

DESPONDENCY

“Pastor, I feel downhearted and despondent. I’ve tried thinking positive thoughts to encourage myself but nothing seems to be working. There seems to be a spirit of heaviness on my life that I am unable to shift! What can I do to get out of this negative mindset?” Despondency typically is connected to a sense of hopelessness. That is, the conviction that any further effort on your part is futile and unable to remedy your situation or bring about lasting positive change. When you find yourself thinking this way, you must first understand that “hope” needs to be restored before you can lift your head up high. And for hope to be restored you have to trust God to do what He said He will do - regardless of your circumstances, regardless of how desperate you get. If you are truly putting your trust in God you can’t be without hope because you know that even in the worst-case scenario He will not abandon you. Jeremiah 29:11 reveals the heart of God for people in your situation, “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a **future** and a **hope**.” Every time the Lord thinks of you He has thoughts of peace that secure both a future and a hope! Therefore, you should never feel despondent or lost! Your head should always be held high!

My daughter Xana wrote a song called "Hold on To Life" and the opening line in the chorus says, "Hold your head up." There are many different pressures around our lives that would work against us to make us despondent and keep us from holding our heads up high. David found some proven keys in cultivating an attitude of victorious living and how we can all hold our heads up high. In Psalm 27:6 he says, "***Then I will hold my head high above my enemies who surround me. At His sanctuary I will offer sacrifices with shouts of joy, singing and praising the Lord with music.***" In Psalm 3:3 he declares, "***But You, O Lord, are a shield for me, my glory and the One who lifts up my head.***" The Hebrew word translated "lift" means; to be set on high, to rise up, to be raised and uplifted. It signifies:

1. Movement to a new position of rank, power and favour
2. Movement from defeat to a place of victory
3. Movement away from the spirit of despondency and fear

Notice, when the psalmist found himself feeling despondent he quickly turned his attention toward God. While his enemies were surrounding him on every side, he was still able to hold his head up and sing praises to the Lord. David knew that even when he didn’t have the strength to carry on, the Lord would be the One who would lift up his head. That is, to raise him up and elevate him to a place of victory.

If you are feeling despondent declare this out aloud: ***“I will boldly declare the greatness of my God and the power of His word. I will not live in defeat, but will stand my ground and fearlessly praise my God. I know God will lift me up and I will live life with my head held high. This is the position of victory that He has secured for me.”***