

# News & Announcements

## PRAYER REQUESTS

**Annette Asbury** is scheduled to have surgery on April 9<sup>th</sup> to remove her thyroid. Keep Annette in your prayers.

**Delois Jenkins** is doing much better, but continue to keep Delois in your prayers.

Keep the following on your prayer list who are either shut-in, unable to worship with us, or have on going health concerns,

**Daryion and Janette Banks, Clara Beth Barker's daughter, Marsha; Liz Barajas' dad, Dorothy and Firman Barton, Vaughn and Keith Barton, Mary and Bob Cress, Beverly Dempsey, Delois Jenkins, Rachel Kidwell, Beth Nebeker, Bobbye Pounders, Ignacio Reyes, John Simo, and Fernando Vizcarra, Jr., & Lewis Wells,** in your prayers.

**Our Gospel Meeting** is Sunday, May 1 through Friday, May 6, 2016. The speaker is John Robertson of Wichita Falls, Texas. The lessons are as follows: 1) The Jesus of the Bible; 2) A Spiritual Phenom; 3) The Sabbath; 4) Self Control; 5) Bible Study; 6) The Pharisees; 7) How to Use the OT in the NT and; 8) The Beloved Saints.

## TRAVELING MEMBERS

**Delois Jenkins** is in California and will return soon. Keep Delois in your prayers for a safe return.

## MILITARY MEMBERS

**Michael Barnes and David Sims** are stationed at Nellis Air Force Base.

# WORD OF FAITH

*Weekly bulletin of the Vegas Drive Church of Christ*

March 27, 2016 • 3824 Vegas Drive • Las Vegas, NV 89108 • (702) 636-4986  
Sunday Bible Class: 9 AM • Sunday Worship: 10 AM & 6 PM • Wednesday Bible Class: 7 PM

[www.vegasdrivechurchofchrist.com](http://www.vegasdrivechurchofchrist.com)

## Dealing With Discouragement

Discouragement is universal. No one is exempt from the dark cloud it casts over our lives. Great men of God -- David, Job, Jeremiah, and even Jesus -- became discouraged.

Discouragement can take many forms and be caused by many things.

**Family Matters.** Possibly a marriage is not working out as the man and woman had hoped and dreamed that it would. Children may cause concern and constant anxiety to parents. There may be illness of loved ones, financial insecurity, etc.

**Moral Failure.** In the battle between the flesh and spirit, many times the flesh keeps winning. One may have, among other things, a weakness to alcohol, drugs, sex, dishonesty or laziness. When we lose a battle, we lose heart and often become discouraged.

**Spiritual Matters.** For example, there are wives who try to keep the lamp of faith burning in spite of the unbelief of a husband who has no interest in spiritual things. It could be that one becomes stagnant in his spiritual growth and his zeal begins to wane -- Christ may not mean as much as He did or as He should, prayer seems to get him nowhere, church attendance seems flat and worship assemblies are boring. Some get discouraged because their convictions for truth cause them to be at odds with relatives or friends. Some may become disappointed in preachers, elders or other influential Christians because of their hypocrisy, carnality or apostasy. Discouragement in spiritual matters may result from a lack of success in the church in converting the world and building up the local body.

As shocking as it may seem, faithfulness to God and His word do not guarantee that one will not become discouraged. As a matter of fact, the more one is involved in the work of the Lord, the greater, at times, his discouragement may be. Those who endeavor to teach God's truth or live faithfully as a Christian encounter many and varied discouragements. What faithful teacher and Christian has not asked himself at one time or another, "What's the use?" when his efforts to teach others and to set a proper example seem not only to accomplish nothing but also to be unappreciated. Discouragement also comes to preachers. The pulpit provides no insulation from it.

We must remember that others before us have had their disappointments and discouragements also. Jeremiah was met with almost unimaginable discouragements (Jer. 9:2). Yet, in spite of all his longings to leave, he stood at his post of duty through the weary years, faithful to God even to the last. Jesus and His apostles faced many discouragements. So must we.

Discouragement, though, is not sin within and of itself. While it may be defined as to deprive of courage or confidence, to hinder by disfavoring, to attempt to dissuade; it may also be defined as deep and sober concern because of real problems. The person who is never discouraged is of no real value. The real issues and grim realities of life are too deep to pretend that nothing is ever bad enough for heartache and tears.

Discouragement will come. We must know how to deal with it.

**Discouragements When Teaching Others**

We are not able to effectively consider all the discouragements that plague the one who is endeavoring to be spiritual because of space restrictions. But we can look at one aspect of Christianity that often is very discouraging to people. That is the area of teaching others.

Many children of God fail to be involved in personal evangelism and others who are doing it quit because of the discouragements connected with it. Because a work can be discouraging, though, is no reason not to be doing it if God wants it done. Paul, as the apostle to the Gentiles, was often discouraged in his labors but he did not allow it to stop him from doing what he knew to be right. Nothing, including discouragements, moved him from his work of evangelism ([Acts 20:24](#)). Neither should anything keep us from our work for the Lord.

It has been said that the person who is forewarned is forearmed. Perhaps if we can anticipate some of the discouragements that typically arise when one attempts to teach others the gospel, we will be able to deal with and overcome them. A few of them follows.

**Dull Minds.** The writer of Hebrews was hindered in his efforts to teach some because they were "dull of hearing" ([Heb. 5:11-14](#)). While He was upon the earth, people, because of dull minds, failed to comprehend what Jesus said ([John 7:33-36](#); [8:21-27](#); [8:38-43](#); [Matt. 13:10-16](#)). Even His most dedicated followers sometimes missed the point of His teachings ([Matt. 15:10-20](#); [16:21-23](#)).

**Closed Minds.** There are those who neither try to nor want to understand. They want to have things their way. The apostle Paul foretold of this attitude in [2 Timothy 4:3-4](#). Jesus also encountered this attitude when teaching. Consider those who would take His loaves and fishes but not His teaching ([John 6:24-29](#)). They put their personal desires ahead of the truth He taught ([John 11:47-50](#); [Matt. 12:22-24](#)). When He would not serve their purpose and teach them what they wanted to hear, they had no time for Him but, rather, closed their eyes and hardened their hearts to the truth ([Matt. 15:13](#)).

**Opposition.** Any kind of opposition is discouraging but when opposition seems to triumph, real conviction and genuine dedication are needed to stand against it. Jesus faced successful opposition. Many were determined to destroy His influence and defeat His purpose. They resorted to perversions, misrepresentations and lies in an effort to destroy His reputation ([Luke 23:1-2](#); [John 19:12](#)). His good works infuriated them so they sought to pervert them in order to turn others against Him. They were wrong but they temporarily got the upper hand ([Matt. 27:20-23](#)). But He ultimately triumphed.

**An Antagonistic Environment.** We live in a power-mad, pleasure-crazed world. Materialism, secularism, skepticism, pessimism, degeneracy and hypocrisy offer little encouragement for the spread of the gospel. Remember, though, the spiritual condition of the world in which Jesus lived and taught. Both Gentiles ([Rom. 1:18-32](#)) and Jews ([Rom. 2:1,17-24](#); [3:9-10](#); [Eph. 2:1-3](#)) were extremely sinful. The people were ignorant and vile, their rulers were bigoted and politically motivated, and the priests were oppressive and unmerciful. Skepticism, traditionalism and hypocrisy prevailed. Yet, amid such undesirable conditions, Jesus launched and continued His work refusing to be deterred in His efforts.

**Waning Interest.** We feel elated when interest is growing and enthusiasm is high but what happens when interest lags? Some become despondent and say, "What's the use?" Jesus experienced the disappointment of decreasing interest. Great crowds followed Him at first but when they considered His teaching "too hard" they dropped out and lost interest. At the end of His three year ministry, only a handful remained. He understood that even one soul was worth more than all the wealth in the world ([Matthew 16:26](#)).

### Dealing With Discouragements

Jesus is our perfect example as we live our lives before God ([1 Pet. 2:21](#)), the proper standard for conduct and attitudes. The apostle Paul encouraged the members of the [church in Corinth](#) to imitate him as he imitated Christ ([1 Cor. 11:1](#)).

While He was on the earth, Jesus had to face discouragements. We must ask, "How did Jesus handle His discouragements?" In learning how He dealt with them, we can learn how we ought to react to those discouragements that come our way. The following are some ways that Jesus dealt with those things that disappointed and discouraged Him.

**He Did Not Give Up.** Jesus recognized that the key to any situation was in Him, not in the obstacles He faced. Discouragement, you see, is a condition of mind not one of outside circumstances. Happiness does not depend upon where you are but upon what you are. Keeping in good spirit is not a question of circumstances about us but, rather, a question of what we are within ourselves.

**He Took a Wider View.** The higher up you are, the farther you can see. Jesus saw things from the Godward side and that side is not discouraging. He encouraged His disciples to have that same perspective. In [John 4:35](#) He told them to "lift up your eyes." No matter what happens in our lives, all will ultimately turn out well if we are faithful in doing the Lord's will. The promise is made to faithful Christians in [Romans 8:28](#) that "all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."

**He Kept Working.** When He was blocked in one direction, Jesus patiently looked in another. When nothing was left for Him to do but to die, He went to the cross willingly and confidently. Sometimes in life, things may not turn out as we have planned or as we would like them to and we may feel like giving up. Whenever you feel that way, look to Jesus and follow His example. Keep doing the will of God. Persevere with all your heart.

**He Always Prayed.** When faced with a crisis situation, Jesus gained strength through prayer unto His Father ([Matt. 14:23](#); [Luke 5:16](#); [6:12](#); [Matt. 26:36-42](#)). We must be people of prayer ([Luke 18:1](#); [1 Thes. 5:17](#)). In times of despondency, discouragement and disappointment, [prayer is the answer](#).

### Conclusion

In the midst of many discouragements, Jesus calmly, serenely and thoughtfully, kept right on proclaiming the great truths of heaven, doing the will of God and living the proper life. So must we. "And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" ([Gal. 6:9](#)).

*By Gene Taylor*

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### God's Plan of Salvation

HEAR the gospel [Rom. 10:17](#)  
BELIEVE the gospel [John 3:16](#)  
REPENT of your sins [Luke 13:3](#)  
CONFESS Christ [Matt. 10:32](#)  
Be BAPTIZED [Acts 2:38](#)  
Live FAITHFULLY [Rev. 2:10](#)

If you are visiting today, we appreciate your presence and hope to get to know you better. Please fill out a visitor's card so we can have a record of your attendance, and if there is any way we can serve your spiritual needs, please bring this to our attention.

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