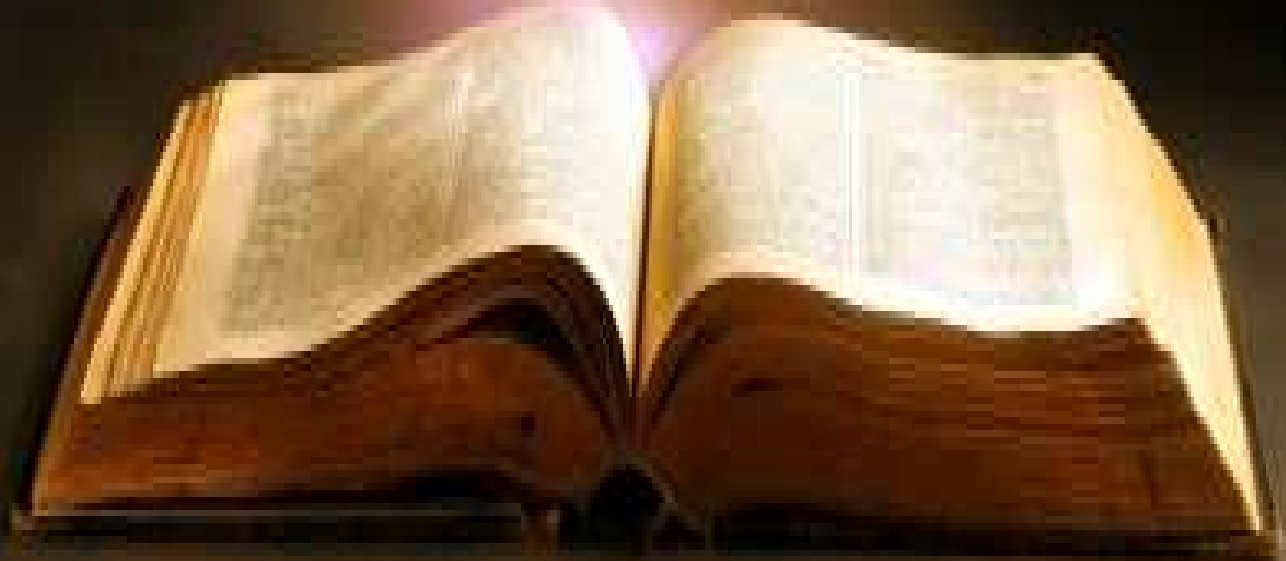


**THE BIBLE: A SOURCE OF  
ENCOURAGEMENT EVEN IN  
THE MIDST OF  
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**Willie Alvarenga**





# **THE BIBLE: A SOURCE OF ENCOURAGEMENT EVEN IN THE MIDST OF DISCOURAGEMENT**

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**TEXT:** Philippians 4:1-20

**PROPOSITION:** Every Christian must believe that the Word of God can provide encouragement when difficult times come our way.

**OBJECTIVE:** Encourage Christians to turn to the Word of God for encouragement.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

1. The central theme of the letter to the Philippians is **“Living for Christ”** (Philippians 1:21).
2. Now, in the process of living for Christ, we will all face trials and afflictions which may discourage Christians.
3. Difficult times are real:
  - a. Death of a love one
  - b. House burnt down
  - c. Someone stealing our car
  - d. Lost a job and have no money
  - e. Natural disasters
  - f. Etc.
4. What do we do when difficult times come our way?
5. How do we handle discouragement?
  - a. If we take a moment to realize, we will notice that many Christians get discouraged and walk away from Christianity because of discouragement in their lives.



- b. How we handle discouragement will determine where we will spend eternity.
- 6. In this lesson, I want to share with you a few biblical principles taken from God's Word, which can help us to overcome difficult times in our lives.
- 7. Let us remember that there is power in the Word of God to...**
  - a. Save us (James 1:21; Romans 1:16)
  - b. Give us happiness (Jeremiah 15:16)
  - c. Keep us away from sinning (Psalm 119:11)
  - d. Feed us spiritually (1 Peter 2:2)
  - e. Comfort us (Romans 15:5)
  - f. Guide us (Psalm 119:105)
- 8. The Bible also has power to encourage Christians.
- 9. Therefore, as we consider these principles, may I encourage you to be a doer of God's Word? (James 1:22; Luke 9:44; Luke 8:12)
- 10. These Biblical principles will be taken from the fourth chapter of the letter to the Philippians.

**STATEMENT OF DISCUSSION:** According to the Word of God, if every Christian wants to overcome discouragements in life, he must...

**I. REMEMBER TO STAND FAST IN THE LORD (Philippians 4:1).**

- A. When difficult times come, the Bible instructs us to stand fast in the Lord.
- B. Consider the teaching of the Bible:
  - a. Philippians 4:1
  - b. Ephesians 6:10-18
  - c. Philippians 1:27
  - d. Psalm 27:14
  - e. Psalm 55:22
  - f. Psalm 34:19
  - g. Revelation 2:10



**C. Many stood fast in the Lord, even in the midst of affliction:**

- a. Job (Job 1-42)
- b. Daniel (Daniel 6) The lion's den, God delivered him
- c. Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego (Daniel 3). Notice: v. 16-18 for their courage and steadfastness.
- d. Many of the prophets of old.

**D. Notice that Philippians 4:1 says, "Stand fast in the Lord"**

- a. We are not to stand fast in our might (2 Corinthians 3:4-5; John 15:5)
- b. We are not to stand fast in our own understanding (Proverbs 3:5-6)
- c. We are not to stand fast in the world (1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4)
- d. We are to stand fast **IN THE LORD!**

E. Are you standing fast in the Lord? Hope and pray that your answer is yes!

**II. REMEMBER THAT OUR NAMES ARE WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF LIFE (Philippians 4:3).**

A. This is another way how the Bible encourages Christians to remain faithful, even when trouble times are here.

**B. The Bible says a lot about the Book of Life:**

- a. We can know our names are written in the Book of Life (1 John 5:13; Philippians 4:3).
- b. If we have obeyed the gospel of Christ, we can be sure that our names are written in the Book of Life (Baptism puts us into Christ, Galatians 3:27).
- c. Our names can be blotted out if we give up (Revelation 3:5; 20:14-15).
- d. God wants us in Heaven (John 14:1-3).

C. We must keep Heaven in our minds so that we may not give up (Revelation 21:4)



**D. There is a great reward to those who never give up:**

- a. 2 Timothy 4:7-8
- b. James 1:12
- c. Revelation 2:10
- d. Matthew 24:13
- e. 1 Peter 5:8-11
- f. Revelation 3:5
- g. Revelation 3:12

E. Let us never forget the reward that God bestows upon the faithful ones.

F. How often do you think about heaven and your name in the Book of Life?

**III. REMEMBER TO REJOICE IN THE LORD NO MATTER WHAT  
(Philippians 4:4).**

A. This makes no sense to the people of the world and even among some Christians.

**B. The Bible tells us that we must rejoice in the midst of affliction:**

- a. Philippians 4:4 Where was Paul when he wrote this verse?
- b. Colossians 1:24
- c. James 1:2

**C. The apostles rejoiced in the Lord when they suffered for the cause of Christ:**

- a. Acts 5:40-41 (Peter and John)
- b. Acts 16:25 (Paul and Silas)
- c. Hebrews 12:2 (Jesus)
- d. Matthew 5:10-12 (Sermon on the Mount)
- e. 1 Peter 4:13, 16 (Rejoice as we partake of Christ's sufferings)

D. This may not be an easy task, but fully trusting in God's help, we can have the strength to rejoice even when we face trouble times.

E. Are you rejoicing in the Lord?



#### **IV. REMEMBER THE BLESSING OF THE AVENUE OF PRAYER**

**(Philippians 4:6-7).**

A. Yes brethren, we MUST remember the blessing of the avenue of prayer.

**B. We are instructed to pray at all times:**

- a. Philippians 4:6-7
- b. 1 Thessalonians 5:17
- c. Colossians 4:2
- d. Romans 12:12
- e. Matthew 26:41

C. Jesus is our example on prayer:

- a. Mark 1:35
- b. Luke 6:12
- c. Matthew 26:36, 39, 42, 44

D. How often do we pray?

E. We must turn to God in times of need (Hebrews 4:16).

#### **V. REMEMBER TO KEEP AN OPTIMISTIC ATTITUDE (Philippians 4:13).**

A. A faithful Christian must keep an optimistic attitude at all times.

**B. Examples of those who had an optimistic attitude:**

- a. Paul (Philippians 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:16-18)

C. An optimistic attitude will help us to not get discouraged.

D. We have many Christians who lose their faith and end up giving up Christianity.

- a. We must remember that God is with us (Hebrews 13:5; Matthew 28:20)

**E. Do you have an optimistic attitude?**



- a. Remember that without faith, it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11:6).

## **VI. REMEMBER GOD'S PROVISION (Philippians 4:19).**

A. If you have studied the Bible, you will realize that God has never forsaken His people.

### **B. God cares for us:**

- a. **Matthew 6:25-34** (Sermon on the Mount)
- b. God has said that He will never forsake us (**Hebrews 13:5**). These were the same words God told Joshua. As we read the 24 chapters of Joshua, we realize that God never forsook him.
- c. God, through His providence, will provide for our needs.
- d. **Luke 22:35**, God provided for His people.
- e. **Genesis 48:15**, Jacob's words as he blesses Joseph's sons "**The God who has fed me all my life long to this day**"
- f. **Psalms 84:11** "**No good thing will God withhold from those who walk uprightly**"

C. We must trust in God at all times!

## **VII. REMEMBER TO GIVE GOD THE GLORY NO MATTER WHAT (Philippians 4:20).**

A. This is one very important point: God must receive the glory, even when we suffer.

- a. Let us remember the life of Job, a man who suffered so much, but that still gave God the glory (Job 1:21-22).

B. Notice that Paul, finishes this letter, by telling the brethren at Philippi that God must be glory forever and ever (Philippians 4:20).

C. No matter what we experience in life, we **MUST** give God the glory at all times.



- D. Paul was in prison at the time he writes Philippians. Even though he was there, he still gave God the glory.
  - a. We must do the same!
- E. May God help us to this end!

## **CONCLUSION:**

1. In this lesson we have discussed several principles that help us to stay encouraged, no matter what.
2. Therefore, next time you face trials and afflictions, remember the following...
  - a. Remember to stand fast in the Lord
  - b. Remember your name in the Book of Life
  - c. Remember to rejoice at all times
  - d. Remember the blessing of the avenue of prayer
  - e. Remember to keep an optimistic attitude
  - f. Remember that God will supply all of your needs
  - g. Remember to give God the glory now and forever
3. By doing these things, we will be able to be more than conquerors over discouragement and afflictions.
4. God will always give us the victory (1 Corinthians 15:57)!