



REAL WOMEN!

Hitting the Wall of Discouragement

R. E. A. L.
Women!
R. elevant
E. ncouraging
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*Prepare your minds for action.
1 Peter 1:13*

In meditating on this Preparing Your Mind for Action scripture I found myself struggling and struggling to break through into the truths I knew God was trying to reveal. I felt like the wall was soooo thick I could never breakthrough. There was a strong temptation to say, "Forget it." Flooding thoughts of "why bother?" crashed over me, wave after wave. After all what is the point? Who cares?

Suddenly it dawned on me; I needed to *Prepare my Mind!* I had hit the wall of discouragement. So how do you prepare your mind for dealing with the discouraging wall?

First: Realize that the Wall of Discouragement exists. It is a given. Living in this life, we will **always** face discouragement. Somehow, accepting this wall as an enemy that I face helps me prepare my mind and makes it easier to cope with. Taking the time to examine where this discouragement finds an opening to our hearts is well worth the effort. Please understand opportunities to be discouraged abound. Receiving bad news, having people desert the cause, financial issues, working hard and not getting the promotion desired and trouble with spouse or children are definite things that bring discouragement. The question is: how are we going to respond to these discouraging situations?

Discouragement comes in many forms. It feels as elusive as a nagging dread or as obvious as a dark cloud on a clear day. It can show up as heaviness or anxiety. It can feel like an oppressive wind making it hard to breathe. Discouragement comes against your feelings to try and get to your faith. We must lead by our faith, and then our feelings will come along.

The goal of the spirit of discouragement is to cause us to lose our motivation to accomplish some valid goal. It aims to make us to emotionally fatigued and discouraged ultimately so we either slow down or completely stop any progress to the once purposed end. We begin to doubt if the cost is worth the effort; in short we lose sight of the objective.

The target of discouragement is our heart or our soul; that part of us in which our emotions, will and intellect abide. Hebrews 12:3 reminds us to *consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart* or as the New King James translates: *For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.* We must become skilled at guarding our hearts, our minds and our wills or discouragement will render our courage of none effect.

Discouragement would tell us we are weak, insecure and unable to accomplish our assignments; which *without* The Lord is true. But, sisters, we do have a Savior, who is alive and reigning over the whole earth. He is strong and powerful—and that power is available to defeat any strongholds that would assail our minds, our emotions or our intellect. The Walls of Discouragement are not so thick that they cannot be broken through. In fact; they must come subject to His Word and His Power.

In the gospels we find the disciples in hiding after they heard the most discouraging news possible. Jesus had been arrested, crucified and buried. They went back to their homes, huddling up in fear and discouragement. But then, the women came with an amazing story! He had risen. What looks like death can with God's help can be the beginning of Life. God truly is working all things together for those that love Him and are called to His purpose, including the most discouraging things that happen to us. This is our hope; this is the main tool we can use against discouragement.

We fight discouragement by taking courage—by becoming confident and courageous in the face of real or possible danger. We "take" courage from the Lord. He offers it freely. 1 Thes-



**Live Free,
Sisters,
Live Free**

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salonians 2: 2 *You know how we had already been ill-treated and insulted in Philippi before we came to you in Thessalonica. And even though there was much opposition, our God gave us courage to tell you the Good News that comes from him.* God gives us courage as we look to Him. We gain courage from who He is. As we take the time to really “look” at Him, we are reminded of His Power, His love and His Authority. As we look at Him our mind shifts for our inabilities, to His abilities, from discouragement to courage.

When you begin to notice this evil force assailing you:

1. Stop what you are doing.
2. Look at Jesus. Begin to meditate on Him, what He has done for you. Remind yourself of answered prayers and testimonies of yourself and others.

3. Ask the Holy Spirit for Help. Pray in the Spirit. Take the authority given you by the Scriptures.

4. Do not isolate yourself. Develop strong relationships. We gain encouragement and courage from our brothers and sisters.

5. Take time to sing and worship Him.

6. Declare your intentions, with His help to breakthrough this wall of discouragement.

Remember, preparing your mind for action is a lot like the military preparing for war. In fact, one of the expressions used for combat is “action”. A common question for soldiers, “did you see any “combat” while you were in Iraq?” If we are conscious that we are going to face the enemy of discouragement, then we must know we can and must defeat

discouragement. We do not have to fall victim to its evil force. Equip yourself for victory!

Written by: Martha Rodman

In writing the above article, I went through some very discouraging times. I have had to put into practice the above suggestions, and I would be glad to report—they work! Taking the time to really look at Jesus and see Him, in His power and might made working through these discouragements so much easier. Faith was rising within me, even when the situations outwardly didn’t seem to be changing at all. But, I trust Him. He is so very faithful, dear sisters.

Martha Rodman

Statement of Faith:

We are becoming Relevant, Encouragers who are Alive to God and His Spirit, even to the point of Being Lion-Hearted!

Impart ministries

apostolic perspectives for encouraging and establishing churches and Christian leaders...

Impart Ministries News Update

Impart Ministries is pleased to announce a new and improved web site. www.impart.org has been re-worked and now includes all the back issues of Real Women, Impartation as well as a calendar of events, blogs and other useful information. We are so thankful and grateful to our son Andrew, who gifted us with this updated site. Darryl spent many hours posting the back issues of Real Women, and I am very thankful to him as well. Please take time to visit the site!



Leadership Encouragement

Dear Women of Influence (Leaders!),

What a wonderful privilege it is to serve Him. The joy of watching others grow in Him due to our influence is so satisfying. At the same time, it is a sobering responsibility that we carry and it affects every aspect of our lives. I have been re-reading through the books of Timothy looking for the wisdom Paul shared with Timothy on how to be a good leader. These books are filled with guidelines, standards and encouragement on how to function in this role.

We are instructed in I Timothy 6:11 to, *“pursue righteousness, godliness, faithfulness, love, endurance, and gentleness.”* The Amplified Bible expands it to say: *But as for you, O man of God, flee from all these things; aim at and pursue righteousness (right standing with God and true goodness), godliness (which is the loving fear of God and being Christlike), faith, love, steadfastness (patience), and gentleness of heart.*

It is our responsibility as leaders to actively pursue these virtues in our lives. Paul exhorts Timothy to *pursue* these virtues. Examine your heart. When was the last time you *actively pursued* righteousness? Godliness? Faithfulness? Love? Endurance? Or gentleness? For most leaders, there is a strong desire to have these qualities at work in their lives. But, I am afraid, many of us get a bit lazy in their active pursuit. These are the very virtues that will take us from being a good leader to a great leader. If we desire to truly influence others for Christ, we must take the time to seek after God in these areas.

Unfortunately, as leaders we can maintain our position without aggressively working in these areas. In the extreme, some leaders expect their followers to “put up with” their own shortcomings in these soul holes, while urging perfection with those they lead. This disconnect leads to frustration and discouragement, in both the leaders and those they lead.

The difference between a good art piece

and a great art piece is often in the attention to details. It is the same with leadership. Taking the time to seek or pursue God in these important areas is crucial. Too often leaders “shoot themselves in the foot” because they haven’t taken the time to allow the Lord to sand off the rough places of their personality and work in adding patience and longsuffering to their lives. We cannot grow in our leadership skills without paying attention to these fruits of the Spirit.

I believe almost every leader we know would agree with the need to pursue righteousness—the seeking of conforming our way and walk with Him by His power and grace. What about godliness? If I am seeking righteousness doesn’t that automatically mean that I would be pursuing godliness? Apparently not, because Paul tells us to seek both righteousness and godliness. The best definition that I could find for “godliness” is: *a God-honoring manner of life, issuing from a true knowledge of God and his grace in Jesus Christ. A genuine devotion to God transforms relationships and behavior in every context.*

To chase a life of godliness is to seek to be God honoring in every area of our life...something we can only do as we allow His Spirit to conform us to His ways. We cannot become “godly” on our own, but neither can we shrug our shoulders and say, “Well that’s just the way I am.” when something less than God honoring comes forth from our mouths or actions. Prayerfully seeking and practicing godliness is not an option, according to Paul it is a requirement. If we continue to pursue faithfulness (to our God as well as our relationships and responsibilities) we will grow in our influence as well. The rest of the list: love, endurance and gentleness must be also developed.

Adding these qualities to leadership will open the doors of influence many are seeking. These virtues give us the keys to others’ hearts and when we have their hearts, we can ask for their hands to work together to accomplish the goals of ministry.

As Darryl and I travel through the various streams of the church, the main issue of concern and frustration of “followers” has to do with a leader’s real or perceived personality struggles. These are not areas of sin, per se, but areas in which the Holy Spirit is still working to bring into conformity to Christ likeness. Let us be careful that after walking with Him and getting much of the basics down, we don’t become forgetful and sloppy in our responses to others.

If we take the time to add courtesy to our lives—to pursue or seek after each of these virtues’ our influence will increase monumentally. Remember:

But as for you, O man of God, flee from all these things; aim at and pursue righteousness (right standing with God and true goodness), godliness (which is the loving fear of God and being Christlike), faith, love, steadfastness (patience), and gentleness of heart.

Dear Single Sisters (continued)

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pure status ahead of marriage. It will not promote a healthy marriage, it will only subtract from it. Seek Godly counsel concerning the timing of your marriage.

God has a plan which is wise and good. Remember, God is a good God who loves to give us His good gifts. I am not recommending you sit at home and wait for Mr. Right to ring your doorbell; by all means go out and live your life with fullness and joy. But, be careful to do it under the scriptural guidelines He has given us. We love you and appreciate your gift and place in His Body. Please share the gift of your life with us, for you are needed.



Building Together Across Generations

Dear Single Sister and those that love them,

I am writing to you because I felt God wanted you to know that you are important to the Body of Christ. We appreciate you. We might not always know how to show our concern, our care or our support as best as we could, but we do need you and the value you add to our lives. Some of you are single by choice, some by circumstance, and some are single again due to death or divorce. There is also a segment of the church that is "single in Christ", meaning that their spouse is an unbeliever and therefore when it comes to church activities they are definitely alone. With the number of singles predicted to make up nearly one-third of households by 2010, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, you need to know you are not alone.

Many of our Single Sisters desire to join the ranks of the married. Their current single state is to them a cross to bear. The struggle with loneliness, planning for the future, and how to remain pure in our sexually focused world become very real issues.

I would love to give you a formula for finding Mr. Right, I am sure I would make millions! However, each woman's story is just that, her own story. I can only encourage you to seek Him.

When I graduated from the University of Washington, still single with no beau it was difficult. I had been attending a Plymouth Brethren church full of college age singles. We so enjoyed each other. Then, poof that season of life was over, my triplet sisters, Marie and Mary were both married so I felt even more like the spinster sister. I had (in all honesty and transparency) self promoted a relationship with a fellow named Paul. God directly told me, "He is not the one for you, break it off". I had to ask Him to help me for the fear of being unattached was quite real. How immature and selfish I was. The very next day Paul told me, "I can't do this anymore" and I felt bad because he was the one who ended it-- not me!

My friend and I headed for Alaska. It was an excellent time for me to seek the Lord. For the first time in my life God encouraged me to pray for my husband; whoever he might be (this really was a brand new thought!). So, I prayed as God led. He began to lead me to pray, "Lord, make me whole". "Prepare me for marriage". My parents had a difficult marriage and after 43 years, divorced. I did not want the same result. He worked in my heart and soul so that I became content in the state I was in. Was it easy? No. Was it worth it? Yes! As I learned to turn to Him, I learned how to be alone, but not lonely. I learned to enjoy friendships with guys and gals. I learned to enjoy being with Him. The State of Singleness is not a state to be ashamed of. It is not a state to rush through. I know that sounds so trite and simplistic. I know it sounds like, "That is easy for you to say, you've been married for 33 years!" But, my dear sisters, it is true. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 7:32 *I want you to be free from worry. A man who is not married is busy with the Lord's work, trying to please the Lord.*

There is wisdom found in this verse. I found that when I began to be busy with the Lord's work and trying to please the Lord, I actually stopped worrying about "who, what or when" I would be married. My eyes were loosed from being "bound" to the frustration and fears of not being married, and began to focus on what I could do for Him in my single state that I couldn't do if I was married.

The church has not perfected the art of helping singles. Many are definitely striving to meet the myriad of needs these wonderful fellow believers face. You may feel like a fifth wheel, overused, or overlooked, but please know that you are important to Him and to us. We need you. We need to hear from you. We need your forgiveness when we don't do it right and we need your support as leaders attempting to meet the needs of both families as well as singles. Those of you who are single again have your own special needs and concerns. Our heart hurts for you as you learn to mourn the passing of a dream, to handle the financial and physical issues of maintaining a household alone again, and perhaps raising children alone. The Scripture tells us if there are any sick among us let him call for the elders. My advice is if there are needs that are not being met, and then take the time to call the elders and share your need in faith, trust and grace. God tells us to help bear one another's burdens, but many times those burdens are not made known so they are not shared.

And my dear single sister, please be careful. There are obvious temptations lurking to draw you away from your First Love. Lies promoted by your adversary tempting you to take matters of your future mate "in your own hands" compromising your values and dreams simply to have companionship. Those who have succumbed to these temptations would warn you. It is not worth it. You will end up more alone in a godless marriage than you were single.

And my dear single sister who believes you have found your mate...but has put off marriage until "the right time" please be careful as well. There never is a "best time". Do not compromise your

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R.E.A.L.
Women

Encouraging

Enthusiastic

Enduring

Examples

Eager

Sign up for

The Email Version of
Real Women!

Email your request:

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