

DON'T GIVE IN AND DON'T GIVE UP

If you are like me, sometimes we struggle with some issues, questions and circumstances that, if we are honest with each other - bring us to a place of being discouraged. We begin to question decisions we have made. We begin to question God on what He was or is doing. We see ministries and/or people that were/are lacking in integrity seem to prosper. We begin to get disheartened in the things that we have been doing unto the Lord. We begin to think that maybe our entire Christian walk up until this day was a waste of precious time. Of course there is more, however, I think you catch "my drift."

Being in this mind set, what could we do? We experience a sense of hopelessness within our heart. Of course it always seems that as we are going into what seems to be a deep abyss of discouragement and, yes, let's admit it, "a little self-pity," others around us seem to be flourishing in "hearing from and moving in" God's power and fullness. It seems as if God is placing everyone but you into their rightful place in this hour in preparing the way of the Lord, in bringing forth the Kingdom of God, in the areas that God had ordained for them and in finding their place within the Body of Christ, and so on. This is wonderful and we are genuinely blessed for them and rejoice along with them in their joy.

In the midst of our struggle we sometimes get to the point where, we may not totally want give up, but we begin to **give in** to the temptation of making the move from discouragement, to that of full fledged depression. We may understand and know enough within our spirit to understand the enemy's tactics and "mark" on what we are experiencing. However, knowing that does not make it any easier.

Again, the question we ask ourselves is, "What could we do?" "What are we to do?" Well, I know that you all know the answer - we go to the Lord in prayer and go to His Word. Sometimes, we receive from the Lord through a friend. Sometimes, God speaks or ministers to us through the beautiful things around us. Below are some of the ways in which He spoke to me and encouraged my heart and has helped me during these attacks of the enemy. I know there are many other scriptures and things that we could mention. Below are just a few. My desire is to pass this on to you. Maybe you are going through a time such as this or maybe someone you know is. Feel free to share some of the below items and add some of your own scriptures or thoughts of encouragement.

Below is a note I received from a dear friend, Jim Cason, which blessed my heart and may encourage you in a time of discouragement.

As you know I'm reading through Daniel daily. Since I'm fasting this passage from David Pawson's commentary on Daniel stuck out to me. I thought I would share it with you.

*"So Daniel began his stand for principal in the relatively small matter of diet, but this gave him the resolve to face the **Lions** later. There's a profound lesson here.*

If you can stand your ground over a little issue, you're likely to stand your ground over a big one. Your character is formed in small decisions, on little issues which enables you to stand later when the big crunch comes." David Pawson.

*Pretty cool, huh. I don't know about you but that encourages me. I want to build a character that stands ground. We both know some "big crunches" are coming in this late hour. It's refreshing to know **that every little insignificant stand we make builds upon another**. Iron doesn't naturally get stronger over time (Number of years in the Lord). It gets stronger as it is exposed to the forge. It also becomes useful as it is*

hammered into shape - either a weapon or a tool. In the hour that the great apostasy comes, the Bible says that, "The hearts of many will fail them." There will be those numbered among them that have been in the Lord for many, many years. Old geezers like ourselves, (editorial not - I am not an old geezer), who have seen it all and "know it all." But I believe that He is going to have that remnant of both young and old who have **stood their ground over and over in the little things**. And when the "lions are revealed," it'll be more than a Sunday school Bible story.

All that also led me to write this after meditating on the sovereignty of God.

OUR ROLE IN THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD

There is flexibility in the sovereignty of God. If our life in the Lord is like playing against Him in a chess game whereby His winning secures our redemption, then every move I make, He can match and He will still win. However, I would be free to make the moves I wanted to make. God has more free will than us, so our freedom is limited by His. The key is staying in the game even while suffering the consequences of our poor moves. So why stay in the game that is difficult to play and impossible to win? - because, our mastery of the game is not the point. The point is the pleasure we derive by making our best move and pleasing the heart of our father the master chess player. If we always value our time spent in the game with him, and in doing so our redemption is secured, (abiding in him) then we can never really lose. God knows that He will always win but his interest is in growing our character and that we desire to make our best move. God does not delight in an "unworthy opponent" who puts forth no effort, or is bored with the game, or threatens to quit. **We only lose if we quit.**

Unfortunately like I was saying I think there will be many in this late hour, who are going to quit. Ones who "know it all," are un-encountered, get "bored" with God and/ or have found the whole thing way too difficult.

Lord let us not be satisfied with the dissatisfactory. Make us dissatisfied with self-satisfaction, and ones who are only **satisfied with what satisfies You**. How about that for a prayer?!!!

Below are some scriptures that the Lord spoke to me which blessed my heart and have encouraged me. The below scriptures are from the Amplified Version.

Galatians 6:6-9

⁷ Do not be deceived and deluded and misled; God will not allow Himself to be sneered at (scorned, disdained, or mocked by mere pretensions or professions, or by His precepts being set aside.) [He inevitably deludes himself who attempts to delude God.] For whatever a man sows, that and that only is what he will reap.

⁸ For he who sows to his own flesh (lower nature, sensuality) will from the flesh reap decay and ruin and destruction, but he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

⁹ **And let us not lose heart and grow weary and faint in acting nobly and doing right, for in due time and at the appointed season we shall reap, if we do not loosen and relax our courage and faint.**

¹⁰ So then, as occasion and opportunity open up to us, let us do good [morally] to all people [not only being useful or profitable to them, but also doing what is for their spiritual good and advantage]. Be mindful to be a blessing, especially to those of the household of faith [those who belong to God's family with you, the believers].

Joshua 1:6-9

⁶ *Be strong (confident) and of good courage, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.*

⁷ *Only you be strong and very courageous, that you may do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you. Turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.*

⁸ *This Book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe and do according to all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall deal wisely and have good success.*

⁹ *Have not I commanded you? Be strong, vigorous, and very courageous. Be not afraid, neither be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.*

Malachi 3:13-17

¹³ *Your words have been strong and hard against Me, says the Lord. Yet you say, What have we spoken against You?*

¹⁴ *You have said, It is useless to serve God, and what profit is it if we keep His ordinances and walk gloomily and as if in mourning apparel before the Lord of hosts?*

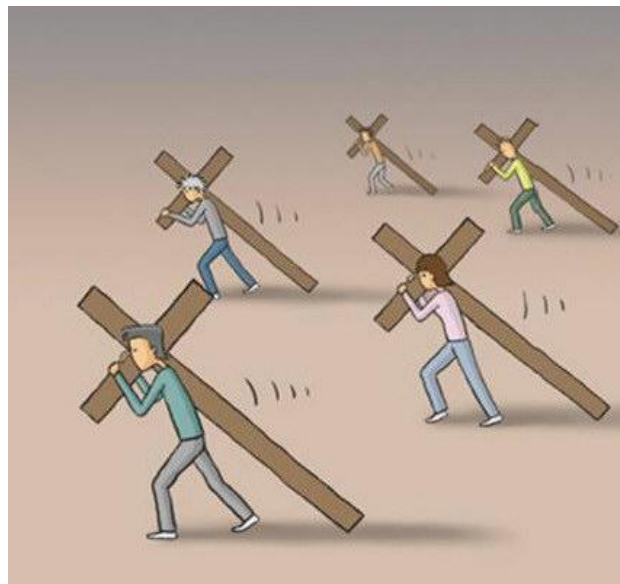
¹⁵ *And now we consider the proud and arrogant to be happy and favored; evildoers are exalted and prosper; yes, and when they test God, they escape [unpunished].*

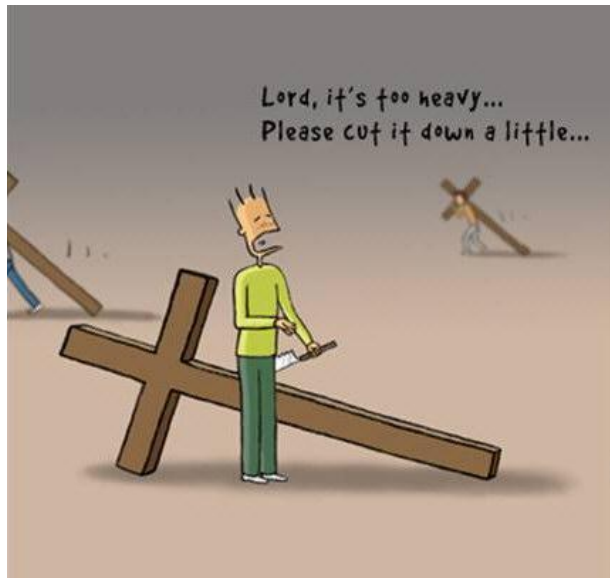
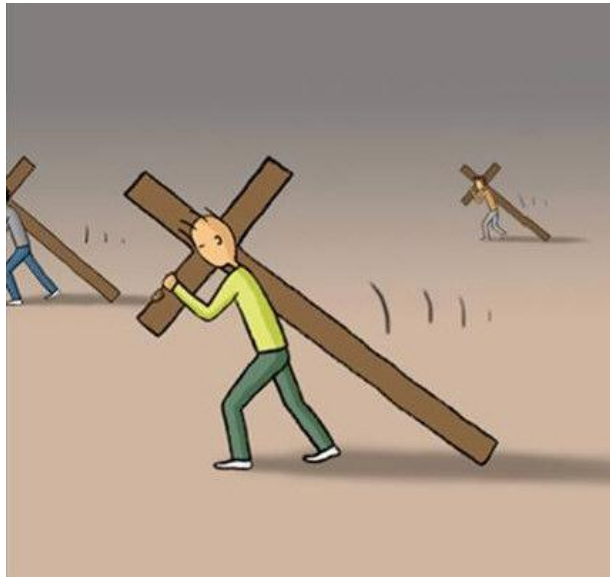
¹⁶ *Then those who feared the Lord talked often one to another; and the Lord listened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him of those who revered and worshipfully feared the Lord and who thought on His name.*

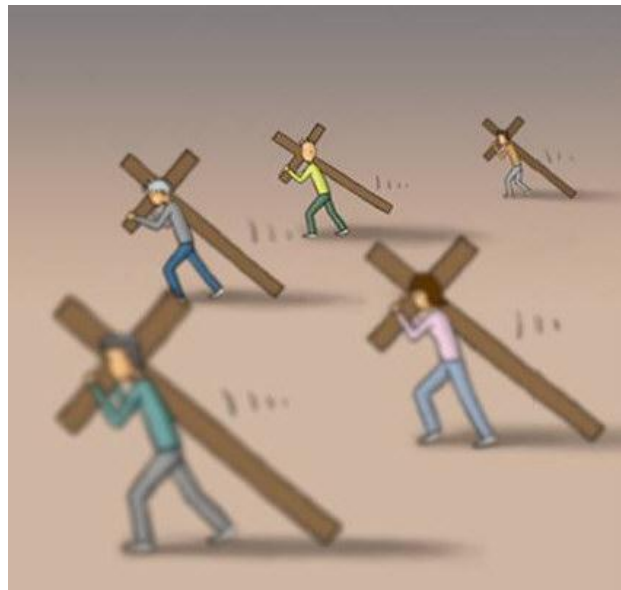
¹⁷ *And they shall be Mine, says the Lord of hosts, in that day when I publicly recognize and openly declare them to be My jewels (My special possession, My peculiar treasure). And I will spare them, as a man spares his own son who serves him.*

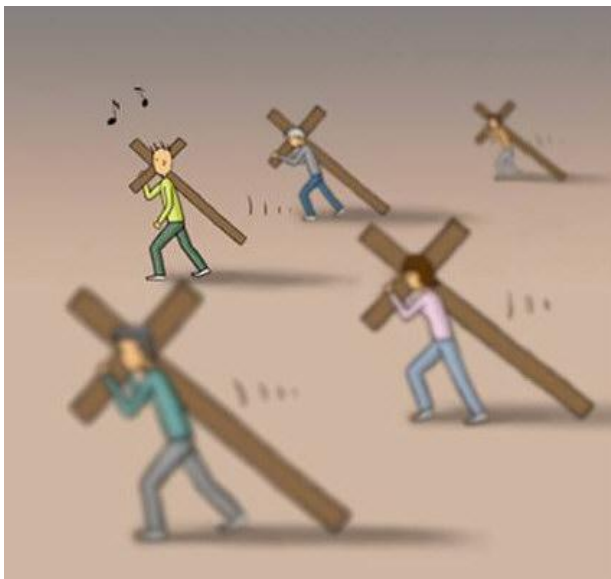
Sometimes a picture, or in this case “pictures,” can paint a thousand words. Please, follow this through.

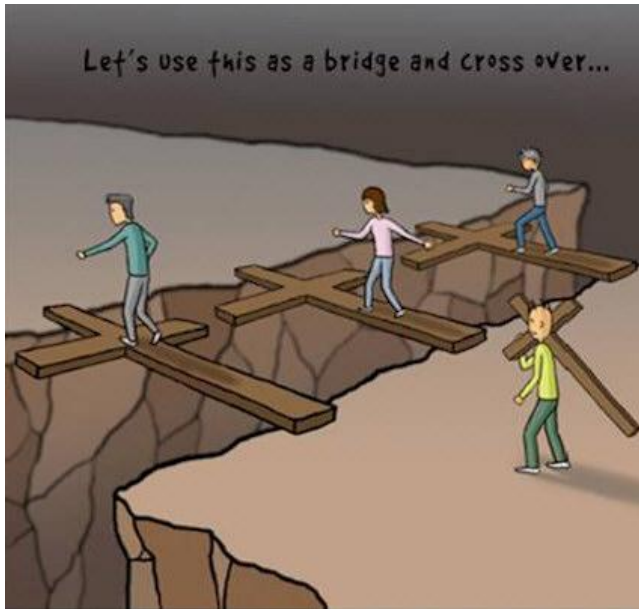
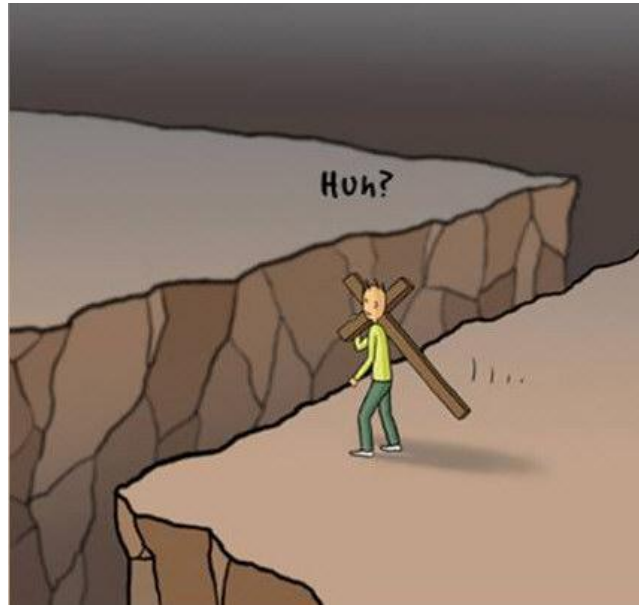
(From <http://www.jesussite.com/blog/2007/11/take-up-your-cross/>)













Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. – Matthew 16:24)

Don't Give In Don't Give Up. The Christian walk was never promised to be an easy one.
Remember **Isaiah 40:29-31** -

*"He gives power to the faint and weary, and to him who has no might He increases strength [causing it to multiply and making it to abound].
Even youths shall faint and be weary, and [selected] young men shall feebly stumble and fall exhausted;
But those who wait for the Lord [who expect, look for, and hope in Him] shall change and renew their strength and power; they shall lift their wings and mount up [close to God] as eagles [mount up to the sun]; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint or become tired."*

**DON'T GIVE IN DON'T GIVE UP!!!
YOU ARE GOING TO MAKE IT!!!**