

St. Matthew AME Church  
Bible Study  
Monday, February 1, 2010  
"Seven D's, Plus One"  
Discouragement

- I. Discouragement is to seek to prevent or take away confidence, hope and spirit. To thwart or hamper by being negative, expressing disapproval, expressing objections or raising doubts.
  - A. All of us experience discouragement in life. Either from our relationships or interactions with others, circumstances over which we have no control or that we bring upon ourselves.
    1. Discouragement of itself is not demonic. We can be discouraged by something in particular such as loss of a job, failed relationship, debt or other financial matters or some health issue. We are discouraged about a particular area of our lives.
    2. Discouragement is usually for a period of time or until particular issue is addressed or resolved.
  
- II. Discouragement becomes demonic when it is "allowed" to build or establish a stronghold in our lives. A stronghold is when the demonic spirit takes control in our lives.
  - A. When discouragement builds a stronghold it not only becomes demonic, it opens the door for other demonic spirits to come into our lives. (Example of this is Luke 8:26-30)
  - B. Most of the time we do not have to deal with one, but many demonic spirits at work in our lives. (Luke 8:30)
    1. Result we are overwhelmed because there are so many things going on in our lives.
    2. At first we do not know why we are acting the way we do, but we know we are not ourselves.
    3. Sometime we may display a lack of physical control but often times unlike the man in this text it is manifested in the way we think. It is a matter of our minds. We demonstrate the following:
      - a. Lack of self-confidence
      - b. Hopelessness
      - c. Lack of motivation, drive, spirit
      - d. Become negative, pessimistic, skeptical
  
- III. Strongholds are not built quickly but over a period of time. This man use to be in his right mind and lived in town among the people. Perhaps had a family, worked, etc.....
  - A. Something caused this man to become discouraged and for discouragement to build a stronghold in his life.
    1. Perhaps it involved people and his interaction with them. (Luke 8:39)
    2. Whatever it was it caused him to lose self control
  - B. We must not allow discouragement or any demonic spirit to build a stronghold in our lives
  
- IV. Several things the text tells us about demonic spirits and their face off with Jesus.
  - A. Demonic spirits recognize Jesus (Luke 8:28-29)
  - B. They are subject to the authority of Jesus (Luke 8:31-33)
  - C. We can be restored and make people respect us (Luke 8:35)