

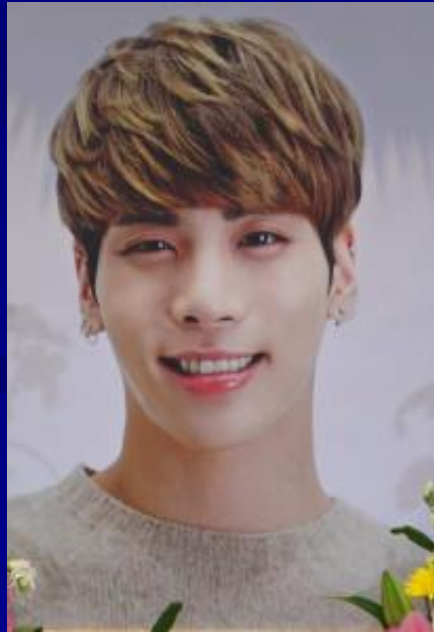
1. WE LIVE IN A BROKEN WORLD

- We live in a broken world, where everything leads to **SELFISHNESS AND DESPAIR**. Our plans falter, our dreams die, our resolves weaken, our perspective dims. How should we handle the difficulties of a broken world? **MANY BECOME DISCOURAGED. HANA KIMURA**, a youthful Japanese Indonesian wrestler & a pretty psychologically vulnerable youth, was severely criticised on the internet. The pressure must be excruciating – for a young person with little understanding of what they have got themselves into and no-one trustworthy to turn to & she committed suicide.



1. WE LIVE IN A BROKEN WORLD

- **KOREAN POP STARS** may seem to have be so happy. What people don't realize is that many of them suffer from mental stress due to their ridiculously hectic & micro-managed lifestyles, not to mention the constant criticism & hate they receive from the Internet! 7 Korean pop celebrities have faced hate & constant criticism and unfortunately, 7 have taken their own lives due to the pressure. **COVID PANDEMIC HAS SEEN THE RISE OF DEPRESSION & SUICIDES.**



2. WHY IS DISCOURAGEMENT SO POWERFUL?

■ (1) **IT IS POWERFUL BECAUSE IT RELATES TO OUR EMOTIONS.** It is a feeling of being down, or unsuccessful, or a failure, a worry, a struggle. (2) **IT IS POWERFUL BECAUSE IT RELATES TO HOW WE RELATE TO OTHERS.** Often we become discouraged when we compare ourselves to others: looks, weight, wealth, education, ability.



■ **(3) DISCOURAGEMENT IS POWERFUL BECAUSE IT FOCUSES OUR ATTENTION ON AREAS OF OUR FEAR. NAOMI OSAKA** four-time Grand Slam champion & one of the biggest names in tennis, said “I get really nervous and find it stressful to always try to engage and give you the best answers I can. I’m introverted & anyone that has seen me at the tournaments will notice that I’m often wearing headphones to help dull my social anxiety,” **NAOMI & WE NEED TO DEFEAT DISCOURAGEMENT PERMANENTLY.**



■ **(4) DISCOURAGEMENT CAN LEAD US TO EVIL DEEDS:** In Idar-Oberstein, Germany, a cashier, a student, told the customer to put on a face mask, as required in all German shops. After a brief argument, the man left. The suspect returned about an hour & a half later, this time wearing a mask. But as he brought his six-pack of beer to the till, he took off his mask & another discussion ensued. The perpetrator then pulled out a revolver & shot the cashier in the head. The suspect, a 49-year-old German man, walked to a police station the next day. He was arrested & has confessed to the murder. **HE “ACTED OUT OF ANGER ABOUT THE REJECTION”**



2. WHY IS DISCOURAGEMENT SO POWERFUL?

(5) IT'S THE DEVIL'S MOST USEFUL TOOL: It was advertised that the devil was going to put up his tools for sale. On the date of the sale the tools were placed for public inspection, each being marked with its sale price. Many tools were on display, including hatred, envy, jealousy, doubt, lying, pride and so on. Laid apart from the rest of the pile was a harmless-looking tool, well worn and priced very high. "The name of that tool?" asked one of the purchasers. "Oh," replied the devil, "**THAT'S DISCOURAGEMENT.**"



FURY
WRATH
BITTERNESS
LOATHING
RESENTMENT
HATE

Buzzle.com

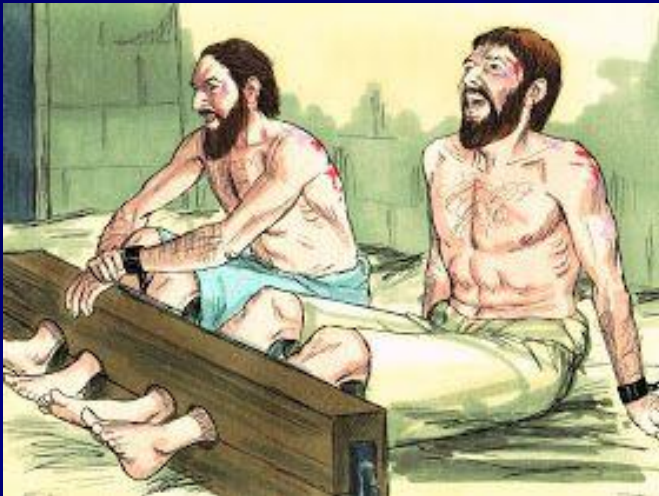


■ DISCOURAGEMENT THE DEVIL'S TOOL: "WHY HAVE YOU PRICED IT SO HIGH?" "Because it's more useful to me than the others. I can pry open and get inside a person's heart with that one, when I cannot get near him with other tools. Now once I get inside, I can make him do what I choose. It's a badly worn tool because I use it on almost everyone since few people know it belongs to me." **THE DEVIL'S PRICE FOR DISCOURAGEMENT WAS SO HIGH, HE NEVER SOLD IT. IT'S STILL HIS MAJOR TOOL. THE DEVIL USES IT ON GOD'S PEOPLE EVERYDAY.**



3. GOD IS THE SOURCE OF ENCOURAGEMENT

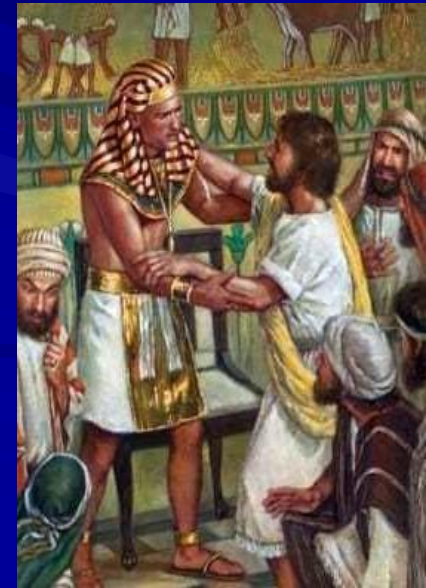
- (1) BY PROVIDING AN INNER JOY & PEACE (DESPITE CIRCUMSTANCES) Paul & Silas were thrown into prison, But instead of being discouraged **Acts 16:25-26** ²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose. **WITHOUT THIS INNER JOY & PEACE, NO AMOUNT OF COUSELING OR HELP HAS ANY LONG TERM EFFECT.**



3. GOD IS THE SOURCE OF ENCOURAGEMENT

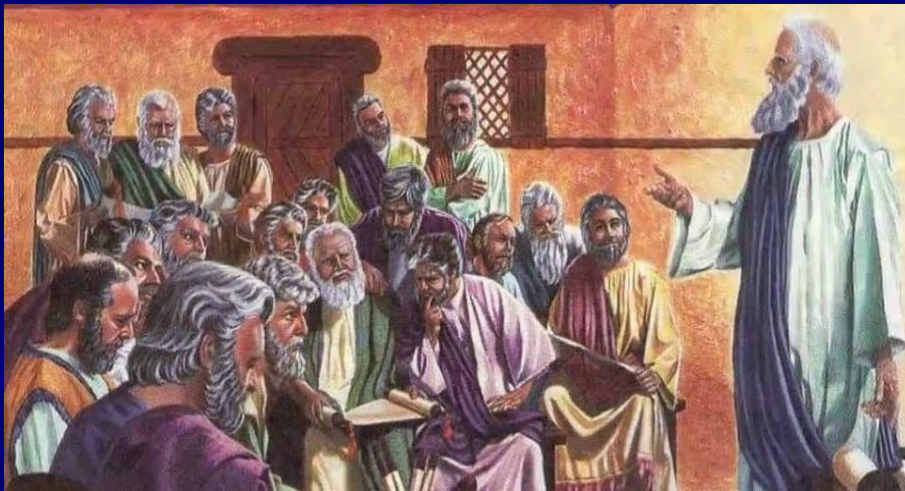
■ (2) WE GET THIS INNER JOY & PEACE BY GOD'S

CONTINUED PRESENCE. When God is present with us, we can endure anything. Take God away from us, & the slightest trial will overcome us. When we go through severe trials & deep valleys, Satan tempts us to doubt God's presence, which leads to feelings of hopelessness & total despair. But, God was with Joseph who went from pit to prison to palace. (Genesis 37-50) **IS GOD'S PRESENCE WITH YOU?**



3. GOD IS THE SOURCE OF ENCOURAGEMENT

■ **(3) BY ALWAYS REMEMBERING THE WORK WE HAVE DONE FOR HIM.** Paul could probably see nothing but failure. He had failed to reach the Jews with the gospel of Christ, yet Christ came and reminded Paul that he had testified of Him in Jerusalem. What an encouragement this must have been for Paul. ***Romans 15:16*** *He gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.* **GOD NEVER FORGETS WHAT YOU HAVE DONE FOR HIM. DON'T QUIT & LET THE DEVIL WIN.**



3. GOD IS THE SOURCE OF ENCOURAGEMENT

■ **(4) BY PROVIDING FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE HIM (DESPITE PAST FAILURES):** Paul was now in chains, no longer able to preach & move about on his own. Earlier, he had purposed in his heart to preach Christ in Rome. His present circumstances would not encourage him to think he had any prospect of doing that. But God comes & tells Paul that he will indeed have opportunity to preach Christ in Rome. (**Acts 27**) God wasn't done with Paul after all. **DON'T GET DISCOURAGED BY CIRCUMSTANCES SUCH AS COVID. ENSURE GOD'S PRESENCE IS WITH YOU.**

