

SEQUOIA NOTES

Today's Sequoia Message...

Overcoming Discouragement & Despair

With Ryan Dawson - Lead Pastor
January 7, 2024



2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV) "We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

Stronghold = anything that exalts itself in our minds, "pretending" to be bigger or more powerful than our God.

- **Jesus has already won the victory over our strongholds.**

Where do you go when life brings discouragement & despair?

Psalm 42 (NLT) For the choir director: A psalm of the descendants of Korah. As the deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O God. ² I thirst for God, the living God. When can I go and stand before him? ³ Day and night I have only tears for food, while my enemies continually taunt me, saying, "Where is this God of yours." ⁴ My heart is breaking as I remember how it used to be: I walked among the crowds of worshipers, leading a great procession to the house of God, singing for joy and giving thanks amid the sound of a great celebration! ⁵ Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Saviour and ⁶ my God! Now I am deeply discouraged, but I will remember you—even from distant Mount Hermon, the source of the Jordan, from the land of Mount Mizar. ⁷ I hear the tumult of the raging seas as your waves and surging tides sweep over me. ⁸ But each day the Lord pours his unfailing love upon me, and through each night I sing his songs, praying to God who gives me life. ⁹ "O God my rock," I cry, "Why have you forgotten me? Why must I wander around in grief, oppressed by my enemies?" ¹⁰ Their taunts break my bones. They scoff, "Where is this God of yours?" ¹¹ Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Saviour and my God!

"Where is this God of yours?"

2 Corinthians 1:8 (NIV) "We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. ⁹ Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.

- **Put your hope in God, not your circumstances.**

⁵ Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Saviour and ⁶ my God!

Hebrews 11:1-2 (NLT) "Faith shows the reality of what we hope for; it is the evidence of things we cannot see. ² Through their faith, the people in days of old earned a good reputation."

Romans 4:17

Romans 8:28

Practice the Gaze vs Glance Principle

- **Praise God even when you don't feel like it.**

^{5b} I will praise him again—my Saviour and my God!

⁸ But each day the Lord pours his unfailing love upon me, and through each night I sing his songs, praying to God who gives me life.

Lamentations 3:21-23

- **Proclaim God's goodness all the time.**

⁹"O God my rock"

^{11b} I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Saviour and my God!

Romans 10:17 (NLT) "Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ."

Isaiah 61:1-4 (NLT) The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon me, for the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort the broken-hearted and to proclaim that captives will be released and prisoners will be freed. ² He has sent me to tell those who mourn that the time of the Lord's favour has come, and with it, the day of God's anger against their enemies. ³ To all who mourn in Israel, he will give a crown of beauty for ashes, a joyous blessing instead of mourning, festive praise instead of despair. In their righteousness, they will be like great oaks that the Lord has planted for his own glory. ⁴ They will rebuild the ancient ruins, repairing cities destroyed long ago. They will revive them, though they have been deserted for many generations.

- **The remedy to our discouragement is a recognition that God is with us & for us.**

Big Idea: Embrace the presence of Christ to overcome discouragement & despair.

The Translation of the Bible Scriptures used in today's service are from the New Living Translation (NLT), the New International Version (NIV), & the New King James Version (NKJV)



Sequoia Impact Communities are where we
live out our identity as a
Family of Servants on Mission.

To get plugged in email:

impactcommunities@sequoiachurch.org

Overcoming Discouragement & Despair
#8 of 10 - January 7, 2024

- 1) How do you normally handle seasons of discouragement and despair? What do you do to navigate these challenging experiences?
- 2) Read Psalm 42. What is the **Context** for this passage? Who is the writer and the recipients? Where does this fit in the book as a whole? What are the circumstances?
- 3) **Observation:** What “jumps out” in this passages? What interesting details do you observe? What questions come up about the passage? What is the major theme in the passage?
- 4) **Meaning:** What was the meaning for the original recipients? What meaning is inferred in this Psalm for us?
- 5) In what ways do our circumstances often lie to us?
- 6) What steps does the psalmist take to overcome his discouragement?
- 7) Read Isaiah 61:1-4. Jesus used this passage to inaugurate his ministry. How does this Good News help us navigate seasons of discouragement and despair?
- 8) How does the recognition that God is with with us and for us, help us overcome the stronghold of discouragement and despair?
- 9) **Application:** How is God speaking to you today through this message? What steps do you need to take to put your hope in God, praise God even when you don't feel like it, and proclaim His goodness all the time?



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