

Longview Baptist Temple
Sunday School Lesson
July 20, 2008



Christian Character Traits

Courage

Deuteronomy 31:6, Psalm 118:6, I Corinthians 15:58, Philippians 4:13, II Timothy 1:7

Lesson Aims:

- That your students should **know** that courage does not involve just physical strength.
- That your students should **show** a willingness if needed to stand alone in obedience to the Lord.
- That your students should **grow** as they learn to be trustful in the Lord instead of fearful in difficulties, obstacles and danger.

Introduction:

Dictionary definition of character = a person marked by notable qualities or traits of consistency; moral excellence and firmness.

Dictionary definition of courage = firmness of mind and will in the face of danger or extreme difficulties.

From the Christian viewpoint character is:

- The subconscious doing of right acts as prescribed in the Word of God.
- Consciously raising and improving your personal holiness.
- Implementing Christ like qualities into your life in order to bring glory to God.

From the Christian viewpoint courage is:

- Responding to danger without thought of retreat.
- Applying the resources I have available in creative ways when faced with overwhelming odds.
- Following difficult instructions in the face of obstacles and danger.
- The ability to trust the Lord for His strength in all circumstances of life.
- Confronting an opponent with the confidence that I will ultimately succeed.

Questions that will help to evaluate your courage:

1. Do you give up or mentally retreat when facing obstacles?
2. Have you compromised what you believed to be right when you faced danger, damage or destruction?
3. Have you given something or someone to God's care and control, and then taken it back when difficulties and uncertainties surround you?
4. When problems arise are you confident and steadfast in the work of God or does your spiritual schedule seem to lessen?
5. Do you have to see in order to believe or do you believe to see?

The opposite character trait of courage is ***faint-heartedness*** which is lacking firmness of mind and resolve when facing opposition and obstacles.

Memory verse:

Joshua 1:9 – "...Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

Lesson:

Courage

Bible examples of courage:

1. **Joshua** – He demonstrated courage as a military leader in his first battle with the well-entrenched city of Jericho by following difficult instructions. (Joshua chapter 6)
 - He was divinely appointed and ordained as the successor of Moses (Numbers 27:18-23).
 - As a military leader, Joshua dethroned 31 kings and suffered only one defeat at Ai.
 - The obstacle Israel faced:
 - ✓ Jericho was a walled city 30 feet high and 12 feet wide.

- ✓ Jericho was strategically located near the fords of the Jordan River.
 - ✓ Jericho was thought to be the most powerfully fortified city in Canaan.
 - ✓ Jericho was self-sustaining within the walls and possessed the ability to hold out for a long time if attacked.
 - The orders Israel received from Joshua: (Joshua 6:1-6)
 - ✓ The source of the orders – they came directly from the Lord himself.
 - ✓ The nature of the orders – they were not normal military tactics, just the opposite, very abnormal military tactics.
 - ✓ The content of the orders – God gave a specific plan for the city to be surrounded by armed men and priests, not all the people. Soldiers came first, priests next, and a rear guard (rereward) to follow behind.
 - The obedience Israel demonstrated: (Joshua 6:6-20)
 - ✓ They demonstrated immediate obedience with no hesitation, not questioning Joshua their leader.
 - ✓ They demonstrated exact obedience not changing or altering a thing.
 - The outcome Israel experienced: (Joshua 6:20-27)
 - ✓ Downfall of the huge walls
 - ✓ Defeat of a strong enemy
 - ✓ Destruction of the entire city
 - The opportunities Israel received:
 - ✓ The opportunity for the presence of God to be experienced – God wanted them to know Him in a greater way.
 - ✓ The opportunity for the power of God to be manifested – God wanted them to see He is able.
 - ✓ The opportunity for the promise of God to be fulfilled – God wanted them to understand that He keeps His word.
 - Realize some of life's most valuable lessons are learned within the boundaries of obstacles and danger. When we courageously choose to obey the Word of God during those times Scriptural convictions will be strengthened and a superior way of life will be realized.
2. **David** – Because of David's unwavering confidence in the Lord, realizing that God was on his side, young David could courageously face an opponent with the confidence that he could only succeed. (I Samuel chapter 17)
- He was divinely appointed as the successor of King Saul (I Samuel 16:1-13)
 - The obstacles David faced:
 - ✓ The 9 foot tall Philistine giant Goliath in full battle array practically invulnerable.
 - ✓ Goliath, the champion of the Philistines, terrified and immobilized King Saul's entire army. (I Samuel 17:11)
 - ✓ The taunting of his older brother Eliab (I Samuel 17:28).
 - ✓ The discouraging words of King Saul (I Samuel 17:33).
 - The outcome David experienced:
 - ✓ The immediate result was victory in this critical battle. If the Philistines had won they would have reduced Israel to a slave state.
 - ✓ David instantly became a national hero.
 - ✓ He experienced the blessing of being the one whom God used to cause the nation of Israel to gain a fresh respect for the power of God.
 - Why David prevailed:
 - ✓ As a teenager he already had experienced God using him and it was fresh on his mind (I Samuel 17:34-37).
 - ✓ As a teenager he understood the enemies' challenge of the living God was a cause worth standing up for. (I Samuel 17:29)
 - ✓ As a teenager he used a weapon he had studied and proven. (I Samuel 17:38-39)
 - ✓ As a teenager he believed to see the victory and foretold Goliath the outcome (I Samuel 17:45-47).
 - ✓ As a teenager David won the physical because he was equipped in the spiritual.