

The Book of **UPSIDE DOWN**

Turning Discouragement Upside Down
2 Corinthians 4

Possible reasons for Paul to be discouraged...

1. The church was not acting right.
2. People that Paul cared about were not doing well.
3. He was being unjustly maligned and attacked.
4. He had faced extreme physical and emotional assault.
5. Problems seemed to be coming from all sides.
6. He faced feelings of failure, inadequacy, and self-doubt?

Truths to combat discouragement...

1. We have the Holy Spirit in our lives.
2. If we are doing the right thing for the right reason, we just need to keep on.
3. Jars of clay are great treasure containers.
4. The blows of life can have limited impact.
5. Inner renewal is more powerful than outer diminishment.
6. Problems are not only temporary, they can have great potential.

An upside down look:

1. Choose not to be discouraged! (It is a choice!)
2. Tell yourself the truth about your situation.
3. Refuse to give up!

storylines prompt:

When have you experienced God's comfort in your story? Write about your experience.

Have you been able to pass that comfort on to others?



resource guide

First Five / Final Five:

- ⇒ Take the first five minutes of each day to READ God's Word.
- ⇒ Take the final five minutes of your day to REFLECT on God's Work in your life. (Sample questions are on the back of the bulletin.)

The Big Idea:

- In your own words, how would you summarize the main idea of the message?

From the Message:

- Which of the possible reasons for Paul to be discouraged have you experienced yourself? What would you add to the list?
- Which of the truths that can help us overcome discouragement do you most need to hang onto right now?
- Do you have a story in your own life of a time you refused to give up and were rewarded for it?

From the Passage:

- In verse 8, there are four paradoxical metaphors. How can each pair be true at the same time?

Think it through / Talk it over:

- Do you think that some people get more easily discouraged than others? Why do you think that is?
- When are you most likely to experience discouragement in your own life?
- How have you dealt with discouragement in the past? What has worked for you? What hasn't? What can you do differently?
- What does the day-by-day renewal look like for you? When have you been aware of God working in your discouragement?

Take a Step:

- ⇒ Truth transforms us only as we take action. What is your plan to apply this truth?