

Part 1 of 2

A Study on Courage

I recently had a friend die from a long-term illness. Despite her prognosis, I found in her the most courageous person I had ever known. I was amazed because of how often I could be grumpy when the slightest thing didn’t go my way. And yet my friend never, and I mean never, allowed her fate to get her down. When she passed, I was so moved by her rock-solid faith that I was driven to discover her secret. That’s when I discovered how much the Bible has to say about courage. 1 Corinthians 16:13-14 sums up her life.

*“Be on guard. Stand firm in the faith. Be courageous. Be strong.
And do everything with love.” 1 Corinthians 16:13-14*

Definition of Courage: mental or moral strength to venture fearlessly, to be brave, to persevere, and to withstand danger, fear, or difficulty. i.e. the courage to do what is right.

Synonyms: courageous, courageousness, bravery, encouragement, fearlessness, gallantry, valor, virtue

Courageous is proven courage.

Courage is similar to bravery; however, bravery infers and embodies the physical as if to ignore danger or injury to step into harm’s way. It takes courage to act bravely, meaning that it takes mental and emotional strength to act bravely.

Antonym: coward—fear based—self-preservation, thinking of self, first.

The antithesis of courage is cowardice. Fear engenders cowardice. The author and source of fear is Satan, who is also known as the father of lies. Satan wants to prevent you from making a courageous decision that honors God. Satan will use fear to lead you down the path of least resistance. Satan will always steer you away from making a courageous decision to take the moral high ground.

Faith is a Necessary Driver and the Primary Element to Possessing Courage

“So take courage! For I believe God. It will be just as He said.” — Acts 27:25-26

Courage is a godly virtue—faith based—“Good will come from my sacrifice.”—synonym is valor, which denotes honor and respect because of selflessness.

Courage is defined as mental and emotional strength to act righteously. Courage is a godly attribute because it engenders and defines right choices that honor God.

Selflessness (a Biblical concept) invites/enables/engenders courage

Whereas, selfishness drives self-preservation which tends to vanquish courage

Courage imbues a firm conviction and or vision of the moral high ground. Courage is derived from deep-seated conviction that people have great intrinsic value, a biblical concept.

Strength of character begets courage. 1 Corinthians 16:13-14, “Be on guard. Stand firm in the faith. Be courageous. Be strong. And do everything with love.”

1 John 2:28. “And now, dear children, remain in fellowship with Christ so that when He returns, you will be full of courage and not shrink back from Him in shame.”

Confidence in God’s provision engenders courage. Mark 6:50-51 says it this way, “But Jesus spoke to them at once. ‘Don’t be afraid,’ He said. ‘Take courage! I am here!’”

Self-sacrifice, a Christ-like quality, enables courage

Courage by definition and nature is not weak or easily defeated, rather possesses tenacity, firm determination, resilience, fortitude, and willingness to overcome opposition.

Walking in the Spirit moment by moment takes courage. Galatians 5:16-18 tells us, “So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won’t be doing what your sinful nature craves. The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions.”

Declaring the Gospel, witnessing and speaking up for what is right is often done in a seemingly hostile environment. 1 Thessalonians 2:2-3, “Yet our God gave us the courage to declare His Good News to you boldly, in spite of great opposition.”

Summary: Courage is a gift that we must develop and exercise by implementing His Word in faith. Hebrews 3:6, “But Christ, as the Son, is in charge of God’s entire house. And we are God’s house, if we keep our courage and remain confident in our hope in Christ.”

 Information and Revelation  Application and Transformation
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Heavenly Father, thank You for Jesus who is my exemplar and source of courage. Thank You for instilling in me the capacity to have the courage so that I may honor You with my life. LORD, help me see Your bigger picture for my life that is so much more significant than the limited, puny vision I have sought for myself. Draw me closer to You so that I can gain Your wisdom and discover Your heartbeat. LORD, help me have the courage to conquer my fears and live above the ordinary so that I do everything with Love. I ask for courage to follow after You so that my life will honor You and bring You glory. Help me moment-by-moment walk in the Spirit—I choose to let the Holy Spirit guide my life so I am free to carry out Your good intentions. LORD, when I face a hostile environment for Your sake, I ask You to give me courage to declare Your Good News boldly, in spite of great opposition. I ask You to help me keep my courage and remain confident in my hope in Christ Jesus. I declare that Jesus is the only hope of glory! I proclaim Your love and make these proclamations in Jesus’ name. Amen.

*By David E McFadden © 2026
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