



Courage in a Time of Crisis

REV. DR. ADAM C. KOONTZ

Fear and worry come easily. Courage is harder to find. How do we persevere in faith and flourish in Christ especially when so many certainties turn into uncertainties? Read and pray the Scripture passages below to find Paul's words come true that "through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).

COURAGE UNDER TRIAL

1. In a letter filled with suffering, Paul also wrote to the Corinthians about courage. What is the future Paul sees in 2 Corinthians 5:6–10?

2. How can Paul "always" be of good courage (cf. Rom. 8:23–27)?

3. If Paul were walking "by sight," what are some things that could understandably discourage him (cf. 2 Cor. 2:1–4, 7:5–7, 11:16–33)?

4. Look carefully at your life. What are the things present, past or future that could discourage you if you walked “by sight”?

5. What does Paul mean by “home with the Lord”? How does that give you courage?

COURAGE FOR BOLDNESS

1. Can you be a Christian with no problems? Courage is necessary because problems always stand in our way. Read the story of Jehoiada’s courage in 2 Chronicles 23. What would have happened if fear had won out in Jehoiada’s heart?

2. What sustained Ezra when so many obstacles were laid in his way? Read Ezra 7:11–28.

3. What did Joseph of Arimathea stand to lose when he “took courage” and asked to bury Jesus’ body? Read Mark 15:42–47.

4. What is our attitude when reasons to be courageous and bold are hard to find? Read Psalm 27:14 and Psalm 31:24.

5. What do God's people do when all hope seems lost? Consider how the apostles reacted when their lives were threatened in Acts 23:11 and Acts 28:15.

6. How was Daniel strengthened when the government and so much earthly power was set against him and his God? Read Daniel 10.

COURAGE TO CONFESS CHRIST

1. What purpose does Paul see in his suffering and death? How can he have "full courage" even then? Read Philippians 1:19–26.

2. Paul sees his continued life or his imminent death as good things. Why does he speak about suffering as something "granted" to the Philippians in 1:29–30? What is the "conflict" they share with Paul?

3. Compare Joshua's preaching in Joshua 10:25 with Paul's encouragement to the Philippians in Phil. 2:1–11. How does our hope in God's coming salvation encourage us today?

4. On what did Paul set his heart while in prison and near death? Read Philippians 3:8–10.

5. On what can you set your heart so that you have full courage and a cheerful heart every day? Read Philippians 4:4-7.

PRAYER FOR COURAGE

O God, the Author of peace and Lover of concord, in knowledge of Whom is our eternal life, Whose service is perfect freedom: Defend us, Your humble servants, against all the assaults of our enemies, that we, surely trusting in Your defense, may not fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.