

Fear 4-18-2010

The LORD Commands Joshua

Joshua 1:1. After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide:

2. "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them--to the Israelites.

3. I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses.

4. Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates--all the Hittite country--to the Great Sea on the west.

5. No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you.

6. "**Be strong and courageous**, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them.

7. **Be strong and very courageous**. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go.

8. Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

9. Have I not commanded you? **Be strong and courageous**. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

10. So Joshua ordered the officers of the people:

11. "Go through the camp and tell the people, 'Get your supplies ready. Three days from now you will cross the Jordan here to go in and take possession of the land the LORD your God is giving you for your own.' "

18. Whoever rebels against your word and does not obey your words, whatever you may command them, will be put to death. Only **be strong and courageous!**"

Joshua is given steps of obedience on the road to God's blessing. The promise and provision is there but the steps must be taken. The first and greatest enemy must be conquered.

Fear
Be afraid...very afraid...

Psalm 27:1 The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Our purpose in living is to 'realize' the truth and blessings of God through the challenges of the circumstances of life lived out through the example and redemption of Jesus Christ according to the will of the Father as revealed by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and to share that truth and those blessings with other people.

My purpose in standing here is to encourage you to continue this process if you are actively engaged in it, to return to it if you are out of the practice, or to begin it if you have been too busy so far to pursue the purpose and meaning of your life...or if you erroneously thought you didn't have one...a purpose that is...

Right now my purpose is also vocabulary class.

I say that my purpose is to 'encourage'
At the heart of that word is the word courage
And at the heart of that word interestingly enough is the latin word 'cor' meaning heart

I want to talk about fear but I find it impossible to do so without talking about courage as they are often thought of together as opposites.

One definition for ‘encourage’ (the one best fitting here) is:
To inspire with hope, courage, or confidence; hearten (give heart)
That’s what we should want to do and should be doing for each other.

If you look around at your relationships and that is not what you are doing...stop what you are doing and start to ‘inspire with hope, courage, or confidence; hearten (give heart)

We define courage as: The state or quality of mind or spirit that enables one to face danger, fear, or vicissitudes with self-possession, confidence, and resolution; bravery.

I like that the lexicographer allowed the word spirit here but the word self-possession (self-command, self-control, self-will)...it seems a bit ‘self’-ish...but hang on here...

We know what danger is...fear we will speak about in a minute...but what in the Funk and Wagnalls are vicissitudes

Vicissitudes: variations, changes, shifts, changes of fortune, life's ups and downs (informal)

Or it could be stated as: the challenges of the circumstances of life... those vehicles for realizing the truth and blessings of God

Re-cap

So what is fear:

1.a. A feeling of agitation and anxiety caused by the presence or imminence of danger.

b. A state or condition marked by this feeling: living in fear.

2. A feeling of disquiet or apprehension: a fear of looking foolish.
3. Extreme reverence or awe, as toward a supreme power.
4. A reason for dread or apprehension: Being alone is my greatest fear.

These seem somehow inadequate to me...something is missing...a real sense of fear

Possible submissions I may send these in:

- An uncontrollable urge to wet oneself
- A powerful urge to seek the nearest closet, dumpster, or manhole and jump in it
- A pretty darn good reason to run away or in circles while screaming
 - I thought you had the shopping cart with the baby in it!
 - Knock, knock, knock, Policia!

Genuine fear is generally not that funny... sometimes... but generally not

Strangely my greatest fears have come during times of recreation:
Dennis FX Mohatt...

Negril...

Clarion...

What do you fear most...the oncologist...the proctologist...
the encrinologist, the cardiologist, the urologist, the neurologist, I
think we get the gist of real fear.

Do you fear being alone, un-cared for, and forgotten.

Do you fear the loss of loved ones, children, your sanity, your
youth

Do you fear financial collapse, one world government, persecution
for your beliefs, anarchy, oligarchy.

Do you fear finally getting to legally park in the blue zone...

I don't fear them, unless I think about them, then I fear them, a lot

Do these thoughts result in: A feeling of agitation and anxiety caused by the presence or imminence of danger

Danger is imminent if not already present in our lives.

Fear if allowed to control us can lead us to make poor choices and stop us in our tracks when God tells us to go. It can hamper our obedience and God's desire to bless us. It can turn winners into losers and the sober into boozers.

Are you ready for some good news?

It's a feeling... an emotion... a pretty nasty one... a sometimes powerful one... but a feeling

We will experience fear as surely as we experience temptation...
And like embracing temptation when we embrace fear we sin.
As Christians when we embrace fear we say to God... nope...
You are not sufficient...

When God says "Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord" as he does in Psalm 31:24 He is not making a casual suggestion... He is telling us the step of obedience on the road to blessing we must take.

Courage and fear are not opposites... just thought of that way

Courage is a state or quality of mind or spirit that enables...

A part of our character

Fear is an emotion that can alert or paralyze us.

Different substances, not different ends of a spectrum,
not opposites

"Courage is not simply one of the virtues but the form of every virtue at the testing point" [C.S. Lewis]

I am not going to recite or define the long list of Christian virtues but as you think through them it is courage at the point where each is tested that tightens our grip and makes them ours.

This ability and action of claiming one by one as our own the virtues that God offers is the growth of Christian character that God seeks in us.

Growing Christian character is 'realizing' (making real) the truth and blessings of God through the challenges of the circumstances of life.

This happens only through courage.

True courage comes only from knowing we have our place in Gods Kingdom now and in eternity as fixed by the Word of Jesus Christ (His example and our salvation) living out God's will as revealed by the Holy Spirit. We are further 'encouraged' by the communion of the saints...us here now... and the words and acts of encouragement of our Christian brothers and sisters when they can squeak a few out.

Is there anything in this life worthy of fear...one thing for the unsaved:

There will come a day when all that we hold dear in the flesh will pass away and we will stand in judgement before our God; either at the end of the world or the end of our days. At that moment our character will be fixed forever. We will be called upon to be seen in alignment with Gods truth and surrendered to His will and covered by the blood of Jesus Christ. To be found wanting at the turn of the final page is the only thing in this world to be feared.

Luke 17:33 If you cling to your life you will lose it...

Otherwise if you're saved you're good to go.

Psalm 27:1 The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Gods provision Psalm 31: 19. What a stack of blessing you have piled up for those who worship you, Ready and waiting for all who run to you to escape an unkind world.

20. You hide them safely away from the opposition. As you slam the door on those oily, mocking faces, you silence the poisonous gossip.

21. Blessed God! His love is the wonder of the world.

22. I panicked. "Out of sight, out of mind," I said. But you heard me say it, you heard and listened.

23. Love God, all you saints; God takes care of all who stay close to him, But he pays back in full those arrogant enough to go it alone.

24. Be brave. Be strong. Don't give up. Expect God to get here soon.

I would like to re-define courage as: The state or quality of mind or spirit that enables one to face danger, fear, or vicissitudes with God-possession, confidence, and resolution; bravery.

Christian Virtues

<http://www.corder.org/bible.d/bible.virtues.html>