

What is courage?

By

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Courage is a quality that enables you to do something useful that many other people would not dare to do, according to the dictionary. Often believers need to be courageous, they need to do useful things many others would not dare to do. Following Jesus means stepping outside comfort zones.

The Lord Jesus had courage

The Lord Jesus had the courage to address injustice or evil in Jewish society and He said things no one else was bold enough to say. He did not shrink back from criticizing the established religious order in clear language – read for example Mark 7:5-13 or Luke 11:43-44. Jesus loathed hypocrisy, He loathed how the common people were held back from truly serving God. He dared to address these issues and in this way, He persisted in doing the will of his Father.

The apostles had courage

The apostles were often in danger because they proclaimed the Gospel. Peter and John for example, taught the people in Jerusalem about Jesus. The religious leaders were not at all pleased with that. “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished (...) So they called them and charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered them, ‘Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.’” (Acts 4:13-20). Sometimes this courage resulted in apostles being imprisoned or even killed. But they nevertheless went on. As the apostle Paul wrote: “In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:12-13).

No fear?

Being courageous does not necessarily mean that you are a daredevil who knows no fear. Being courageous means you don't walk away from your responsibilities or from tough issues that demand your attention. It means you do not go into hiding like a coward. This means that you need to overcome fear! Even Jesus knew fear during those quiet moments in Gethsemane (Mark 14:34-36). Intense fear. But Jesus entrusted his anxiety to God the Father and found strength in Him, strength in the face of grief and pain. If even Jesus needed to look up for strength to his Father, then how much more we need to do that!

This is how we need to live: with a straight back, because we know our courage and strength comes from God. Do you lack the courage to do the thing you need to do, or to start a certain task or chore? Do not walk away from it but entrust it to God and look up to Him for strength and courage. Follow in the steps of Jesus.

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