

Courage is a Choice

“Their circumstances will never shake them and others will never forget their example. They will not live in fear or dread of what may come, for their hearts are firm, ever secure in their faith. Steady and strong, they will not be afraid, but will calmly face their every foe until they all go down in defeat.”

Psalms 112:6-8 TPT

Courage can be defined as “the ability to do something that frightens one, or having strength in the face of pain or grief”. As the Scripture above describes, a courageous person is someone who isn’t shaken by circumstances, may experience fear but doesn’t live in it, and is secure and strong no matter what. Does this describe you?

It can be easy to look at what it means to be courageous and think that this must be some kind of innate quality, that some people are more courageous while others tend to shy away from difficulty and taking risks. However, the ability to do something that frightens yourself is a choice that God calls each of us to make, and wants to help us work through what holds us back so that we can become the people the above Scripture describes.

Bible Study

What Steals Our Courage?

Edgy with Guilt

The wicked are edgy with guilt, ready to run off even when no one’s after them; Honest people are relaxed and confident, bold as lions.

Proverbs 28:1 MSG

How would you describe yourself when you feel guilty? Do you get defensive, skeptical that everyone is out to get you? Do you get angry for no reason, or always on edge that someone is going to ask you a question you don’t want to have to answer? When we don’t deal with the guilt in our hearts, all courage goes out the window, because we can’t just relax and be okay with who we are and where we’re truthfully at. When we choose to be honest, we can be bold and confident that God accepts us for who we are so we don’t have to be guilty.

- What do you need to be honest about today in order to get freed up from what’s making you guilty?

Held Back by Doubt

But Jesus spoke to them at once. “Don’t be afraid,” he said. “Take courage. I am here!” [28] Then Peter called to him, “Lord, if it’s really you, tell me to come to you, walking on the water.” [29] “Yes, come,” Jesus said. So Peter went over the side of the boat and walked on the water

toward Jesus. [30] But when he saw the strong wind and the waves, he was terrified and began to sink. "Save me, Lord!" he shouted. [31] Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him. "You have so little faith," Jesus said. "Why did you doubt me?"

Matthew 14:27-31 NLT

Peter started out confident and courageous, deciding to take a risk and walk on the water toward Jesus. But once he saw the winds and the waves, he doubted that God would actually take care of him. His courage was conditional, dependent on the circumstance he was in. When we doubt God's ability or willingness to take care of us through the storm, we get wiped out by the waves in our life, because we've stopped relying on Him.

- Is your courage and faith conditional? What storms in your life have stopped you from believing God will take care of you?
- What doubts do you have about God? (he doesn't actually care, he doesn't have a plan, he can't actually change me, he won't come through for me, etc.)

Choose Courage!

Faith Sparks Courage

In their weakness their faith imparted power to make them strong! Faith sparked courage within them and they became mighty warriors in battle, pulling armies from another realm into battle array.

Hebrews 11:34b TPT

Once we deal with the guilt and doubt that holds us back, faith helps us choose to have the courage to make the impossible happen. Because the people in this Scripture chose to trust God, they *became* powerful and mighty warriors, even though they had been weak and afraid before.

- What weakness do you feel stuck in? How can faith help you become powerful enough to overcome it?
- What is one thing you can do to spark your courage?

Even When It's Hopeless

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be." [19] Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. [20] Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, [21] being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

Romans 4:18-21 NIV

Even when there was no reason to hope or have courage, Abraham held onto hope anyway. He faced the facts - he saw how impossible it was to accomplish his purpose - but he kept on believing. He had the courage to keep fighting not because he was so naturally strong and

courageous, but because he made the choice to believe that God would pull through for him, and He did!

- What in your life do you want to change that feels impossible?
- What facts do you need to face first, before you can have faith? What truths do you need to confront about yourself to get rooted and faith in God?
- How can you choose today to believe God will pull through for you?

Every Step of the Way

"Let's go across to the outpost of those pagans," Jonathan said to his armor bearer. "Perhaps the LORD will help us, for nothing can hinder the LORD. He can win a battle whether he has many warriors or only a few!" [7] "Do what you think is best," the armor bearer replied. "I'm with you completely, whatever you decide."

1 Samuel 14:6-7 NLT

Haven't I commanded you? Strength! Courage! Don't be timid; don't get discouraged. GOD, your God, is with you every step you take."

Joshua 1:9 MSG

Courage is a choice, but it's not a choice you have to make alone. With God and friends, we can face any battle, overcome any difficulty, get through any circumstance and come out the other side victorious.

- Who in your life can you choose to be courageous with together?
- Now that you know God is with you every step of the way, what can you do today to choose to be courageous?



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