

# Encouragement for Weary Servants: When Life Gets Hard, Don't Quit

Life has a way of wearing us down. Whether it's unexpected changes, rejection from others, or simply the weight of daily struggles, we all face seasons where we want to throw in the towel. Paul's experience in Acts 18 offers powerful encouragement for anyone feeling weary and ready to quit.

## What Does It Mean to Be a Weary Servant?

Paul's journey to Corinth reveals the reality of spiritual weariness. After facing intellectual challenges in Athens, he arrived in Corinth - a city known for its moral corruption. Corinth was essentially the Las Vegas of the ancient world, complete with temple prostitutes and rampant immorality. Paul had every reason to feel overwhelmed.

The message is simple but profound: Don't quit. When you're weary, tired, and discouraged in life, don't quit because God's not done using you. He's not done working in you. This is not the final chapter of your life.

## How Does God Work Through Life's Unexpected Changes?

### God Uses Disruption for Divine Connections

Paul met Aquila and Priscilla in Corinth - fellow tentmakers who had been forced out of Rome by Emperor Claudius. What seemed like a disruption became a divine appointment. Through their shared trade, Paul found not just work partners but spiritual family members who would become crucial to the early church.

"And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome" - Acts 18:2

Sometimes the inconveniences and sufferings in our lives aren't just negative circumstances. God is always doing something greater than what we see presently. When He starts moving in your life, shifting gears, there's something planned - ultimately to reveal Jesus through your circumstances.

### Flexibility in Ministry and Work

This was the first time Scripture mentions Paul making tents during his missionary work. He chose to work with his hands rather than burden the Corinthian church financially. Both full-time ministry support and bi-vocational ministry are biblical - the key is following the Holy Spirit's leading.

Don't throw a tantrum when life changes and it's not fair. Instead, surrender your heart to the Lord and say, "God, you're in charge. You lead."

# Why Should We Keep Sharing Jesus When People Reject Us?

Paul faced fierce opposition from the Jews in Corinth. When they opposed and blasphemed, he shook out his garments and declared, "Your blood be upon your own heads. I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles" (Acts 18:6).

## The Power of Moving Next Door

Paul's response was remarkable - he simply went next door to Justus's house. When God closes one door, look for the next open door. Don't let rejection derail you from sharing the Gospel.

The results were encouraging: Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed along with his entire household. Many Corinthians heard, believed, and were baptized. God's word doesn't return void.

Lesson: Don't quit sharing Jesus even when people won't hear you. Just go next door. There are ears and hearts out there searching for hope who want to hear the good news.

## How Do We Overcome Fear in Ministry and Life?

Despite seeing God work, Paul still faced real fears. Otherwise, God wouldn't have needed to say, "Do not be afraid" in Acts 18:9. In a night vision, the Lord told Paul:

"Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city" - Acts 18:9-10

## What Fear Does to Us

Fear affects us in three devastating ways:

1. Fear shuts our lips from speaking what we should be speaking - whether praising God or witnessing to others
2. Fear clouds our minds from understanding God's truth about His presence and power
3. Fear causes us to forget His promises - we can't see the people God is preparing to reach

## God's Antidote to Fear

When fear grips you, remember three truths:

- God's presence is with you - "I am with you"
- God's power protects you - "No one will attack you to hurt you"
- God's promises are sure - "I have many people in this city"

# What Practical Steps Help During Discouraging Times?

When facing discouragement, three practices prove essential:

## 1. Set Your Eyes on Jesus Anew

Too often we focus on people, circumstances, or what's not happening, and we spiral downward. "Consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls" - Hebrews 12:3.

Jesus said, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" - Matthew 11:28.

## 2. Wait Upon the Lord

"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint" - Isaiah 40:31.

Waiting isn't wasting time - it's waiting expectantly because you know God is going to move. Your heart is just as important as the issue clouding your heart. You need a quiet heart, a quiet time, and a quiet place to hear from the Lord.

## 3. Open Your Ears to His Word

"And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart" - Galatians 6:9.

Paul stayed in Corinth for 18 months - the longest he'd remained anywhere - teaching them the Word of God. Not political parties or social agendas, but God's Word. It's not always glamorous, but it's always good.

## How Does God Protect His Servants?

When the Jews brought Paul before Gallio, the Roman proconsul, Paul was about to defend himself when Gallio intervened. He dismissed the case as a religious dispute, effectively giving Christianity legal protection throughout the region.

Paul was promised no harm, and even when men tried to harm him, God stepped in. The Lord essentially said, "Remember, I said I'd be with you. I got this. You just chill. I'll defend you."

## Life Application

This week, identify one area where you're tempted to quit - whether in ministry, relationships, work, or personal growth. Instead of giving up, take these three steps:

1. Look for the "next door" opportunity - Where might God be opening a new path when one seems closed?
2. Spend time in God's Word - Let His promises about His presence, power, and purposes speak to your fears
3. Connect with someone to hear what God is doing in their life - let their testimony refresh your own faith

Don't make big decisions on bad days. Let the bad days be bad days, but go back to what you know to be true from God's Word. Let God carry you because you can't walk through this alone.

Questions for Reflection:

- What situation in your life is making you want to quit right now?
- How might God be using current disruptions to create new opportunities for ministry or growth?
- What fears are keeping you from speaking up about your faith or continuing in what God has called you to do?
- When was the last time you waited quietly before the Lord instead of spinning in circles trying to fix everything yourself?

Remember: God is not done with you. He's not done working in you or through you. This is not the final chapter of your story.