

A Christ-Centred Church with a Heart of Compassion

Message Date: 5/7/2026 Lighthouse Meeting Date: 7/7/2026	Message Title: Arise: Overcoming the Spirit of Discouragement Minister: Pastor Chuka Nwafor
Key Texts: 1 Thessalonians 2:18, Romans 1:13, Ephesians 6:12, 1 Kings 19:1-4, 1 Kings 19:4, 1 Kings 19:5-7, Isaiah 61:3, Ruth 1:20, John 8:44, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, 2 Corinthians 1:4, 2 Corinthians 1:8-9, 2 Corinthians 1:9, Psalm 46:1, Proverbs 18:10	Sub Text:
<i>Please read the entire document and Bible texts before you begin to discuss and answer the related questions. This will help you grasp the overall context of the message, however, remember the Bible is not a discussion book but a decision book. God honours and empowers your decisions not your discussions.</i> <u>INTRODUCTION:</u> There is a difference between a person who has never faced a storm and a person who has learned to stand in one. Scripture never promises us a life free of affliction, if anything at all it assures us of the inevitability of difficult and very challenging times of life, especially as believers in this world. However, along with this; it promises us a Companion in the midst of it - The fellowship of the Holy Spirit otherwise known as the Invisible Jesus. One of the most formidable weapons of the Enemy against the souls of men especially believers is the weapon of discouragement. It releases feelings of frustration, helplessness, hopelessness, and a quiet creeping voice that says, "Why bother? Just give up." That voice has a name. It is the spirit of discouragement, and it is one of the most underestimated weapons in the enemy's arsenal because it doesn't attack your body, it attacks your mind and will to keep moving forward. Today we are going to expose this spirit, trace it through Scripture, and declare by the authority of the Word, that it is time to break that spirit and its impact on God's children' Historical and Biblical Context Discouragement is not a modern invention. Long before antidepressants and therapy sessions, the enemy was using the weapons of hindrance, delay, and despair to derail the purposes of God in His people's lives. Paul himself testified that he "purposed often" to visit the believers in Rome but was "hindered" (Romans 1:13, AMPC), and he later named the source directly: "we wanted to come to you... but Satan thwarted and hindered us" (1 Thessalonians 2:18, AMPC). The prophet Elijah, a man who had just called fire down from heaven, collapsed under a juniper tree and asked God to let him die (1 Kings 19). Naomi, a woman of faith, was so undone by loss that she asked people to stop calling her by her own name. These are not weak people. They are proof that discouragement can reach anyone, including the anointed, and that Scripture gives us both the diagnosis and the cure.	

TEACHING POINT ONE: Discouragement Is a Real, Targeted Spiritual Attack

Discouragement is more than a bad mood, it is the loss of confidence, enthusiasm, and hope, and Scripture treats it as an active spiritual assault, not a random emotion. Paul described being repeatedly "hindered" from doing what God had called him to do (Romans 1:13, AMPC), and he named the source plainly: Satan himself worked to thwart and delay him (1 Thessalonians 2:18, AMPC). This means discouragement often isn't a sign that God's plan has failed, but it's evidence that you are close enough to purpose that the enemy felt the need to intervene. Discouragement is a gateway Spirit once it gains access, it opens the door wide-open to a number of other spirits such as despair, confusion, depression, sickness and ultimately death by suicide in many instances. Discouragement has to be dealt with as soon as possible before it becomes entrenched and prepares the ground for other spirits.

Practical Application

When you sense hindrance, delay, or a sudden wave of hopelessness about something you know God called you to do, recognize it as resistance, not rejection, and press forward in prayer rather than retreat (Ephesians 6:12, AMPC). The aim is to get you to give up entirely on the will and blessing of God planned for your life. To get you to choose an alternative or lesser route and will for your life.

Scripture Focus: "Because we wanted to come to you, Paul, again and again [wanted to come], but Satan hindered and impeded us." 1 Thessalonians 2:18 (AMPC). See the ministry of principalities and powers and territorial spirits in the book of Daniel 10:11-12

Digging Deep / Self-Reflection

Where in your life have you assumed a closed door meant "God said no," when it may have actually meant "the enemy is afraid of your yes"?

TEACHING POINT TWO: The Word of God Commands You to Arise

After Elijah collapsed, an angel didn't rebuke him, the angel touched him, fed him, and let him rest before saying anything else (1 Kings 19:5-7, AMPC). This is God's pattern: restoration before instruction. Isaiah 61 carries the same authority, a prophetic decree over those bound by mourning and a "heavy, burdened, and failing spirit," declaring beauty for ashes, joy for mourning, and praise for heaviness (Isaiah 61:1-3, AMPC). The word "arise" is not a suggestion; it is a command backed by covenant.

Practical Application

Speak Isaiah 61 over your own circumstance today, declare it out loud as a decree, not just a hope, and allow God to meet your physical need for rest before demanding more of yourself.

Scripture Focus: Isaiah 61:3 (AMPC)

Digging Deep / Self-Reflection

What has kept you lying down, sleeping, physically, emotionally, or spiritually, longer than God intended?

TEACHING POINT THREE: Refuse to Let Your Circumstances Rename You

Naomi lost her husband and both her sons and returned home so broken that she told people, "Do not call me Naomi... call me Mara [bitter]" (Ruth 1:20, AMPC). This is exactly what discouragement attempts to do, redefine your identity based on your pain rather than your purpose. Scripture calls Satan "a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44, AMPC), and one of his oldest tactics is convincing you that your circumstance is now your identity.

Practical Application

Refuse any name, label, or identity that your pain tries to assign you, and instead declare who God says you are according to His Word (2 Corinthians 5:17, AMPC).

Scripture Focus: "And she said to them, Call me not Naomi [pleasant]; call me Mara [bitter]; for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me." Ruth 1:20 (AMPC)

Digging Deep / Self-Reflection

What "new name" has discouragement tried to give you, hopeless, forgotten, finished, and have you unknowingly accepted it?

TEACHING POINT FOUR: Let Trials Shift Your Trust from People to God. This is not meant in any way to diminish or minimise the critical importance of relationships and people during our very challenging times. The scripture two are better than one, remains absolutely true. However, there are seasons and times of our lives when God wants us to focus squarely on Him in order to draw us to Himself.

Paul describes being "so utterly and unbearably weighed down and crushed" that he despaired even of life, admitting he felt he had received "the sentence of death", but this was so that he would stop trusting in himself and instead trust "in God Who raises the dead" (2 Corinthians 1:8-9, AMPC). Sometimes God allows the people we lean on to be unavailable specifically so our confidence relocates fully into Him.

Practical Application

When human support fails you, resist bitterness and instead ask God what He wants to become to you in that gap that people could not fill (2 Corinthians 1:9, AMPC).

Scripture Focus: "[Indeed] we felt within ourselves that we had received the [very] sentence of death, but that was to keep us from trusting in and depending on ourselves instead of on God Who raises the dead." 2 Corinthians 1:9 (AMPC)

Digging Deep / Self-Reflection

Who or what have you unconsciously trusted more than God, and how might this season be repositioning your hope?

(5) TEACHING POINT FIVE: God Is Your Refuge and Strong Tower, He Will Not Fail You

Psalms 46 declares that God is "our Refuge and Strength, a very present and well-proved help in trouble," so present that "we will not fear" even if the earth changes and mountains are shaken (Psalm 46:1-2, AMPC). Proverbs adds that "the name of the Lord is a strong tower; the

[uncompromisingly] righteous run into it and are safe, high above evil" (Proverbs 18:10, AMPC). This is not poetic language, it is a legal, covenantal promise of protection for those who run to Him.

Practical Application

In your next moment of fear or discouragement, physically and verbally declare Psalm 46:1 over the situation as a weapon against anxiety, not just a comfort in retrospect.

Scripture Focus: "God is our Refuge and Strength [mighty and impenetrable to temptation], a very present and well-proved help in trouble." Psalm 46:1 (AMPC)

Digging Deep / Self-Reflection

Do you run to God first when trouble hits, or do you run to Him last, after every other option has failed?

CONCLUSION:

Discouragement is real, it is targeted, and it has taken down even the mightiest of God's servants, but it is not the final word over your life. The same God who fed Elijah under the broom tree, renamed Naomi's future even after she renamed herself Mara, and comforted Paul in his darkest affliction is present with you right now. He is not distant from your discouragement, He is your refuge in the middle of it. It's time to arise.

Next week we will specifically focus on God's antidote for discouragement. How to overcome the spirit of discouragement. WE will explore the divinely tried and tested strategies for overcoming this deadly weapon and how to shield your heart and mind from its devastating effects.

PRAYER POINTS

1. Lord, expose every spirit of discouragement operating in my life, in Jesus' name.
2. Father, restore my confidence, enthusiasm, and hope according to Isaiah 61.
3. I reject every negative name or identity that my circumstances have tried to assign me.
4. Lord, shift my trust from people and self entirely onto You alone.
5. Holy Spirit, make me a vessel of comfort to someone else who is discouraged today.
6. I declare that God is my refuge and strong tower, I will not be shaken.
7. Father, give me the grace to arise, in Jesus' mighty name, amen.