

The Christian And Courage

No. 68

Introduction.

I. Once a swimmer gave up in the middle of a race and his coach asked him why he had given up. He answered, "I got some sand in my mouth." Then the coach blasted out, "You ought to have swallowed it. You need some in your system."

II. This is something every Christian needs. He needs some sand (some courage) in his system to live the Christian life. God does not have any use for a coward or a compromiser.

A. The Bible says, "Be strong and let your heart take courage, all ye that hope in Jehovah." (Psa. 31:25).

B. It also says, "Act you like men," that is, "Do not be cowards." (1 Cor. 16:13).

I. **Examples Of Courage** - As we read through the pages of the Bible we find many examples of people who possessed great courage.

A. One of the greatest examples of courage was Moses. (Ex. 32:1-20).

B. Another example of courage was Nathan, the prophet. After David sinned with Bathsheba and had her husband Uriah killed, he came to David and rebuked him for his sin. It took great courage to rebuke the King of Israel and tell him he would be severely punished because of his adultery and his murder. His unwavering courage brought David to repentance. (2 Sam. 12:1-20).

C. Another example of courage was **Daniel**. (Dan. 6:1-24).

D. Another example of courage was **Christ**. Our Master was a man of great courage.

1. He had courage to stand up before the mighty leaders of the Sanhedrin. He had the courage run the money changers out of the temple. He had the courage to rebuke the hypocritical religious leaders of His day. He had the courage to face death .

2. In the garden of Gethsemane, when the mob came out to arrest Him, He said, "I am the One whom you seek." He made this bold statement even though He knew they would arrest Him and put Him to death. He had the courage to go to the cross even though He could have summoned 12 legions, 72,000 angels, to come to His rescue.

II. **Courage Needed Today** - There is a great need for this same courage in our modern age. The followers of Christ must be courageous and stand for the right regardless of the consequences.

A. Christians must have the courage preach the gospel of Christ.

1. Those who are afraid or ashamed to preach the pure gospel of Christ will not have any part with God. Not only must we have the courage to proclaim the gospel of Christ we must have the courage to hold the line against error. Jesus and the apostles warned that false teachers would come into the world. (Matt. 7:15; 2 Pet. 2:1; I 4:1).

2. Today the world is filled with teachers who teach a corrupted gospel. We must not stand idly by and let them sow the seed of error. We must have the courage to stand against these teachers and expose them as false teachers.

B. Christians must have the courage to stand for their convictions - Great pressure is exerted on Christians to compromise their convictions and become like those about them.

1. For example, pressure is placed on the individual to compromise his convictions the job. Employees, under economic pressures, often make little compromises in order to get ahead in the world. Employers often expect their employees to lie and cheat in order to make some extra dollars for the company. Christians must not, however yield to these pressures. We must remain true to our convictions even if it means the loss of our jobs and economic hardships.

2. Another example is dress in the 20th century. Modern woman is placed under great temptation to be like those about her and dress in immodest apparel. It takes great courage for a young girl or woman of our day to dress modestly as a woman professing godliness as the scriptures enjoin. (1Tim. 2.8-10).

3. Another example in drinking in our age the majority of people drink and pressure is placed on those who do not drink to compromise their convictions.

a. When President Hayes was in office a young reporter attended a banquet given in the president's honor. This reporter was a total abstainer. When he asked the president for a copy of his speech, the president asked him why he did not drink the liquor served at the banquet. The reporter replied, "Because I wanted to get the facts straight for my paper." The president was so pleased that he gave him a copy of speech and a friendship was formed between them that lasted for years (The young man was Edward W. Bok, who later served as editor of the "Ladies Home Journal." The famous Bok tower in Florida is a memorial to him. We need more like him who the courage of their convictions.

B. Christians must have courage in the ordinary duties of life.

1. There are **two kinds of courage**. One kind is for critical occasions, and the other is for everyday life. It is in the last category that we fail. It takes courage plod along every day, carrying life's responsibilities, and always standing up for the right.

2. A man who won many medals from his country for bravery in battle came home and remained drunk most of the time. He had the courage to face the enemy on the battlefield, but he had not the courage to master himself. Ordinary courage is the greatest kind, and it is the kind we need today. We need to grit our teeth and press on in the battle of life.

C. Christians must have courage to bear bravely the sorrows of life. "Into each life some rain must fall" and some have endured unbelievable suffering. It takes great courage endure such suffering and continue to be cheerful and do right. It takes great courage to say, "With God's help I will bear that which comes upon me."

III. **How We Can Get This Great Courage** - Let's now consider how we can get this great courage have been talking about.

A. In the first place, we can get courage by **realizing the presence of God**.

1. When we are afraid we must remember that..."If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31).
2. We depend too much on ourselves. No wonder we lack courage. We need to realize that God is near and that all things work together for good to them that love God." (Rom. 8:28). We are "more than conquerors through him that loved us." (Rom. 8:37).

B. In the second place, we can get courage by **having a great faith in our cause.**

1. During a war someone asked this question, "Why does a certain regiment always conquer, while others fail?" And the answer was, "This conquering regiment had a great faith in their cause while others did not."
2. We have a great cause, we have a great Captain. We are on the winning team. We can muster courage when we know that Christ is with us and will bring us through.

C. In the third place, we can get courage by **having hope for the future.**

1. Hope is spoken of as "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." (Heb. 6:19). We can bear up bravely when we have hope. Where there is no hope, courage is gone.
2. The hope of immortality gives us strength to conquer the temptations and sorrows and battles of life. Paul wrote. (II Cor. 4:16-5:1). The hope of life with God gave the early Christians the courage to live and die for Christ and it will give us the courage to live the Christian life.

Conclusion.

- I. The Waldensians, a religious sect of the 12th century which sought to revive primitive Christianity, lost their leader, Peter Waldo, in his early thirties. When they gathered to say good-bye to him, one of the men touched the young leader's hair and said, "Our comrade's hair became white because of his loyalty to our cause" This statement brought a great cheer from the Waldensians and sent them out to fight for their cause.
- II. Let us be brave and courageous and others will be helped and strengthened and inspired to take up the Christ life and will enjoy life eternal with us.
- III. In this lesson we have discussed the courage a Christian must possess in life.
 - A. This does not mean or imply that the non-Christian must not have courage. He must have the courage to admit he is lost in his sins. He must have the courage to turn from his sins and walk down the aisle and give his life to Christ. He must have the courage to be buried with the Lord in the waters of baptism and come forth to take his place as a soldier in the great army of God. If he will manifest this courage he will be blessed with eternal life which is given to those who complete the Christian race.
 - B. Will you accept Christ as we stand and sing?