

Why You Need Courage (1)

Friday 27th January

'BE STRONG AND OF GOOD COURAGE...' JOSHUA 1:6 NKJV

Why did God say to Joshua, 'Be strong and of good courage'? For four reasons: 1) *For Joshua's own sake.* God had a lot invested in Joshua; the future of an entire nation rested on his shoulders. And since God has a lot invested in you too, you must believe that it's His will for you to succeed. If you grew up in a family or church where you felt unworthy of God's favour and unentitled to His blessing, you must reprogramme your mind with the Scriptures. '...then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success' (Joshua 1:8 NKJV). 2) *For the Lord's sake.* God told Joshua, '...do not be afraid...for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go' (Joshua 1:9 NKJV). God's reputation was on the line. The nations in Canaan had heard how He delivered the Israelites from slavery, drowned the Egyptian army in the Red Sea, and fed His people with food from heaven every day. Had Joshua failed to conquer the Promised Land it would have brought reproach to God's name and made His people a laughing stock. The Lord had a bigger stake in Israel's success than anyone else. His plan to bring forth the Messiah depended on their success. His desire was to turn a bunch of slaves into the greatest nation on earth - one that served the true and living God. And Joshua had a big part to play in it. Where did Joshua's strength come from? This promise: '...the Lord your God is with you wherever you go' (Joshua 1:9 NIV).

BIBLE IN A YEAR: LEV 21:1 - 23:25, MATT 10:32-42, PS 104:24-35, PR 3:11-12

January
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Why You Need Courage (2)

Saturday 28th January

'BE STRONG AND OF GOOD COURAGE...' JOSHUA 1:6 NKJV

Joshua discovered four reasons why you need to be strong and demonstrate courage. Yesterday we looked at the first two. Today let's look at the next two: 3) *For the sake of others.* People are watching you. They want to know if you'll face the situation with courage or buckle before it in fear. Your ability to demonstrate faith in the midst of difficulties will give them courage. The battle is not just about you, it's about those God has planned to bless through you. You may not have money or fame, but you have influence. The attitudes you display and the decisions you make will influence your children and your grandchildren. You say, 'But I am afraid.' We all experience fear. But the Psalmist declared, 'Whenever I am afraid, I will trust in You' (Psalm 56:3 NKJV). 4) *For your enemies' sake.* David wrote: 'You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies...' (Psalm 23:5 NKJV). God will not only fight for you, He will vindicate you in the eyes of your critics. It's good to have critics and competitors. Sometimes a foe can press you into victory where a friend cannot. Who would ever have heard of David, without Goliath? Who would have known about Moses, if there had been no Pharaoh oppressing God's people? And what would have been known about Esther, without Haman's evil plot against the Jews? What's your dream? Is there an enemy standing between you and its fulfilment? Dare to confront them and they will become an instrument in God's hand to press you into your destiny.

BIBLE IN A YEAR: LEV 23:26 - 25:55, MATT 11:1-9, PS 107:1-9, PR 3:13-18

'...BE STRONG AND OF GOOD COURAGE, AND DO IT...' 1 CHRONICLES 28:20 NKJV

In 1955 Rosa Parks was arrested in Alabama for refusing to give her seat on the bus to a white man. Boycotts and bloodshed followed until the U.S. Supreme Court ruled segregation unconstitutional. Later Rosa wrote: 'Knowing what must be done does away with fear. When I sat down on the bus that day I'd no idea history was being made, I was only thinking about getting home. But I had to make up my mind. After many years of being a victim...not giving up my seat, and whatever I had to face afterwards, wasn't important...I felt the Lord would give me the strength to endure whatever I had to face. It was time for someone to stand up - or in my case, sit down.' Courage is displayed at unexpected moments; what you do in such moments can change you, and those around you. The story's told of a spy who was sentenced to death by a general in the Persian Army. The general had a strange custom of giving condemned criminals a choice between the firing squad and 'the big door.' When the general asked, 'What will it be?' the spy chose the firing squad. Turning to his aide the general said, 'They always prefer the known to the unknown, yet, we gave them a choice.' The aide asked, 'What lies beyond the big door?' The general replied, 'Freedom.' Then he added, 'Few are brave enough to take that door.' The dividing line between mediocrity and success is courage. That's why David told his son Solomon upon ascending the throne: 'Be strong and of good courage, and do it.'

BIBLE IN A YEAR: DELIVERS FROM TROUBLE, PS 34, ACTS 12:1-17



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Henry John Heinz

Monday 30th January

'HER CHILDREN RISE UP AND CALL HER BLESSED...' PROVERBS 31:28 NKJV

At age six, Henry John Heinz began helping his mother tend the small garden behind their family home. At twelve, he was working three and a half acres of garden, using a horse and cart for his three-times-a-week deliveries to grocery stores throughout the city of Pittsburg. He went on to found his own company and named it *57 Varieties*. The Henry John Heinz Company was incorporated in 1905, and today, over one hundred years later, it sells more than thirteen hundred products worldwide, ranging from ketchup to baby food. But there are other things you need to know: Henry John Heinz loved Jesus and was deeply involved in the promotion of Sunday school in Pittsburg and around the world. His company was noted for pioneering safe and sanitary food preparation and for being ahead of its time in employee relations. He provided free medical benefits, swimming and gymnasium facilities, and promoted women to positions of greater responsibility, making them supervisors. He earned a reputation for enhancing the working and living conditions of his workers. In his will, Henry John Heinz said: 'I desire to set forth at the very beginning of this will, as the most important item in it, a confession of my faith in Jesus Christ as my Saviour. I also desire to bear witness to the fact that throughout my life, in which there were unusual joys and sorrows, I have been wonderfully sustained by my faith in God through Jesus Christ. This legacy was left to me by my consecrated mother, a woman of strong faith, and to it I attribute any success I have attained.'

BIBLE IN A YEAR: LEV 26-27, MATT 11:10-19, PS 107:10-16, PR 3:19-20