

# Have Courage

by Mary McCave

Courage is not an absence of fear, but rather, when you have fear in a situation, fear that you can feel in the pit of your stomach, and despite that fear, you move past it and act! That is courage.

God our Father gives us strength when we are weak. God helps us and has never left us alone. But God does not provide us with courage. We must muster it in our souls to walk in courage. I want to share about individuals in God's Word who walked in courage in the face of overwhelming odds and scary situations. We have so many examples in God's Word, and we also have people around us. Many are called heroes. When other people run away in fear, these heroes around us run into the situation despite their fear and help others.

How do we have this type of courage? We have to have faith in His Word. God says what He means and means what He says. God is not a man that He should lie; we must be convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that God is real, sitting on His Throne, and He is with us every moment of every day!

Romans 10:17. So faith comes by hearing and hearing the Word of God.

Proverbs 7:1-3. My son, keep my words and treasure my commandments within you. Keep my commandments and live, And my teaching as the apple of your eye. Bind them on your fingers; Write them on the tablet of your heart.

We are the ones who have to immerse ourselves in the Word of God. That is how we will build our faith to the point in our lives where we know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that God's Word is true!

In Deuteronomy 31, Moses gives his last counsel to the children of Israel. With Joshua leading them, they are about to cross the Jordan to the promised land.

Deuteronomy 31:6,7,23. "Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you." Then Moses called to Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, "Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with the people into the land which the LORD has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall give it to them as an inheritance. Then he commissioned Joshua the son of Nun, and said "Be strong and courageous, for you shall bring the sons of Israel into the land which I swore to them, and I will be with you."

What a last counsel! Three times, Moses tells them to be strong and courageous. They are the ones who have to act, cross over the Jordan, and move into the promised land.

At the end of Deuteronomy in chapter 34, Moses dies. Now, it's up to Joshua to gather the people to act.

God counsels Joshua and tells him to be strong and courageous and to cross into the promised land.

Joshua 1:5-7,9.”No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous, for you shall give this people possession of the land which I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right or the left, so that you may have success wherever you go. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”

After receiving the revelation from Moses. Joshua and the people believed the Word and took hold of the promised land. Unlike their fathers, who were given the same promise but, because of fear, spent 40 years in the wilderness.

In Chapter 2, Joshua sends out two spies to view the land, especially Jericho. They went and lodged at the house of Rahab, the harlot. (Almost every commentary has Rahab as an innkeeper.) It was told to the King of Jericho that two men from Israel were lodged there.

Joshua 2:3-14. And the King of Jericho sent word to Rahab, saying, “Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the land.” But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them, and she said, “Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.” It came about when it was time to shut the gate at dark, that the men went out; I do not know where the men went. Pursue them quickly, for you will overtake them.” But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them in the stalks of flax which she had laid in order on the roof. So the men pursued them on the road to the Jordan to the fords; and as soon as those who were pursuing them had gone out, they shut the gate. Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof, and said to the men, “I know that the LORD has give before you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two Kings of the Amorites and were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. Now therefore, please swear to me by the LORD, since I have dealt kindly with you, that you also will deal kindly with my Father’s household, and give me a pledge of truth, and spare my father and my mother and my brothers and my sisters, with all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.”

So the men said to her, “Our life for yours if you do not tell this business of ours; and it shall come about when the LORD gives us the land that we will deal kindly and faithfully with you.”

Joshua 6:23. So the young men who were spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and mother and her brothers and all she had; they also brought out all her relatives and placed them outside of the camp of Israel.

What an amazing record! Joshua was convinced of all the LORD had told him. Rahab was convinced that the LORD was the God of heaven and earth just by hearing all that God had done when He brought the children of Israel out of Egypt. What a fantastic report she gave the spies.

All the inhabitants of Jericho had no courage, and their hearts melted when they heard all that God had done for Israel. What a report to give to Joshua, what encouragement for them. Rahab had such faith in the God of Israel that she defied the King, saved the two spies, and saved herself and all her relatives.

A man named Ananias, in Acts chapter 9, was told by God to go and put his hands on Saul, who was, at the time, destroying the people of God and throwing them in prison. He even asked God how he heard about this man and how much harm he did to Your saints at Jerusalem, and he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name. God told him to go, and Ananias had to gather the strength and courage to go and lay his hands on Saul. Ananias went, and Saul was converted, and he changed the course of history! Such courage, faith, and many more who displayed such courage, such as Deborah, Joseph and Mary, David, Daniel, Shadrach, and so many more.

What all of them had in common was their faith in God without a shadow of a doubt. Their faith in God moved them to the point they acted with courage! They are no different from us. They all dealt with betrayal and dysfunctional families, paid taxes, fought wars, worked, enjoyed life, and struggled with life. They also dealt with death. They made mistakes, yet they got back up and kept on. They didn't forget and grow complacent. They kept their faith strong.

We all live in this world. Some people have to work 60 to 70 hours a week. But it is important to keep coming back to the Word of God in your mind. My focus is not on the temporary but on the eternal things. Where do I keep my "heart of hearts?" It's not the outward but the inward.

Years ago, when I went to The Way College, we were challenged to read only the Word of God and cut out watching TV or any other secular activity for the first three months. We went to work and classes and immersed ourselves in reading the Word. Well, to this day, that laid a foundation for me that I haven't forgotten. When things get tough in my life, I go to the Word. I have fallen, but I get back up. Everyone makes mistakes, but you don't quit. Get back to the doing the Word of God.

I Corinthians 16:13. Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.

When Moses finished his last counsel to the people, he ended with the following;

Deuteronomy 32:46,47. He said to them, "Take to your heart all the words with which I am warning you today, which you shall command your sons to observe carefully, even all the words of this law. For it is not an idle word for you; indeed it is your life. And by this word you will prolong your days in the land, which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess."

This Word of God is not idle words. It is life to us. We must watch what we put into our hearts. We must be diligent, fully persuaded that God's Word is true, and stand upon it. Build our faith, and immerse ourselves in God's Word.

Only faith in God can banish a person's despair and lighten a heart through the darkest night.

Isaiah 26:3. Thou will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee.

Psalm 57:7. My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises!

How steadfast is your heart?