

Introduction: A mythical story and a brief review

A definition

Dis-cour-age-ment (-ment) *n.* - to deprive of courage, hope, or confidence; to lose heart.

The question

Where are you most prone to struggle with discouragement?

Discouragement is the #1 destroyer of God's plans for our lives; just before we receive God's highest and best, many of us throw in the towel.

God's plan for slaying the dragon of discouragement

A - Attitude

God's will in adversity – _____

*² Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, **lacking in nothing**.*

James 1:2-4

R - Resource

God's promise in the process – _____

⁵ But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. ⁶ But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, ⁸ being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

James 1:5-8

T - Theology

God's prescription for perseverance – _____

⁹ But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position; ¹⁰ and the rich man is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away. ¹¹ For the sun rises with a scorching wind and withers the grass; and its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away. ¹² Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

James 1:9-12

Hanging tough in tough times demand we:

1. Get God's perspective on our circumstances. James 1:9-11

- How? By looking at our circumstances, through the eyes of _____.

2. Get God's perspective on our future. James 1:12a

- How? By looking at our future, through the lens of _____.

3. Get God's perspective on our motivation. James 1:12a

- How? By looking at our motivation, through the lens of _____.

Summary/review – You can slay the dragon of discouragement!

1. Re-evaluate your circumstances.

- **The test:** is my faith in things that are perishable or things that are _____?

2. Re-evaluate your focus.

- **The test:** is my hope determined by the size of my problems or the certainty of God's _____?

3. Re-evaluate your motivation.

The test: is the primary motivation of my heart to _____
or simply get relief and please myself?

