's Bible reading is John chapter 21.

OVERCOMING DISCOURAGEMENT WITH PRAYER
New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement
Booklet #21

Lesson #19

This week's verse to memorize: Isaiah 41:10

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Discouragement is an inevitable part of every life—whether a person is saved or unsaved. The difference is that once a person becomes a believer, the Father strengthens him or her to face every difficulty; he or she is His child.

And Jehoshaphat stood in the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord, before the new court. And said, O Lord God of our Fathers, art thou not _____?
And rulest not thou over all the _____?
And in thine hand is there not _____, so that none is able to _____? Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever? (II Chronicles 20:5-7).

Your omniscient and all-powerful God is greater than any problem in your life. He knows your future circumstances and prepares your heart and mind to withstand coming trials. The moment you encounter a problem, you can tap into His omnipotence. He promised to meet believers' needs; therefore, He is under His own divine obligation to give guidance and direction. Your first response should always be to call out, "Father!" Immediately, two things will take place: the problem's growth is stunted, and you are reminded of the unique position given to those who trust in the sovereign Lord.

And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a sanctuary therein _____, saying, if, when evil cometh upon us, as the sword, _____, or famine, we stand before this house, and in _____, (for thy name is in this house,) and cry unto thee in our affliction, then thou wilt _____ (II Chronicles 20:8-9).

God always gives a solution to every problem; however, you should not be sitting back and waiting for Him to work out the details. The Lord usually requires an act of faith from His child to jumpstart the resolution. Experience and trust should tell you that His solutions are always best, but human strength may falter when you hear what He asks of you. Thankfully, the One Who gives you endurance also offers courage to act at the right moment.

And all Judah _____, with their little ones, their wives, and their children. Then upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, came the _____ in the midst of the congregation; And he said Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not _____ by reason of this great multitude; for the _____, but God's (II Chronicles 20:13-15).

Long before a crisis arises or a solution is needed, a wise believer will be consistently seeking God. In trouble-free times, you can build a foundation of trust and develop communication with Him that can help you withstand any hardship. Problems are unavoidable, but the Father is faithful to help bear your discouragement. Make a list of problems that are unsolved and take them to your Father in prayer.

Today's Bible reading is II Chronicles chapter 20.

WHEN DISCOURAGEMENT COMES
New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement
Booklet #21

Lesson #20

This week's verse to memorize: Isaiah 41:10

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Discouragement is inevitable. In nature, powerful tempests leave a changed landscape behind them. In your life, challenging circumstances can force you to shift direction.

And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples _____, and to go before him unto the _____, while he sent the multitudes away. And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain _____: and when the evening was come, _____. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, _____: for the wind was contrary (Matthew 14:22-24).

When difficulties arise, do you say to the Lord, "I am doing what you asked, so why is this happening?" Such thinking assumes that being in the center of God's will exempts you from problems. In Matthew 14, Jesus instructed the disciples to get in the boat and go to the other side of the sea. As they were obeying Him, high winds and waves developed. The truth is, storms can arise even when you are exactly where God wants you to be.

These things I have spoken unto you, that ye might _____, in _____ ye shall have _____ but be of good cheer; _____ (John 16:33).

Another question you may sometimes ask is, "Father, what have I done wrong?" Many of us automatically assume that we are a large part of the problem. God does use trials to correct you, but not all situations come from your mistakes. He may allow troubles to perfect you — that is, to mature you and help you grow into Christ's likeness; this was the case with the disciples. Jesus knew what laid ahead for them, and He desired to make them fit vessels for the work He was calling them to do. The lashing winds created an environment conducive to learning key lessons for future ministry.

And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, _____. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and _____ for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them saying, _____; it is I; be not afraid (Matthew 14:25-27).

God uses all kinds of different ways to train and equip you, because He wants you to become a strong, vital servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. Realize that nothing can happen to a child of God unless He allows it. Instead of keeping your head bent low against the struggles of life, look up to the Lord, and seek His purposes in your challenges.

What things are you blaming God for not doing in your life? Is God really the one who should be receiving all of the blame? _____

Today's Bible reading is Matthew chapter 14.

WHEN WE FEEL BURNED OUT OR DISCOURAGED

New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement

Booklet #21

Lesson #21

This week's verse to memorize: I Peter 4:2

That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to do the will of God.

Discouragement or Burnout. In this fast-paced, overworked world, most of us have felt the tiring numbness of burnout and have become discouraged very easily. How should a believer in Christ respond to these feelings?

Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, _____
from the Lord, and my judgment is _____ from my God? Hast thou
not known? Hast thou not heard, that the _____,
the Lord, the _____,
_____, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding (Isaiah 40:27-28).

Surrender. Even if it does not seem like the right or easy thing to do, you must surrender everything you have to the Lord. His hands are large enough to hold anything and everything you need Him to handle. When you try to keep everything to yourself, you will eventually start to lose control.

He giveth _____; and to them that have no might _____
_____. Even the youths _____
_____, and the young men shall utterly _____; But _____
_____ upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as
eagles; they shall run, _____; and they shall walk,
_____, and not faint (Isaiah 40:29-31).

Depend on Him. Have you ever given a concern to the Lord, only to find yourself trying to take it back? You probably tend to want to fix things yourself. However, the truth is that only God has the power to bring all matters to their proper conclusion. When you try to take things back, you will only interfere with the solution He wants to bring about.

And we know that _____ for _____, to
them who are the _____ to his purpose (Romans 8:28).

Trust Him. Do not overlook this vital point: God loves you. Because of His great love, God wants to take care of you.

Therefore I say unto you, Take no _____, what ye shall
_____, or what ye shall _____; nor for your body, what ye shall _____.
Is not the _____, and the body than raiment? Behold the
_____: for they sow not, neither do they _____,
nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly father _____. Are ye not _____
_____? Which of you by _____
_____ can add one cubit unto his stature? (Matthew 6:25-27).

Are you burned out or discouraged? If so, return to the Spirit and be rekindled today.

What do you desire to do for the Lord for the rest of your life? _____

Today's Bible reading is Matthew chapter 6.

LIFTING THE WEIGHT OF OUR BURDENS AND DISCOURAGEMENT

New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement

Booklet #21

Lesson #22

This week's verse to memorize: I Peter 4:2

That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to do the will of God.

Have you ever suddenly woke up in the middle of the night with a heavy burden on your heart? Whether emotional, financial, or relational, your burdens can weigh you down and make you discouraged; they can also spur you to action.

As for me, _____; and the Lord shall _____ . Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and _____ voice (Psalm 55:16-17).

In life, there are different kinds of burdens. Some, like an impulse to pray for others or a strong motivation to do God's will, are intentionally placed by the Lord and won't be lifted until He has accomplished His purpose through them. You will also have sin burdens, though; these burdens cannot be removed until confessed. You are not meant to carry burdens stemming from worries over daily life, family responsibilities, and the like.

He hath delivered my _____ from the battle that was against me; for there were many with me. _____, and afflict them, even he that abideth of old. Selah. Because they have no changes, therefore they _____ He hath put _____ such as be at peace with him: he hath broken his covenant (Psalm 55:18-20).

You may tend to think of burdens as unavoidable in life, as if you were ordained to shoulder these difficulties yourself without "bothering" God about your trivial problems.

Cast thy burden _____, and he shall _____: he shall never _____ the righteous to be moved. But thou, O God, shall bring them down in a _____: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; but I _____ (Psalm 55:22-23).

Actually, your purpose in life is to walk obediently before God and to trust Him to handle any weightiness in your life. You are to cast every burden on Him by identifying what it is and then surrendering it into His care. Laying burdens down requires faith. When you trust God, He will sustain you as He has promised.

Blessed be the Lord, _____, even the God of our salvation (Psalm 68:19).

Are you carrying a heavy load? _____ God wants to cradle you and your burdens in His hand. Make a list of the load you are carrying, and begin praying about it: _____

Today's Bible reading is Psalm chapter 55.

FIGHTING DISCOURAGEMENT WHEN THINGS SEEM IMPOSSIBLE

New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement

Booklet #21

Lesson #23

This week's verse to memorize: I Peter 4:2

That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to do the will of God.

Even Christ's disciples struggled with doubt and fear in times of trouble and uncertainty, and many times, they cast their focus in the wrong direction.

After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias, and a great _____ because they saw his _____ which he did on them that were diseased. And Jesus went up into a mountain and there he sat with _____. And the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and _____ come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, _____? (John 6:1-5).

Before He was about to perform the miracle of feeding the 5,000, Jesus tested Philip by asking him where to buy bread. Philip's response revealed that he was thinking of solving the dilemma through man's ideas and worldly means. At the same time, Andrew was busy surveying the crowd, trying to determine his own approach to the situation.

And this he said to prove him; for he himself _____. Phillip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not _____ for them, that every one of them may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him. There is a lad here, who _____: but what are they among so many? (John 6:6-9).

As was true for all of His miracles, Jesus performed this amazing feat of compassion and sympathy to prove who He was then and still is today. The very same Christ who fed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish will act on your behalf when situations seem impossible.

And Jesus said, _____. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about _____. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he _____, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were _____; And likewise of the fishes _____ (John 6:10-11).

In difficult times, when it seems all hope is lost, try not to look upon your discouragement from a worldly perspective. Don't ask, "What am I going to do?" Rather, in a spirit of faith, simply say, "Lord, what are You going to do?" He tells you to cast all of your cares upon Him because He cares for you.

When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they _____, and _____ with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which _____ unto them that had eaten (John 6:12-13).

Patience and faith will help you know God's grace and experience His love and miraculous touch in your life.

Today's Bible reading is John chapter 6.

COURAGE TO FACE DISCOURAGEMENT'S TRIALS
New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement
Booklet #21

Lesson #24

This week's verse to memorize: I Peter 4:2

That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to do the will of God.

The Bible's details of Paul's life reveal the courageous way he handled his trials. He was opposed by religious leaders, manhandled by magistrates, and mobbed by large crowds; yet, through it all, he stood firm in his allegiance to Christ.

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure _____.
I have fought a good fight. I have _____, I have _____:
Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness,
which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall _____ at that day: and not to me only, but unto _____ also that love his appearing (II Timothy 4:6-8).

Before dismissing him as superhuman, though, let's look at Paul's own testimony. He said that he came to the Corinthians in weakness, and he spoke with fear and trembling. He claimed that he had been pushed far beyond his ability to endure.

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with _____
or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know _____
_____, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in _____,
and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with _____
_____ of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the _____ and of _____:
That your faith should not stand in wisdom of _____, but in the power of _____ (I Corinthians 2:1-5).

In fact, Paul's emotions were so strong that the Lord exhorted him not to be afraid; he was human just like us. What did Paul know that would also help us? Wherever the apostle was, God was personally present. Paul believed Jesus' promise to be with him to the end of time.

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am _____
_____, even unto the _____ (Matthew 28:20).

Paul trusted in the guiding presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and he also took heart from the Lord's reassurance of His nearness.

Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, _____, but speak, and
hold not thy peace: For I _____, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for
I have much people in this city. And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the _____
_____ (Acts 18:9-11).

Because we belong to Jesus Christ, we can know for certain that our God is always with us. We, too, have the Savior's unending pledge of nearness and the Holy Spirit as our permanent companion. As we embrace these truths, we will discover the courage to face life's discouragement. What a precious blessing: God is with you!

Today's Bible reading is Acts chapter 18.

A COURAGEOUS LIFE WITHOUT DISCOURAGEMENT

New Life Christian Growth Series - Discouragement

Booklet #21

Lesson #25

This week's verse to memorize: I Peter 4:2

That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to do the will of God.

When you recognize God's presence within you, courage starts to develop; it grows as you draw on His strength.

The eyes of your understanding _____; that ye may _____ what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding _____ to us-ward _____, according to the _____ of his mighty power (Ephesians 1:18-19).

Without God's enabling power, hardship and stress will drain you emotionally and hurt you physically. Such depletion leaves you spiritually vulnerable to Satan's attacks. The nation of Israel is a great example. They should have believed the two spies that trusted in the Lord's presence and power to help them. Instead, they allowed their weakness to sway them, and they sided with the remaining ten spies, who claimed that the Canaanite obstacles were too great.

Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him (Jesus) from the dead, and set him at _____ in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in _____, but in that _____. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be _____ to the church. Which is _____, the fullness of him that filleth all in all (Ephesians 1:20-23).

Paul faced the Romans after enduring great hardship, but was not dismayed because God stood with him and strengthened him. In fact, Paul discovered that the Lord's power in his life reached its peak when he was at his lowest point.

And he said unto me, my grace is _____; for my strength is _____ in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather _____, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I _____ in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for _____ (II Corinthians 12:9-10).

Times of helplessness and weakness are, in reality, opportunities to receive an abundance of divine power.

Not that I speak in respect of _____; for _____, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be _____. I know both how to be abased, and I know how _____; every where and in all things I am instructed both to be _____ and to be _____, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do _____ through Christ which strengtheneth me (Philippians 4:11-13).

Instead of seeking a way out of discouragement and trials, accept God's way as Paul did, and you'll find courage. Imagine yourself standing next to God, drawing on His strength, and fulfilling His desires; that is a picture of courage.

Name one trial that you are giving to God: _____

Today's Bible reading is II Corinthians chapter 12.

New Life Christian Growth Series—Discouragement

*****Booklet #21 Test & Review (Pages 33-36)*****

Instructions: After you complete pages 7-34 of this Booklet, please answer the following questions to share what you have learned. When you are all done, please mail pages 33-36 ONLY, back to: Mountain State Ministries, P.O. Box 217, Springfield, WV 26763. When we receive it, we will review your answers and grade it (Pass or Fail).

Today's Date: ____/____/____

My Full Name: _____

This week's verse to memorize: I Peter 4:2

That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to do the will of God.

Section #1: Multiple Choice

Each question below is followed by three answers, only one of the answers is correct. Read each question carefully; then, select the correct answer and circle it. Each of these questions are taken from Scripture and the lessons in this book.

1. As the deer panteth after:
(A) Green grass
(B) Water brooks
(C) Other deer
2. O my God, my soul is cast down:
(A) Within me
(B) In the sea
(C) In Hell
3. Why is my soul:
(A) Sad
(B) Lifted up
(C) Cast down
4. The Lord wants to be your:
(A) Light
(B) Strength
(C) Savior
5. I desire that the Lord:
(A) Set me up upon a rock
(B) Keep me safe
(C) Make me rich
6. I will sing praises unto:
(A) Man
(B) My family
(C) The Lord
7. We know all thing work together:
(A) To them that help each other
(B) To them that love God
(C) To them that read the Bible
8. Waiting on the Lord will:
(A) Keep you safe
(B) Strengthen your heart
(C) Make you happy
9. Humble yourself under:
(A) The hand of God
(B) Your spouse
(C) Authority figures in the church
10. Be careful for nothing, but do what?
(A) Handle everything with prayer
(B) Ignore life's problems
(C) Give things to your church
11. The road to encouragement is to:
(A) Sing songs
(B) Have lots of money
(C) Pray instead of worry
12. What will separate us from God?
(A) No height, nor depth
(B) Not going to church
(C) Being sinful

Today's Bible reading is II Corinthians chapter 1.

New Life Christian Growth Series—Discouragement

*****Booklet #21 Test & Review (Pages 33-36)*****

This week's verse to memorize: I Peter 4:2

That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to do the will of God.

Section #2: True or False

Each question below is followed by a blank. Read each question carefully. If the statement is true, write the word, "true" in the blank. If the statement is false, write the word "false" in the blank. Each of these questions are taken from Scripture and the lessons in this book.

1. Therefore, I say unto you, take no thought for your life. _____
2. Humble yourself, therefore, under the mighty hand of God. _____
3. Be still, and know that I am not your God. _____
4. Thy hands have made me and fashioned me. _____
5. Jesus went unto them by the sea walking on the beach. _____
6. Moses was hid for five months when he was born. _____
7. My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into temptation. _____
8. Be content with such things as ye have. _____
9. God is your refuge and strength in times of trouble. _____
10. Remember them which have rule over you. _____
11. Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." _____
12. I can have no comfort in times of trouble. _____
13. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord. _____
14. Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. _____
15. Not by might, nor by power, but by myself. _____
16. Fear thou not: for I am with thee. _____
17. The heart is pure above all things. _____
18. Jesus does not view you in light of your failures. _____

Today's Bible reading is Ephesians chapter 2.

New Life Christian Growth Series—Discouragement

*****Booklet #21 Test & Review (Pages 33-36)*****

Sometimes we can be discouraged by our own sins and failures; but we should not be discouraged by life's circumstances that God has given to us, for God is always aware of them and He cares. Even when we do not understand why things happen at times, we can continue to trust in God, trusting Him to work all things together for good to those who love Him. Our responsibility, then, is to be sure that we know and love Him. Do you know and love Him? Explain. _____

It is easy to get discouraged when we focus on ourselves, but when we keep our eyes on Jesus, we see things differently. What are some Bible verses from the lesson that are meaningful to you and that you can read when you feel discouraged? _____

Often, we learn most through difficult and discouraging times. God uses these times to help us focus on Him and to teach us to surrender all to Him and trust in Him alone. Are you trusting in Jesus alone? Have you surrendered your life to Him? Are you willing to stand upon His word—even if no one else seems to stand with you? Explain. _____

New Life Christian Growth Series—Discouragement

*****Booklet #21 Test & Review (Pages 33-36)*****

Even when we get discouraged at times, we can always find comfort in the fact that God loves us—even when we mess up or if it seems that no one cares. Let us, then, stay near to God, for He loves His children and will never forsake them. Life may seem difficult, but God may just be forming you into a beautiful vessel that He can use for His glory. What does it mean to you that God loves you and values you so much that He gave up His only Son to die for you so that you could live forever with Him if you trust in His Son? Are you certain that you are trusting in Him? Do you have eternal life (John 3:16; I John 5:13)? Explain your answers.

Do you have any comments or questions about what you have studied in this lesson or anything else? Is there any way that we can pray for you? Are there any other topics that you would like to study?

If it is your desire to have this Bible lesson series sent to a family member and/or friend, please fill out the following:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Relation to you: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Relation to you: _____