

Abide in Me

*Mentored by the Master
Discipleship in Real Time*



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Encourage Yourself in the Lord

1 Samuel 30:1-6

Discouragement is a subject we don't often talk about, but everyone experiences it at different times in life. Today we will look at a time in David's life when he encountered many discouraging experiences. Over time, those experiences shaped his thinking and determined his actions. Discouragement can be dangerous to our spiritual lives because it distorts our perception and clouds our vision, causing us to overlook our blessings while magnifying our struggles and fears.

In 1 Samuel 30:1-6, David experienced the devastating loss of his home, his family, and the support of his men. At that moment, when David had nothing and no one to encourage him, he encouraged himself in the Lord his God. He shifted his focus by turning to God, talking to God, and trusting in God.

David's victory over discouragement positioned him to lead his men to victory and recover all that the enemy had taken and more! When we face disappointments and discouragements, David's example inspires us to encourage ourselves in the Lord. Jesus told us *"In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."* John 16:33

TEXT

¹ Now when David and his men came to Ziklag on the third day, the Amalekites had made a raid against the Negeb and against Ziklag. They had overcome Ziklag and burned it with fire ² and taken captive the women and all who were in it, both small and great. They killed no one, but carried them off and went their way. ³ And when David and his men came to the city, they found it burned with fire, and their wives and sons and daughters taken captive. ⁴ Then David and the people who were with him raised their voices and wept until they had no more strength to weep. ⁵ David's two wives also had been taken captive, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail the widow of Nabal of Carmel. ⁶ And David was greatly distressed, for the people spoke of stoning him, because all the people were bitter in soul, each for his sons and daughters. But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Proverbs 13:12: "Hope deferred makes the heart sick..."
 - a. Question: Have you ever experienced "hope deferred"?
 - b. How did it impact your outlook on life and faith?

- c. In what areas of life do you find yourself discouraged?
 - d. How does discouragement affect your spiritual life and relationship with God?
2. Abraham and Sarah waited 25 years for the child God promised. Along the way, they grew discouraged and took matters into their own hands.
- a. How did their decision to act out of discouragement impact their lives and the lives of others?
 - b. What does this teach us about handling disappointment?
3. Paul Tripp said, "Waiting is not just about what I get at the end of the wait, but about who I become as I wait."
- a. How does this perspective on waiting change the way you see discouragement or unmet expectations?
 - b. How can we grow in faith and patience in seasons of waiting?
4. David faced many setbacks after his initial anointing.
- a. How do life's hardships affect our faith?
 - b. Do they refine us, drawing us closer to God, or do they define us, making us feel defeated?
 - c. What are some ways we can let hardships refine us rather than define us?
5. After years of running from Saul, David decided to leave Israel and settle in Philistine territory, living in a place called Ziklag for 16 months.
- a. Why do you think David chose to move into enemy territory instead of seeking God's guidance?

- b. What risks do we take when we rely solely on our own understanding?
 - c. Have you ever made a choice for temporary relief that led to unforeseen consequences?
 - d. How might staying rooted in prayer and Scripture help us avoid settling in “enemy territory”?
6. Read Psalm 13:1-6. David shared his frustrations with God, yet ultimately affirmed his trust in God’s character and goodness.
- a. In verses 1-2, David voices his troubles. Why is it essential to express our disappointments and fears to God rather than letting them fester?
 - b. In verses 5-6, David transitions to trust and praise. How does this encourage us to talk to ourselves about God’s faithfulness instead of only focusing on our troubles?
7. Read 1 Samuel 30:4-6. David and his men wept until they had no more strength. Their anguish soon turned to anger against David.
- a. Why do you think the men’s sorrow turned to anger at David?
 - b. How does this reflect our tendency to shift from sorrow to blame when we feel helpless?
 - c. How can we ensure our response to pain remains focused on healing and faith rather than anger and blame?
 - d. Have you ever faced a situation that left you feeling devastated? How did you react?
8. 1 Samuel 30:6 “But David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.”
- a. What does it mean to encourage yourself in the Lord?

