

FirstFruits Gathering At Harvest Christian Church

Be Strong and Courageous April 4, 2017 Suzi Armstrong

Courage and strength are needed to stay the course, to run the race and to advance.

Courage is defined as:

- Mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty.
- To be alert physically or mentally, to prevail, to strengthen oneself, to be determined, to persist, to be resolute, to be sure.

Strength is defined by Webster's dictionary as:

- The emotional or mental qualities to deal with distressing or difficult situations; the capacity to withstand great force or pressure.

Isaiah 50.4-7 NIV

⁴The Sovereign LORD has given me an **instructed tongue**,
to know the word that sustains the weary.

He wakens me morning by morning,
wakens my ear to listen like one being taught.

⁵The **Sovereign LORD has opened my ears**,
and I have not been rebellious;
I have not drawn back.

⁶I offered my back to those who beat me,
my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard;
I did not hide my face
from mocking and spitting.

⁷**Because the Sovereign LORD helps me**,
I will **not be disgraced**.

Therefore have **I set my face like flint**,
and I know **I will not be put to shame**.

- This scripture is a prophecy spoken by Isaiah about Jesus telling us how Jesus will stand in strength and courage.
 - The word of strength and courage spoken over Jesus hundreds of years before His birth. Jesus will deal with being misunderstood, pressured from the world and religion to conform to their form. He will need strength and courage to stand firm.
 - Reliance upon God for help. Jesus is not going to look for help from any place but His Father. He knows where His help comes from.
 - The word "disgraced" can also be translated "confusion". Isaiah is saying will not be confused about the truth. He will not waver between opinions. He won't intellectualize or rationalize the help His Father offers.
 - Set His face like flint means to bind firmly to the will and the word of His Father. No other course will be considered. His mind is made up and is unmovable.
 - I will not be ashamed. I will not be disappointed. I am not disconcerted. I know that My Father is able.
- Jesus drew strength and courage from the place of intimacy in relationship with His Father. Through relationship faith and trust had been developed and established in Jesus' heart.



- We are filled with strength and courage because we believe. This is an ongoing process. As we stand believing and put continual reliance upon our God there is a continuous flow of strength and courage that fills our heart, our mind and our emotions.
- In intimacy we know the love of God in a deep place in our hearts. There is a sound and a frequency of strength and courage that empowers us and enables us to set our face like flint.
- Shame is a painful feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behavior. There is no shame, humiliation or regret in believing God. He is faithful and just in all that He does. Yet the enemy loves to weave shame into our hearts. Shame drains strength and courage away from us. In shame we can't advance or move forward. Shame confuses our identity. Shame carries the sound of death to our future and destiny. There is no hope in shame.
- We stand unashamed. We have been MADE righteous in Christ. Shame has no hold on us!



Psalm 139.16

Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained *for me*, When as yet there was not one of them.

- Strength and courage was put into our unformed substance.

Revelation 12.11-12

¹¹ And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. ¹² For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has *only* a short time."

- You cannot overcome without strength and courage. So it is implied that you have strength and courage.
- Strength and courage come in the word spoken by God.

Genesis 12.1-4a

¹ **Now the LORD said to Abram,**

"Go forth from your country,
And from your relatives
And from your father's house,
To the land which I will show you;

² And I will make you a great nation,
And I will bless you,

And make your name great;
And so you shall be a blessing;

³ And I will bless those who bless you,
And the one who curses you I will curse.

And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."

⁴ **So Abram went forth as the LORD had spoken to him...**

- It takes great strength and courage to leave what you have become familiar with and even enjoy. Think of the emotional ties that Abram must have had with his family. He was 75 years old, so Abram had a lot of history, a lot of memories, a lot of experiences with his family. NOW he was going to get up and leave for a NEW place that he didn't know a thing about.
- To move into the NEW, to ENTER IN through the portal or doors that God opens takes courage and strength.
- How did Abram get the courage and strength? He believed God.



- When God speaks a word to us – whatever that word is – everything is in that word that is needed to fulfill that word. Abram was infused with the substance of strength and courage as he received the word of the Lord. The frequency of heaven “re-tuned” Abram adding new dimensions of strength and courage to do and be.
- Abram had a new sound and it was filled with strength and courage.

2 Timothy 1.12-13 KJV

¹² For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless **I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able** to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

¹³ **Hold fast the form of sound words,** which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.



- Paul spoke this to Timothy toward the end of his ministry. Paul was under arrest and facing sentence. This was written toward the close of Paul’s life. Paul was giving to Timothy the keys, the insight and secrets to how he was able to advance the kingdom of God.
- Paul was NOT ASHAMED. He was not humiliated or questioning or second guessing the race that he had run.
- Paul was not confused. He KNEW (intimacy) whom He had put his faith in, whom he believed. From that place of solidarity of faith in Christ Paul had set his face like flint – he was unmovable, even facing physical death.
- When Saul encountered Jesus on the road to Damascus, he chose to believe. As Paul received the word of the Lord, strength and courage were imparted to Paul.
- Immediately Paul had the strength and courage to walk away from a very zealous lifestyle he led and was proud of. Paul had the strength and courage to apprehend a new life where the old was GONE and EVERYTHING became NEW.
- Paul exhorts Timothy, to “Hold fast the form of sound words”. Paul was saying to Timothy the secret to success is to hold on to the words that God speaks for they contain everything that you need, all provision for your future. Those words will give you the strength and courage to stay course and finish strong.

John 18.37

Therefore Pilate said to Him, “So You are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say *correctly* that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this **I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.**”

- Jesus is the Living Word. The Word of Truth. The Word of God. The governing power behind all things.
- He sustains everything by the power of His word.
- The Voice of Truth is filled with strength and courage.

2 Samuel 22.33 NIV

It is God who arms me with strength and keeps my way secure.

Acts 4.12-14 NIV

¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for ***there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.***

¹³ ***When they saw the courage of Peter and John*** and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and ***they took note that these men had been with Jesus.*** ¹⁴ But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say.

Ephesians 6.10-11

¹⁰ Finally, ***be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.*** ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to ***stand firm*** against the schemes of the devil.

- In the New Testament, again the people of God are exhorted to be strong in the Lord. Securely fastened to Him to draw on His strength and His might.
- In the strength of the Lord there is courage and ability to stand firm – be unmovable in Christ.

We need great strength and courage stand firm against the schemes of the devil, to raise the standard of the Lord in a world of increasing persecution of Christians. Because we live in the days of social media terror and intimidation are broadcast to all releasing the sound of aggression and superiority through great acts of evil on a global level. But God is saying My kingdom is increasing in the earth – there is no giant that intimidates Me – the earth is Mine. As God’s people we declare His kingdom come and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Heaven is invading earth. Be strong and courageous. Christ in you the hope of glory.

There is a sound of courage in heaven and it is being released in the earth, in Detroit, in our neighborhoods, in our families and work place and in our hearts. Incline your ear and hear the sound of strength and courage. Transact with the sound of heaven – receive what the Lord is sending out. Be strong and courageous. Fasten yourself to the Lord and be filled with His might and His power, His strength, His glory, His wisdom, His knowledge and understanding. The whole earth is in eagerly waiting for sons of God to be revealed.

