

Living in Hope with the One Leader Study Series

Title: **Do Not Lose Heart**

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In times of great loss, do not lose heart.

We face difficult days ahead with many unknowns. People will be panicking and reacting, looking for someone to blame. There will be anger, fear, despair, and even death. We will lose jobs, money, and efficiency. But we must not lose heart! In fact, as Christians, we should be a beacon of hope and encouragement to a lost world in need. This can only be accomplished by Christ living in and through us by His Spirit, being sustained by God's eternal Word. The following are some thoughts from the verses referenced below.

Losing heart was a reality for the disciples as they gave up livelihood, endured rejection of family and friends, and faced great uncertainty while they followed Jesus. **Losing heart** was a teaching both of Christ and Paul, who endured great hardships and even cruel deaths. We all at times can "lose heart," become discouraged, and give up hope. We live in a fallen world with difficulties and heartache; thus, we must press in and press on for ourselves and for others. We are to be a light to the world.

Four times Jesus says not to lose heart or to be discouraged.

The first was in a parable after He had discussed His leaving and second coming with the disciples. He said they ought to pray and not lose heart. Prayer protects the heart from being discouraged or "lost." Jesus ends the parable with, "Will the Son of Man find faith on the earth?" Clearly there is a link between prayer and faith.

Luke 18:1, 8 "Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart....⁸ I tell you that God will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?"

- **Prayer takes faith and keeps our heart fixed on the Lord. Prayer strengthens our heart.**

The second is after the last supper, the washing of the disciples' feet, and the revelation of Judas' betrayal. Jesus says He is going away, and they can't go with Him. Naturally, the disciples were in confusion and despair. Jesus tells them not to let their hearts be troubled, for He was going to heaven to prepare a place for them and that He is coming again to receive them.

John 14:1-3 "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.² In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.³ If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also."

- **Overcome a troubled heart with a picture of heaven and of Christ’s sure return. Security, love, and certainty are found in Christ, and all calm the heart.**

The third time is at the same setting. Jesus tells the disciples He is leaving His peace with them and that His peace will be different from that which the world gives. He gives them double encouragement not to be troubled or fearful.

John 14:27 *“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”*

- **True peace is found in Christ alone—not from the world. Peace is the environment of a settled heart.**

The fourth time is found in His last words at the last supper, directly preceding His final prayer. He contrasts Himself with the world. In Him they will have peace, and in the world, tribulation. He tells them to take courage because He has overcome the world.

John 16:33 *“These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”*

- **Jesus gives us this promise: We have Him and His peace. We can take hold of courage because He is greater than the world.**

Paul instructs from his life to give us hope.

In 2 Corinthians 4 Paul tells the believers why he does not lose heart. His encouragement came from having been given a ministry and having received mercy, that He had the life of Christ, and His hope was in heaven—that this world and its challenges were temporal.

2 Corinthians 4:1 *“Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart.”*

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 *“Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, ¹⁸ while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”*

- **We have been given a ministry of reconciliation, been given mercy, and we have the life of Christ.**
- **We do not lose heart because of three things: even though the body is dying the inner man is being renewed daily; our momentary light affliction is producing an eternal weight of glory; and our hope comes not by walking by sight—rather our hope is in the unseen and takes faith.**
- **This too shall pass.**

In Galatians he instructs that we are to restore a brother who has strayed off the path and that in time we will reap a reward if we keep doing good. And don’t give up.

Galatians 6:9 *“Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.”*

- **Doing good and helping others in need keeps our eyes off of our challenges and gives us energy to persevere.**

The writer of Hebrews calls us to consider Christ.

Finally in Hebrews 12, we are called to consider Christ, who endured sin and our transgressions and still accepted us.

Hebrews 12:1-3 *“Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³**For consider Him** who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, **so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.**”*

- **Christ did not lose heart in us; we are not to lose heart in Him.**

In summary, pray at all times:

- **Trust Christ for who He is and what He can do.**
- **Appropriate Christ, His peace, His love, and His security.**
- **Receive your ministry, mercy, and His Life.**
- **Look to the eternal.**
- **This too shall pass.**

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