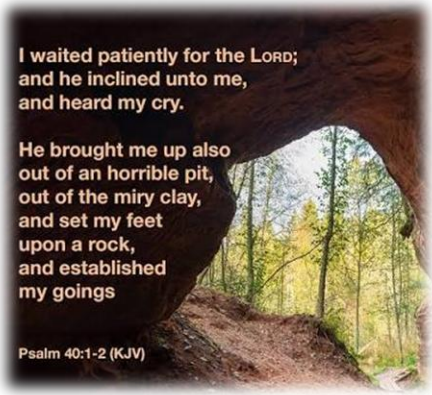
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SOVEREIGN HOPE
bible presbyterian church

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Biblical Foundations for Christian Encouragement



Discouragement is a real concern for many Christians, and it robs us of pure peace and comfort in the Lord. David, the psalmist, experienced it in Psa 40:1-2. It robs us of our vitality, zeal, joy and even our contentment. Many have suffered at the hands of this foe and often defeated by it. There can also be fatigue, a sense of hopelessness, despair, self-pity, depression, doubt and even bitterness against others. Discouragement in an extreme case can be so strong that one may even not want to go on living and can be suicidal .as in the case of Elijah in 1 Kings 19:10 which says, *"And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."* and Jonah in Jon 4:8 which says, *"And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live."God later encouraged him atter he rested and fed him too*

Causes and Cures for Discouragement

Discouragement can be caused by many factors including discontent with people or events in the past, problems of the present and uncertainty of the future. It can be the result of spiritual ignorance of God's mercy and grace. It can be due to ingratitude to God and nonchalance to the opportunities God gave to us today, and our insecurity about the future. It can also be due to an unawareness of the presence of God, of the needs of our fellow man, and lack of faith in the promises of His Word. We may look at our dismal circumstances, then that is



when discouragement sets in. Instead, what we need is spiritual encouragement from the word of the Lord. We need the hope, peace and the knowledge that the Lord knows our troubles has great concern and compassion for us and is not unconcerned about it. 1 Pet 5:7 says, *"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."* and Psa 55:22 says, *"Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."* We need to keep our eyes on Jesus the author and the finisher of our faith is needful to fight off discouragement. In Him you can have comfort and peace and encouragement. We need to by faith rest fully in Him. King David in1 Sam 30:6 did this when he was greatly distressed, *"And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God."* We need to learn to encourage ourselves in the Lord.

Practical Tips on Encouraging One Another.

Below are some insights in combating the evils of discouragement when it hits us.

1. God of Mercy & Comfort.

Col 1:3 says, "*Blessed by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort* "

A. **God is called the Father of Mercies. In the Greek the word "mercy" means compassion, pity, mercy. In God's very heart, is mercy toward us. He is the author of mercy. His mercy toward you brings salvation**, the forgiveness of sins and deliverance from eternal damnation and this, because of Jesus, because of His sacrifice, because of His shed blood for you. God is the God of mercy: Psalm 86:5 *"You are forgiving and good, O Lord, abounding in love to all who call to you."*

B. The word in Greek for "comfort" can mean, exhortation, solace consolation and encouragement. This is why the Holy Spirit is called the Comforter in John 14:26, which says, "But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

- All this shows you that God is a God of Comfort, of exhortation, and of encouragement. All comfort comes from God who is the God of comfort, of mercy and love.

- **The Holy Spirit (who indwells within us as written in 1 Cor 6:17-20) is not a cosmic force, an anti-depression cure, or some secular psychotherapist to lift you up temporally. It is the Almighty and Sovereign God who cares and who can help us to fully sort out our troubles and woes**. The Comfort is received from God By faith. Paul says He is the God of comfort, then we will need to believe it and act upon it; and trust Him and receive His comfort as He provides it. We can receive this through prayer and the meditation of His word John 14:13 says, *"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."*

C. God can also use His people to comfort us. When you have a problem, the Lord can send someone with an encouraging word, a helping hand or a shoulder to cry on from a pastor, deacon, caring mother, sister or brother in Christ. Do share with us and unburden your care to one another and to Christ above all.

2. Counselling with the Word



As comforters we encourage by our words of comfort, our conduct of faithfulness and trust in God by our writings, through our presence, the words, email or even through the songs that we sing to them in a appropriate situation or in a tangible way when we give a love gift to encourage someone who is in need financially or the quiet presence as in a funeral to encourage the bereaved. There is much that we can do for one another to exhort, edify and build up one another in the strength of the Lord. Paul in 1 Th 4:18 says*, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."*

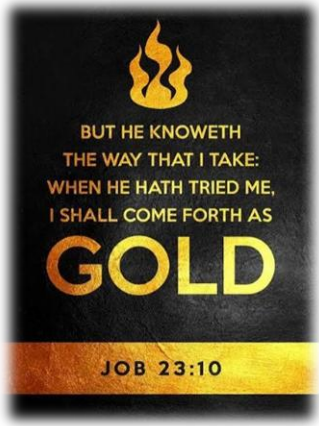
- **The reading and hearing of the word of God is also a balm of gilead and a real source of consolation and solace for our instruction and encouragement**. Rom 15:4 says, *"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."*
- By the Holy Spirit. He is called the Comforter. He indwells within us and hence gives us a inner peace and joy and comfort and hope. (1 Cor 6:19,20)

3. Jehovah in the Midst of our Afflictions/Distress.

2 Cor 1:4 says*, "Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."* The word we can be translated as tribulation, trouble, anguish, persecution, burden and affliction. It can come in different ways.

- From sickness, financial difficulties, loss of a loved one, failed exams, troubles kids, workplace, concerns over an unsure future or a car accident, afflictions can occur that gets us frustrated, confused and hurt. We live in

a fallen world with trouble which can be used of God to train Christians for their high calling as children of God and to minister to their souls after the image of Christ. James 1:2-4 says, *"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."*



- So then, afflictions can be God's way of making you grow and be a better person. And the testing may strengthen our faith in the end through the comfort and mercy of Jesus. We are more valuable than sparrows and He cares for them. (Mt 6:25-33)

4. Instrument of Consolation to Others

2 Cor 1: 4 says, *"Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."* This glorifies God when we encourage and comfort others. In the Lord being used by God to strengthen us. It is a joy and our blessing when the Holy Spirit uses us to encourage others. We may even have afflictions so that we can be able to help others. How often due to a trial in our lives we have been able to help another better because of that similar trial? (ie death of loved ones, loss of jobs or children's problems etc)

God does not comfort us to make us comfortable but to make us comforters to be a blessing to others. He suffered first on our behalf and understood the pain and sorrow of it all.

5. Comfort through Jesus our Redeemer



2 Cor 1: 5 says, *"For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."* This means that all comfort, encouragement and hope that we receive through people, through the Word or through circumstances are possible because of Jesus.

This source of comfort is pure, good and right. It is received by faith. Where our sufferings are abundant, so is our comfort from the Lord. This comfort is a spiritual comfort from heaven and is to be received by faith in the Lord. As experienced by many who have been and are still suffering for their faith in Vietnam, India, China, Iraq, Africa, Indonesia and elsewhere (as shared by open doors). Paul encourages us in 2 Cor 12:9

says, *"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."* and Rom 8:35-39 says, *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*



Conclusion



Year 2026 has been a challenging time for many all around the world and in Singapore too. We live in a depraved and fallen world that is full of despair, distress and troubles. Often, we feel like giving up and going into depression. Practical Christian encouragement from God and one another are needed to help one another in tribulation to tie over these trying times. You can survive in a world of sorrow, hurt, distress, fear and doubt. Do not weep in solitude. For we have the Lord, His word, prayer and the body of Christ in His church to intercede for us and lift us up before the throne of grace. The Word of God can comfort and strengthen us. When we meditate, read and apply it, the Holy Spirit indwelling in you will warm your soul with strength, hope and peace. As redeemed men, we have the Almighty God waiting to show us His mercy and grace. **We need to do our part as well and seek, pray and trust the Lord first and remember the Lord's blessing. We are fully dependent on Him and let us keep focusing our eyes on Jesus alone and not men or circumstances especially in these depressing last perilous days.**

Jack Sin

Short Reflections on My Yangon Mission Trip Nov 13 – 16, 2026

- by Dn Paul Tan -



This was my first mission trip to Yangon, and I went with some apprehension with recent news reports of fighting elsewhere in Myanmar. Yangon surprised me. In its modern shopping centres, I saw familiar Singapore names like BreadTalk and Ya Kun. It reminded me that there is much to learn when you visit and meet the people who live there.

After arrival at Yangon, my first place of visit was Myanmar Theological Seminary. Here, Pastor Jack was teaching Church History to 9 attentive students. I am thankful there are young people who would equip themselves to share the gospel and plant churches in a predominantly Buddhist country. May God give them the wisdom, courage and strength to serve God faithfully in the years to come.



One visit that stayed with me was to Pr Myitta's village church. He built the wooden shed where villages and their children gather, and he lives next to it with his family. The amenities are basic with water drawn from the well behind the house. For city dwellers like me, going to the toilet present quite a challenge. One needs to have a good sense of balance with the toilet's precarious flimsy planks.

I was amazed by how much Pr Myitta takes upon himself, from building and running the place to organizing programmes for the villages and their children. One can see God's grace and love in his perseverance and care for his neighbours. I am grateful for the generosity of our church members in reaching out to meet some of his needs.



We also visited Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Myanmar under Pastor Salai. We joined a large congregation of about 150 people for Sunday worship in a modern, air-conditioned building with a good sound system. It was a joy to see many children dressed for the service and surprised to hear them greet us in English.



My visit to two village churches showed me different sides of pastoral ministry. I saw Pr Myitta bring villagers and children together through outreach and activities almost single-handedly. Pastor Salai, on the other hand, shepherd a larger congregation with a pastoral team helping. Whatever the circumstances, I saw the faithfulness of God's servants tendering to sheep God has entrusted to them.

Though the trip was a short one for me, I came home encouraged by the people we met. Visit to Pr Myitta's village church taught me his resourcefulness, resilience and perseverance if one is placed in an environment of lack. I believe we can give God the glory in sustaining the work there.

Lastly, I am grateful for the kindness and hospitality of Rev Khobal and Rev Salai. Thank you for enlightening us on various social and political aspects of life in Myanmar. And my prayer is for peace to prevail so her people can flourish and that God will bless this land and His faithful servants to continue sharing the gospel till His return.



Last Sun @SHBPC…….

Sharing by **Rev Richard Musyoki**, Ebenezer BPC, Kenya on "*Principles and practices of Biblical Mission & the Defence of the Gospel*".







Memory Verse

2Tim 3:10 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,

Announcements

1. Welcome to our Worship Service! If you are here for the first time, do leave us your contact numbers in our guest book before you leave. Those who share the church vision to acquire a place of worship in due time, may designate your offerings to the SHBPC Church Building Fund.
2. Pastor brings us God's Word this morning on "***Doctrine & Purpose of Life (2Tim 3:8-14)"***, continuing the quarterly series on "***Apostolic Admonitions for Finishing Well in Life - the Epistle of 2 Timothy***".
3. Next Sunday, Pastor will preach on "***Inspiration & 4-Fold Use of Scripture (2Tim 3:15-17)"***
4. Sunday School classes after the worship service are:
   - Walk Thru the Old Testament (Pastor)
   - Studies in Revelation (Dr Kwong Leen)
5. Chinese Fellowship meets every Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom. [**Zoom ID:883 9662 4157 Passcode: 218178**]. Join us for time of learning on the Book of Hosea (Thirdmill video lessons) and Heroes of the Faith (messages).
6. **Christmas Get-Together Lunch Fellowship** is held on **Sat 19 Dec 11am** at **Albert & Janet's home**. **Max: 20 pax**. Register with Eld Yue Kay by 12 Dec.
7. **Christmas Eve Service** will be held on **24 Dec 8pm (Thu night)**. Invite someone to hear the message on "***Those who missed Christmas & Those who Didn't***" by Pastor. **Watchnight Service** will be held on **31 Dec 8pm (Thu night)**. Close the year worshipping God and be challenged by the message on "***When Our Time is Up***" by Pastor.
8. Do send your prayer items to Pastor and join us for Church Prayer Meeting on Wed at 8pm via Zoom. The prayer list is available in church. **[Zoom ID:863 7527 5431 Passcode: 625551].**
9. Pray for:
   - **Devi**: Salvation of family members
   - **Outreach @All Saints Home: 10 Dec**
   - **Travels: Paul Kong** [30/11-8/12, Osaka], **Dn Paul** [30/11-15/12, Tokyo],
   - **Medical: Kin Hoong's daughter Joyce** [post-op recovery], **Simon** [recovery from fall].
   - **Joseph & Rachel**: Gospel Peace Station and void deck outreaches
   - **Lily Almon** [citizenship application]
10. Love gifts, Offering and Tithes to the Lord can be given in the following ways:
    - **Cheque** payable to **Sovereign Hope Bible Presbyterian Church**
    - **Fund transfer** to Church **UOB** Account **392-308-825-1**
    - **PayNow** to Church UEN: **T19SS0116FSOV**

    Kindly indicate **"Church Building Fund"** if you would like to designate towards this cause.