

## Encouraging Yourself in the Lord<sup>1</sup>

(Dr. Baines, Jr.; 10/2019)

Read I Samuel 30:6 --- ***6 David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But David found strength in the Lord his God.*** (NIV) /// ***6 And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.*** (KJV)

**Introduction:** All of us know something about being distressed or grieved. And we have been tempted to deal with our pain in unhealthy ways. Our text shows David under stress and yet handling himself in a godly way. The focus of this discussion is, “***We should move past our pain with godly encouragement.***”

### **Key Points:**

**1. Our families are under attack.** As in the text, the enemy is attacking our families. Our enemy is the devil. He is working to destroy our children. Think about lack of home training, lacking education system, and danger of the streets. The devil is trying to destroy our marriages. Think about how optional marriage is, prevalent divorce is, and pervasive abuse is. Too many of our families are too far from what we see in passages like Ephesians 5:22-6:4. *Let's live like we understand that the devil is attacking our families.* This kind of living should include vigilance, staying prayed up, and keeping our faith in God.

**2. Pain can tempt us to do the wrong thing.** In our text, David seems to deal with the attacks in his life in a godly way. On one hand, passages like I Corinthians 10:13 remind us that we can handle our temptations. But on the other hand, we should be honest with the idea of being tempted to handle our attacks in ungodly ways. When the attacks get close enough and painful enough, the best of us can be tempted to handle the stress in ungodly ways. Some have resorted to violence, drinking and drugging, extra marital sex, gambling, emotional spending, cussing, eating, etc. *Let's live like we understand that we can be tempted to deal with our attacks in ungodly ways.* This kind of living should be known for staying prayed up, being honest with ourselves, and repenting if we falter.

**3. Leaders suffer as well.** Notice that David suffered in our text on three fronts. David lost his children like the others. He empathized with the loss of his men's children. And he had the added burden of being the object of his men's anger and frustration. In like manner, the enemy is still attacking our leaders personally. He attacks them by way of the leaders' empathy with the pain of their followers. And he attacks through anger that may be more rightful aimed at the enemy who hurt them or God who allowed the pain

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<sup>1</sup> Prepare to discuss the following: What is the point, what scripture supports the point, what is the application sentence, and what is an example of living by the material? After the material is covered, be prepared to answer the following: Which point do you want to spend extra time on, why do you think this point is so important, and what tips do you have for living by this material, in spite of the challenges? **What is one thing you will take from this session and work on, in regard to your discipleship goals?**

(see Mt. 5:11-12). Remember that striking the shepherd leads to scattered sheep, and scattered sheep become lamb chops for lions (see Mt. 26:31; I Pet. 5:8). *Let's live like we understand that the devil is attacking our leaders.* This kind of living should be noted for praying for and cooperating with our leaders. It should be known for not allowing the devil to use us in being sources of undue stress to our leaders.

**4. God is still God.** God made away in our text. Remember that no matter how bad it looks, if it had not been for God, it would have been worse. And by the grace of God, it will get better. Think about how this was the case with Noah (i.e., the ark could have sunk, but God saw them through), Abraham (i.e., Isaac could have killed himself, but God saw them through), and Esther (i.e., Haman could have killed more Jews, but God saw them through). Romans 8:28 is a great passage to keep in mind. *Let's live like we understand that God is still God.* This kind of living should include our obedience and confidence.

**5. Learn to encourage yourself.** Our text talks about David encouraging himself, in the Lord. First, our churches and loved ones should be sources of encouragement. But sometimes they are dealing with their own attacks. Second, every believer should learn and practice encouraging themselves. Praying, singing Christian songs, and meditating on selected passages of scripture (e.g., Pro. 24:19-20; Ps. 27:1-3; 23) can be great sources of encouraging ourselves. *Let's work on encouraging ourselves.*