

Developing Christian Courage

Lesson for Sunday, October 26, 2025

INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ Ask some of these questions to get people talking: What is courage? Who do you think of when you hear the word courage? What is the most courageous action that you have seen?
- ⇒ At some point, direct the conversation to the definition of courage. See how your class would define it.
- ⇒ Almost 15 times, we read the challenge in the Bible that God's people are to be courageous.
- ⇒ Last week we began to put the essential virtues in 2 Peter 1 into three groups that make up three core values every believer should seek to incorporate into their lives.
 - The first core value is our **commitment** to Christ. The first two essential virtues of arete and knowledge are the two pursuits that form the foundation for Christian character.
 - Today we will study our **courage** for Christ. Our courage is a result of continuous development of self-control, endurance and Godliness.

BIBLE STUDY:

1. The **Explanation** of Courage (Romans 12:1-2)
 - a. Definition: The virtues of self-control, endurance and Godliness produce a **brave-hearted** disciple who advances Christ and His ways and opposes evil in himself and others regardless of risk to himself.
 - b. *Courage is the by-product that is produced in the life of a Christian as they are conformed to the image of Jesus.*
 - c. Read Romans 12:1-2 and make the following points:
 - i. Paul reminds us of God's **mercies**.
 1. This is a parallel to what we learned at the beginning of this series: God has given us the farm!
 2. God has given us everything we need for life and Godliness (2 Peter 1:3) and has given us great and precious promises so that we can be partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4).
 - ii. Paul exhorts us to present our bodies as living **sacrifices**.
 1. This reminds us of our commitment to Christ that we discussed last week.
 2. We are to be wholly committed to proclaiming Christ's excellencies and growing in the knowledge of Jesus (2 Peter 1:5).
 - iii. Paul instructs us how to live.
 1. We are not to be conformed to the image of the world.
 2. We are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds.
 3. This happens as we learn temperance (self-control) and patience (endurance) (2 Peter 1:6).
 4. As we learn these virtues, we become Godly, and in the process develop **courage**.
 - d. What does this look like in our daily lives? Godliness must become our **lifestyle** (aka "a living sacrifice). Consider the following illustration.

- i. Have you ever tried to learn a foreign language? It is a tough process!
 - ii. It begins by hearing a word in another language, determining its meaning in English, determining your answer in the other language and then saying it. It will give you a headache!
 - iii. Most language experts will tell you that you have to get to the place where you begin to think in the foreign language. When you arrive in that place, the second language becomes second nature.
- e. The same is true in Godliness. At first, having to think about every action, reaction and temptation is tough!
 - i. Your responses feel unnatural and mechanical. But as you stay with it, God-dependent practice becomes almost second nature.
 - ii. You “translate” every situation that comes up, every act of suffering, and every temptation through the grid of God’s Word.
 - iii. After time, you become Godly, and courage becomes your natural response.
- 2. The **Enemy** of Courage
 - a. Simply stated, the enemy of courage is **worldliness**. Worldliness creates a culture of cowardice. Worldliness destroys your commitment to Christ.
 - b. First, worldliness destroys courage for Christ by scorning **self-control**.
 - i. Anyone who is not saying no to the internal lusts that demand self-rule will remain a coward.
 - ii. Common manifestations: appeals to our sensuality in the way we dress, our entertainment choices and worldly habits.
 - c. Second, worldliness destroys courage for by scorning **endurance**.
 - i. The world and our flesh tell us to quit with life gets tough.
 - ii. We are encouraged to abort unexpected babies, divorce difficult spouses, quit their jobs, hope from church to church, etc. all based on their personal feelings and social conformity.
 - d. Third, worldliness destroys courage for Christ by scorning **Godliness**.
 - i. The world promotes the fear of man more than the fear of God.
 - ii. People are taught to please the crowd; they are not taught to please God.
 - iii. The Godly man is more conscious of what pleases God and of what God requires than of what pleases the world and what the world requires.
 - e. The consequences of living without courage are staggering. People without courage run from challenges and conflict. They fail to speak up against evil and for righteousness. They conform to avoid anything **uncomfortable**.

APPLICATION:

- ⇒ Can you think of a common situation for the people in your class that you can develop and apply what it would look like to develop courage in that area?
- ⇒ Take the example of learning a foreign language and apply it to this circumstance. Discuss what it may look like in everyday life; how long it may take to develop courage.
- ⇒ Can you think of something that you have developed courage for in the past that you can share with your class?