



RESOLUTE

BUILDING THE COURAGE THAT CARRIES THE CROSS

BASECAMP **Local**

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RESOLUTE: THE COURAGE TO CARRY YOUR CROSS

Introduction

What comes to mind when you hear the word *resolute*?

Perhaps you think of determination. Someone who refuses to quit. A soldier standing firm in battle. A statue overlooking a city, guarding it against danger. Resolute people are steady, courageous and unwavering.

The world admires this kind of courage. It celebrates bravery, toughness and determination. While these are admirable qualities, they can only take us so far.

Jesus calls us to a different kind of courage.

Christian courage is not simply standing up for ourselves. It is standing firm for Christ. It is the courage to obey when obedience is costly, to trust when the future is uncertain, to speak when silence would be easier, to persevere when faith is tested, and ultimately to take up our cross and follow Jesus (Luke 9:23).

Throughout Scripture we meet ordinary people who displayed extraordinary courage. This was not because they were naturally fearless, but because they trusted an extraordinary God.

Over this series we will follow four men whose lives show us what it means to live resolutely.

- **Abraham** teaches us the courage to trust God's promises when the path ahead is unknown.
- **Moses** shows us the courage to obey despite our fears and inadequacies.
- **Stephen** demonstrates the courage to stand for Christ in the face of fierce opposition.
- **The thief on the cross** reminds us that true courage is ultimately found in humbly trusting King Jesus, even at the very end.

Over this series we will follow four men whose lives show us what it means to live resolutely. These men were very different. They lived in different times, faced different challenges and experienced different outcomes. Yet they all had one thing in common, they chose faith over fear.

As Christian men, we face pressure every day. Pressure to compromise, to stay silent, to seek comfort instead of obedience, to protect our reputation rather than honour Christ.

The question for us is not simply, *What do we believe?*

The deeper question is:

Will we remain resolute when following Jesus costs us something?

Jesus never promised an easy road. He promised a cross before a crown.

ABRAHAM: THE COURAGE TO TRUST

Faith steps forward before it sees the outcome.

Genesis 12:1–9; 18:22–33; 22:1–19

a. Courage to Trust God's Call

Genesis 12:1–9

Abraham is remembered as the father of Israel, but before that he was simply a man called by God to leave everything familiar. At 75 years old, God told him to leave his home, family and security for an unknown land, promising only, "I will show you."

With his wife, nephew and possessions, Abraham set out, trusting God's promise rather than his own certainty. After a journey of around 640 kilometres, God declared, "To your offspring I will give this land." The promise had begun but there was still no child.

Humanly speaking, Abraham wasn't the obvious choice. He was elderly, childless and being asked to start again. Yet he trusted God enough to obey.

Discussion

1. If God called you to leave everything familiar, how would you respond?
2. Would your age or stage of life affect your willingness to obey?
3. What promises of God require faith before you can see the outcome?

b. Courage to Intercede

Genesis 18:22–33

Abraham's courage wasn't only shown in obedience but also in prayer. When God revealed His judgment on Sodom, Abraham boldly pleaded for mercy.

Again and again he asked whether God would spare the city if righteous people could be found. His concern was not only for his nephew Lot but for the people of the city. Abraham stood before God as an intercessor, appealing to His justice and mercy.

It takes courage not only to trust God's plans but also to bring the needs of others before Him.

Discussion

1. Who are you courageously praying for, even when hope seems small?
2. Is your instinct to judge people or to intercede for them?

c. Courage to Obey

Genesis 22:1–19

The greatest test of Abraham's faith came when God asked him to sacrifice Isaac—the very son through whom the promise would come.

Abraham's response is striking. He rose early, prepared carefully and walked in quiet obedience. There is no recorded argument, only trust that "God himself will provide."

One detail deserves attention: Isaac carries the wood for his own sacrifice up the mountain (v.6), foreshadowing Christ carrying His cross.

At the last moment God provided a substitute, confirming that Abraham feared God above all else. Through Abraham's obedience, God's covenant promises were reaffirmed.

Faith is trusting God even when obedience costs what matters most.

Discussion

1. Has God ever asked you to do something that seemed impossible or unreasonable?
2. What did obedience require?
3. Looking back, how did God prove Himself faithful?

MOSES: THE COURAGE TO OBEY

God doesn't call the qualified; He equips the obedient.

a. Finding Courage in the Lord

Exodus 3:7–4:17

When we think of Moses, we picture him standing before the Red Sea or confronting Israel with the golden calf. But Moses didn't begin as a courageous leader.

Exodus introduces him as an Israelite child raised in Pharaoh's household, a man who fled Egypt after murder and spent forty years as a shepherd in Midian. At eighty years old, his life seemed settled until God called him from the burning bush.

Rather than embracing God's call, Moses repeatedly resists. He questions his ability, his authority, his speaking skills, and finally pleads, "Please send someone else" (Exodus 4:13).

What is Moses really afraid of? Rejection. Failure. Looking foolish. He sees himself as inadequate and imagines others will too.

Isn't that often our story? Standing for Christ at work, with family, among friends, or on the sporting field can feel costly. Like Moses, we're tempted to believe God has chosen the wrong person.

Discussion

1. Where do you find it hardest to stand for Christ?
2. What excuses do you make to avoid obeying God?
3. Is there a missed opportunity you wish you'd taken?

b. Standing Before Earthly Rulers

Exodus 4:27–5:9

Moses and Aaron finally arrive before Pharaoh with a simple but explosive message:

"Thus says the LORD..."

Those words were an open challenge. In Egypt, Pharaoh was regarded as divine. For two former slaves to announce the authority of another King was an act of extraordinary courage.

Their request to worship in the wilderness was also the first step toward Israel's freedom. Pharaoh responds by increasing the Israelites' suffering, but his resistance only sets the stage for God's victory.

What changed in Moses? The fearful shepherd has become a man who trusts God's word more than his own fears. His confidence isn't in himself but in the God who sent him.

Discussion

1. What changed in Moses between the burning bush and Pharaoh's throne room?
2. How does God produce that kind of courage?
3. Where do you need that same confidence today?

c. The Courage to Persevere in Obedience

Numbers 20:2-13; Deuteronomy 3:23-29

Even faithful leaders can stumble.

At Meribah, Israel once again complains about the lack of water. God tells Moses to speak to the rock, but instead Moses angrily rebukes the people and strikes it twice. Water still flows, but Moses has acted in his own strength rather than trusting God's word.

The consequence is severe: he will not enter the Promised Land.

Years later, Moses pleads with God to change His decision, but the answer remains no. Instead, God allows him to see the land from afar before Joshua leads the people in.

Moses reminds us that courage alone isn't enough. We must be courageous in obedience. It's possible to do God's work while relying on our own strength. Jesus calls us not to carry our own agenda, but to take up **His** cross and follow Him.

Discussion

1. Why do you think God responded so seriously to Moses' disobedience?
2. Where are you relying on your own strength instead of God's?
3. What step of obedience is God calling you to take today?

STEPHEN: THE COURAGE TO STAND

Courage stands for Christ regardless of the cost.

a. Life-changing Faith

A Spirit-filled life – Acts 6:8–15

Isn't it incredible when we read moments in Scripture where the Spirit of God fills someone and strengthens them for something beyond themselves? We can find ourselves longing for those moments, moments where God lifts us, empowers us and gives us courage we didn't know we had.

The good news is this: for every believer, the Spirit of God is not a temporary experience but a permanent presence. We don't have to chase moments of empowerment because God has made his home within us.

In Acts, we meet an ordinary man whose life has been completely transformed by Jesus. Stephen cannot contain what God has done in him. He is described as **"full of grace and power"** (Acts 6:8).

Interestingly, we are only given a few details about Stephen himself. Instead, much of the passage focuses on the men who opposed him. Unable to stand against his wisdom and the Spirit at work in him, they resorted to lies, false accusations and public attacks.

There is a striking contrast: Stephen is described with words of grace, power and faithfulness, yet he is brought before the authorities by people who want him destroyed.

Sound familiar?

Jesus himself was falsely accused and condemned. And while we may not face the same level of opposition, the reality remains: when we stand for Christ, there may be times when people misunderstand us, oppose us or try to tear us down.

Discussion

1. Have you ever been challenged or criticised because of your faith?
2. What does a Spirit-filled life look like in everyday life?
3. Where do you need to rely more on the Spirit's strength rather than your own?

b. Courage to Stand Firm in Opposition

Acts 7:1–53

When opposition comes, how do you respond?

Our instinct is often to defend ourselves. We justify our actions, deflect blame, avoid conflict or fight back. We can quickly move into self-preservation rather than faithful witness.

Stephen gives us a different picture.

Standing before the high priest, surrounded by false accusations, Stephen doesn't make the moment about himself. Instead, he boldly points people back to God's story.

Acts 7 records one of the most powerful speeches in Scripture. Stephen traces God's faithfulness through Abraham, Joseph, Moses, the Promised Land, the Law and the prophets. But his ultimate point is confronting: throughout history, God's people repeatedly resisted God's messengers and now they had rejected the promised Messiah himself.

Stephen isn't trying to win an argument; he is trying to reveal the truth.

This is where courage gets tested. It's easy to stand for ourselves. It's much harder to stand for Christ.

When pressure comes, we can respond like a boxer looking for a fight, or like a servant on our knees seeking to honour God. Courage is not about being aggressive; it is about being faithful.

So what does it look like to stand firm?

Discussion

1. When you face opposition, which response comes most naturally: fight, flee, defend, or avoid?
2. What part of Stephen's speech challenges or encourages you most?
3. How can you stand firm for Christ while still reflecting Christ?

c. The Effects of True Courage

Acts 7:54–60

From an earthly perspective, godly courage does not always lead to comfort, success or acceptance. Sometimes standing for Jesus brings rejection, criticism and loss.

But courage is measured not by the outcome. It is measured by faithfulness.

After Stephen's words, the crowd is enraged. But notice the contrast: while they look up in anger, Stephen looks up in worship. As they are consumed by hatred, he sees the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father.

Stephen sees a reality greater than the moment he is facing.

The crowd drags him outside the city and stones him without a trial. Yet even in his final moments, Stephen reflects the heart of Jesus. His final words echo Christ on the cross: surrendering his spirit to God and asking forgiveness for those who are killing him.

And then, beautifully, Scripture says: **"he fell asleep."**

The world saw defeat. Heaven saw victory.

Stephen understood where true power came from. He knew what was worth standing for. He knew Jesus was better than comfort, reputation, safety and even life itself.

The question for us is not simply, "Will we stand when it is easy?"

The question is:

Where do you stand?

Who do you stand for?

Why do you stand?

THE THIEF: THE COURAGE TO SURRENDER

The greatest act of courage is entrusting your life to King Jesus.

Luke 23:39-43

a. Courage in Death for Life

Where we used to stand

If someone asked you to leave everything behind, travel across the world, and preach Jesus in a nation hostile to Christianity knowing you could be imprisoned or killed, would you go?

If you were asked to sit with someone whose whole life was built around idol worship and destructive practices, and lovingly call them to leave it all behind and follow Jesus, would you?

If you were asked to walk into a prison three times a week to tell people who believe they are innocent that there is a King who loves, forgives and offers new life, would you?

Often our first instinct is to play the “pass it on” card. We hope someone else will go, someone else will speak, someone else will take the risk so we can return to the comfort of our normal lives.

But at the cross, we meet a man who had nothing left to lose and everything to gain.

As Jesus hangs between two criminals, we see two very different responses. One thief joins the crowd, mocking Jesus and demanding that he prove his power. The other thief does something extraordinary. In his final moments, with nothing to offer and no hope of saving himself, he recognises who Jesus truly is.

He speaks only three sentences but those three sentences reveal a heart transformed by faith.

This man was condemned to death for crimes we do not know, but they were serious enough to bring him to a Roman cross. Yet in his final hours, he finds the courage not only to defend Jesus in the face of ridicule, but to humble himself before a dying King.

The question is:

- 1. Whose kingdom do you stand for?**
- 2. Is that kingdom worth laying your life down for?**

b. Why we stand

Where we used to stand

So what does it mean to stand resolute? What does it mean to have the courage to take up your cross?

It will look different for each of us. But one thing is certain: it will cost us something.

It would have been easy for the thief to mock Jesus. Everyone else was doing it. Here was a man who claimed to be the Messiah, who had healed the sick and performed miracles, now hanging on a criminal's cross. To the watching crowd, Jesus looked defeated.

But this thief saw something others couldn't see.

He saw the King.

He saw beyond the suffering, beyond the shame, beyond the cross and he declared the truth:

"Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

What a remarkable statement of faith. He didn't ask for a position. He didn't ask for recognition. He didn't ask for a better life on earth.

He simply asked Jesus to remember him.

And Jesus' response is one of the most beautiful promises in Scripture:

"Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

Jesus offered him a place in the kingdom not because of what he had achieved, but because of who Jesus is.

This man had no baptism.

No communion.

No church attendance.

No opportunity to serve.

No time to fix his past.

No ability to prove himself.

He came to Jesus with empty hands and found grace.

He had nothing to offer, yet he trusted the King.

Where do you stand?

c. A call to carry our cross

BASECAMP is not simply about gathering men in the mountains for a weekend away. It is about calling men to follow Jesus to grow in faith, stand firm in conviction, and live as his disciples wherever he has placed them.

The thief on the cross reminds us that courage begins with surrender.

Micah 6:8 gives us a picture of what this looks like:

“Act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.”

The thief displayed these qualities even in his final moments.

He recognised what was right.

He showed mercy towards Jesus when others showed contempt.

He humbled himself before the King.

As men of God, we are called to do the same.

We are called to act with justice.

To pursue mercy and kindness.

To walk humbly with Jesus.

We do this not as warriors looking for battles to fight, but as ambassadors representing our King.

In our families.

In our workplaces.

Among our friends.

In our churches.

In every part of our lives.

The courage we need is not found in ourselves. It is found in the One who has already overcome.

So take heart. Stand firm. Represent your King.

Have the courage to take up your cross today and every day.

Reflection questions

1. What areas of your life is God calling you to stand for him?
2. What things need to be surrendered or shaken off so you can follow Jesus more faithfully?
3. How will you leave this place as an ambassador for the King?