

# Blog



## Courage

Do you have courage?

According to Aristotle, “You will never do anything in this world without courage. It is the greatest quality of the mind.” History is full of examples of ordinary women and men who, in the face of impossible odds, overcame their fears and took bold acts of courage. One such person was Joshua, the Old Testament leader who famously fit de battle of Jericho. His was not an easy life, and from the very outset he was tasked with following in the footsteps of Moses, with all the unrealistic expectations that brought. Joshua needed courage.

At his commissioning as Israel's leader we read the following words in Deuteronomy 31:32.

*And the Lord commissioned Joshua the son of Nun and said, "Be strong and courageous, for you shall bring the people of Israel into the land that I swore to give them. I will be with you."*

Reading Joshua's story with hindsight we may imagine he confronted every battle with an ease that comes from knowing success is a foregone conclusion. But leading people into a succession of fights which could go disastrously wrong requires courage. It took courage to step into the Jordan river, courage to circle Jericho city for seven days, courage to fight the giants of Canaan, and courage to lead the tribes of Israel.

We also face an array of fearful challenges, and we need the same courage that stiffened Joshua's resolve. Here are a few thoughts about overcoming life's hurdles with courage.

## **Courage is required**

*Be strong and courageous.*

Courage is required. "We need a backbone, not a wishbone." (Joyce Meyer). None of us can live life without courage. Certainly, we cannot live the Christian life without courage. Hugh Latimer, as he was being burned at the stake for his faith alongside Nicholas Ridley, turned to his friend and said, "Be of good comfort, Mr Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust never shall be put out." That is courage. God's first, and repeated charge to Joshua, to Hugh Latimer and to us is to be strong and courageous. Courage is required.

## **Courage is rewarded**

*For you shall bring the people of Israel into the land that I swore to give them.*

Courage is rewarded. God never fails. His promises are always Yes and Amen. What he has said, he will accomplish, especially when it is accompanied with an oath. Frightening as the assignment appeared, God's promise was clear. Joshua's courage would be rewarded as the Israelites entered their inheritance. "Without courage, wisdom bears no fruit." (Baltasar Gracian) But courage bears much fruit. Courage is rewarded.

### **Courage is recognised**

*I will be with you.*

Courage is recognised. Joshua was never alone. The courageous Christian is never alone. "A man with God is always in the majority." (John Knox). God has promised that he will never leave us or forsake us. As we pass through raging waters and trials of fire he will be with us. He is with us always, to the end of the age. Acts of courage do not go unnoticed. Courage is recognised.

The character of Joshua and his leadership was marked by courage. "Men and kings must be judged in the testing moments of their lives. Courage is rightly esteemed the first of human qualities. It is the quality which guarantees all others." (Winston Churchill). Courage is required, courage is rewarded and courage is recognised. Be strong and courageous.