

**HACC Small Groups 2018 Fall Cycle**  
**Series: Soul Detox | Part #3: Discouragement**

**INTRODUCTION**

Discouragement is defined as a loss of confidence or enthusiasm; a dispiritedness. Some synonyms of discouragement are demoralization; despair; disheartenment; dismayed.

Take some time as a group to review and summarize the following leading into discussion.

**Four Reasons Why We Get Discouraged**

1. Discouraged with our Relationships
  - Job experienced great discouragement because of his spouse and friends.
    - ***“His wife said to him, ‘Are you still maintaining your integrity? Curse God and die!’ He replied, ‘You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?’ (Job 2:9,10).***
    - ***“May the day of my birth perish, and the night that said, ‘A boy is conceived!’ That day – may it turn to darkness; may God above not care about it; may no light shine on it” (Job 2:3, 4).***
2. Discouraged with Life Circumstances
  - Elijah felt his ministry was a waste.
    - ***“He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. ‘I have had enough Lord,’ he said, ‘Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.’” (1 Kings 19:4b).***
3. Discouraged with God
  - Jeremiah came to a place where he believed God was against him, and because of that perspective he temporarily lost hope in God (***Lamentations 3***).
  - The Disciples were discouraged after Jesus’ death.
    - ***“...but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place” (Luke 24:21).***
  - Every setback is a setup for an even greater comeback.
4. Discouraged with Ourselves
  - Peter felt he failed to live up to his own and others expectations.
    - After Peter denied knowing Jesus three times –  
***“And he went outside and wept bitterly” (Matthew 26:75b).***
  - ***“Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God” (Psalm 20:7).***

## DISCUSSION

### Overcoming the Toxin of Discouragement

1. Remember That God is With You
  - Is there anywhere we can go where God is not also there?
  - What Scripture passages can you think of that describe God's omnipresence?
  - How can discouragement help us to recognize God's presence?
  - Can you think of a time in your life when a discouraging situation turned into a moment where God became very present?
2. God is For You
  - Can you describe times in your life when a discouraging situation became an opportunity for God to demonstrate His care for you?
  - What Scripture passages can you think of that describe God's plan for you?
  - Sometimes the source of our discouragement can come by not fulfilling the expectations we have placed on ourselves or the expectations others have placed on us.
    - What do you think God expects of you?
    - How does knowing God's loving plan for our lives help us put the expectations of others and of ourselves in their proper perspectives?

## CONCLUSION

As a group, discuss ways that as a Small Group you can help one another to journey through life's occasionally discouraging circumstances.

- How does living in a faith community help us to overcome discouragement?

Think of others in your circle of friends, family, and acquaintances who can benefit from community in order to overcome discouragement. Consider inviting them to church or to Small Group.

## PRAYER