



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Leadership Series: COURAGE (Acts 27:14-44)

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Welcome to our study series on leadership. These weekly Bible studies will be brief and shaped for discussion. The format seems appropriate for our 30 minute meetings in the Governor's office and in small group meetings around Kansas.

INTRODUCTION

Courage is that quality of mind which enables us to encounter danger and difficulties with firmness, or without fear or depression of spirits. Synonyms include valor, boldness, and resolution.¹ What is our source of courage? The LORD God told Moses: ***“Be strong and courageous.”*** (Deuteronomy 31:6). The setting was as the people of Israel were entering the Promised Land in 1405 B.C. Moses relayed the message to Joshua (his successor in leadership) and ultimately to you and I as later successors. The reason given for our courage is that ***“The LORD your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you.”*** (Deuteronomy 31:8). **Here is the key point of this lesson on courage:** The Christian, the follower of Christ, can be bold because 1) You have the Holy Scriptures, the very voice of God, alive and powerful (1 Corinthians 2:16). 2) You have the indwelling Holy Spirit, revealing perfect accord with the will of God (Romans 8:26).

STORMS IN YOUR LIFE

Acts 27:20 And when neither sun nor stars shone upon us for many days, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was now taken away.²

Luke was not kidding in his description of the storm that caught their ship. This northeastern wind was at hurricane force. It was impossible for their sailing ship to turn back to Fair Havens or to turn north toward the Port at Phoenix.³ They tied the rudder down (verse 15), bound the hull with ropes, took down the sails, dropped the sea anchor (17), jettisoned the cargo (18), and threw the ship's tackle overboard (19). Have you experienced times when you lost all hope? All seemed hopeless from these sailor's vantage point. But our God is Sovereign. He commands even the winds and waves (Psalms 89:9, 93:4, 107:25, Mark 4:37).

I TOLD YOU SO

Acts 27:21 And when they had been long without food, then Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have set sail from Crete, and have gotten this injury and loss.⁴

A leader builds authority by pointing out when their predictions were correct. “But the centurion was more convinced by the ships owner and the captain than things spoken by Paul” (Acts 27:10). By verse 21 it was evident that Paul had been dead right! Paul uses this fact to urge all to eat some food, gaining strength and encouragement for the next challenge he warns of.

SPEAKING WITH AUTHORITY

Acts 27:22-26 “And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, saying, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.’ Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me. However we must run aground on a certain island.”⁵

Today, we do not expect to hear from angels. We have a better source. We have the word of God and answered prayer. Paul had recently witnessed of Christ's saving grace, sharing with two governors and a king (Chapter 26). Now it was certain that God would put him in front of Nero. This assurance was not from self-confidence or arrogance. Paul spoke definitively and with a commanding air. Christians today speak with conviction and authority when we reference God's word. People are looking for authority they can trust.⁶ There is rarely middle ground when dealing with the hard issues in State and National government. Note that as an effective leader, Paul strengthened those around him. However, he did not shrink from telling the whole truth. “We must run aground...”(Acts 27:26).

BIBLE STUDIES

LEADERS/ADMINISTRATORS' STUDY: WEDNESDAYS 7:30 AM, GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM: 264 WEST

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CONCLUSION

A leader should be optimistic and enthusiastic. This is easy for the Christian. We are serving the living God! Notice how Paul gained credibility with those two hundred and seventy-six persons aboard the ship. But also notice that God was glorified through the events. Those unbelieving sailors and soldiers were witness to a series of graphic examples of God's sovereignty. This was highlighted by God saving their lives through storm and shipwreck. God spared them for Paul's sake in spite of their reckless decision to sail at the beginning of winter.

The blessing of ungodly people for the sake of one of God's saints is a principle which runs through the Scriptures. God told Abraham that He would spare Sodom and Gomorrah for the sake of ten righteous people (Genesis 18:32). Laban begged Jacob to stay because he had observed that God had blessed them since Jacob came (Genesis 30:27). Potiphar, the Egyptian, observed that the blessing of the Lord was on his house and fields since Joseph managed the family business (Genesis 39:5). The people of Egypt and the Pharaoh were blessed through a seven year drought because of Joseph and his extended family (Genesis 42). As a leader, you can instill confidence, take initiative, demonstrate good judgment, speak with authority, and strengthen and encourage others. God will bless you and those who are in your trust. Your bold witness will bring glory to God and show others the way to life.

¹ Noah Webster. American Dictionary of the English Language. (Webster). 1828.

² The Holy Bible. American Standard Version (ASV). (Public Domain). 1921.

³ John MacArthur, Called to Lead. (Thomas Nelson inc.). p31.

⁴ The Holy Bible. American Standard Version (ASV). (Public Domain). 1921.

⁵ The Holy Bible. New King James Version. (Thomas Nelson). 1982.

⁶ John MacArthur, Called to Lead. (Thomas Nelson inc.). p36.