

US

THE POWER OF CULTURE



COURAGEOUS FAITH

Courageous faith sets miracles in motion. It's comprised of sacrificial obedience, complete trust, and total surrender boldly displayed through tangible acts of faith.

Courageous faith is what makes our church take risks. Courageous faith is what keeps us from settling for the status quo. It keeps us dreaming for what seems impossible and planning for things we can't afford and believing for things that make other people think we have lost our minds.

We are not sure, and it may cost us everything...but maybe...just maybe... if we risk everything to take this hill...the Lord will act on our behalf. That's not the mentality of most Christians or most church cultures. We let fear dictate our decisions. We have a better-safe-than-sorry mentality. We live as if the purpose of life is to arrive safely at death.

Maybe it's time for a paradigm shift. When did we start believing that God wants to take us to safe places, to do easy things? Here's a thought: The will of God is not an insurance plan. It's a daring plan.

Perhaps God! It's the key to living with holy anticipation. Perhaps the Lord will help us. May God give us the spirit of Jonathan!

When we talk about courageous faith, we automatically assume we are talking about faith...and we are...but don't overlook the emphasis on courage. Courage is an often-overlooked biblical virtue.

Courage gives us the capacity to take risks, make sacrifices and to be, as Martin Luther King, Jr. said regarding Christian faith, "dangerously unselfish." Courage helps us withstand and even grow through ongoing pain, suffering, isolation and difficulty.

We cannot live our lives fully pleasing to God without courage. Over 25 times in the Bible, we are commanded to be bold and courageous. God takes courage, or the lack of it, very seriously.

COURAGEOUS FAITH

Me is about establishing common ground with your group. A group has to buy into the messenger before they buy into the message. Me is about being transparent and vulnerable to connect with the group. Share your own examples, stories and life experience. Your story introduces the topic. If you are including your spouse or anyone else in your story, ask for permission beforehand.



ME

Prompt Phrases (Examples)

- Share the last time you took a step or leap of faith.
- “Were you afraid or completely confident when you took that step of faith?”
- “Do we believe and practice faith that states, ‘Perhaps, the Lord will help us’?”
- Share a moment that you allowed fear to influence what you knew the plan of God to be.
- “How has your courage or lack of courage influenced your faith?”

COURAGEOUS FAITH

Get people to identify with the topic. Once you have clearly established the topic, in the Me, the next step is to include everyone. Moving the focus from the leader to the group. See the topic at hand from the perspective of a single parent, parents of teenagers, blended family, young adult, empty nesters, widows or other life stage. If people engage with the topic, they will stay with you throughout the discussion.



Prompt Questions:

- “Have you ever felt the same?”
- “Does anyone else relate to this?”
- “Am I the only one who has struggled with faith?”
- “Can anyone else relate to these struggles?”

Example

- Starting your own business
- Beginning a new job
- First time missions trip
- Sharing your faith with someone

COURAGEOUS FAITH

Point people to God's Word on the topic at hand. This segment is about what Scripture has to say - God's solution. Do not re-preach the sermon. Do not camp out here, this is not the conclusion, because you are moving the group to application in the next segment.



GOD

There is no chance for a miracle until you're staring at the impossible. God has to take us out of the realm of what is humanly possible, so that our obstacles can become opportunities for Him to establish His Kingdom on the Earth. His name is to be made famous and that happens the greatest when His power moves against the mountain of the impossible.

"Impossible is just a big word thrown around by small minded men who find it easier to live in the world they've been given, than to explore the power they have to change it. Impossible is not a fact. It's an opinion. Impossible is not a declaration. It's a dare. Impossible is potential. Impossible is temporary. Impossible is nothing!"

Transition Phrases:

(These ideas/examples help you present what God says about the topic.)

- "What Does God say about courageous faith?"
- "The good news is that we are not the first group of people to struggle with courageous faith..." (10 spies/2 spies in Numbers)
- "Mark addressed this issue when He wrote, 'Everything is possible for him who believes.'" Mark 9:23

Key Scriptures - Remember, you do not use all of the Scriptures presented here, these are simply suggested passages for your discussion on the topic at hand. Be sensitive to where the conversation is going and utilize Scripture to support the discussion.

Scriptures on Courageous Faith:

Mark 9:23 (Paraphrased)

Everything is possible for him who believes.

Somebody is always doing what somebody else said couldn't be done. We must dare to think the unthinkable and believe the unbelievable. Let us be known as those people who are ignorant of the impossible and naïve enough to take Jesus at His word.



COURAGEOUS FAITH

Scriptures on Courageous Faith Continued:

Joshua 1:9 NLT

9 This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

Deuteronomy 31:6 NLT

6 So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid and do not panic before them. For the Lord your God will personally go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you.

May the promise of His faithfulness be the anchor of our courageous faith.

The name for God denoted in these verses translates to Yahweh or Jehovah - the Lord, master and absolute ruler. God told Joshua, "I am the absolute ruler and I am going with you...be strong and courageous. Go and possess the promise, by faith in Me!"

Numbers 11:23 NASB

The LORD said to Moses, "Is the LORD'S power limited?"

How we answer that question, THE question, will determine the kinds of prayers we pray, the kind of possibilities we pursue, and the culture we create.

COURAGEOUS FAITH

This is the application of the sermon. The group discusses what to do with what they have heard. This is where we answer the questions, “So what?” and, “Now what?” It’s better to find one application that we can challenge everyone to embrace, than to talk about ten different applications and not apply any of them. The discussion may include multiple applications, but our goal is the same.

YOU

Dr. J.A. Homes said, “Never tell a person that something cannot be done. God may have been waiting for centuries for somebody ignorant enough of the impossible to do that thing.”

Consider the composition of your group and select those that apply to your group.

How Does Courageous Faith Apply to

- ...a teenager?
- ...college student?
- ...singles?
- ...newlyweds?
- ...parents?
- ...empty nesters?

How Does the Topic of Courageous Faith Apply to:

- ...you?
- ...your family relationships?
- ...your relationships in our church?
- ...your relationships with those outside the faith?
- ...your relationships in the marketplace?

COURAGEOUS FAITH

Paint the verbal picture of what could and should be. Inspire the group to see the potential outcome if these principles are applied. Imagine what the church, the community, families, maybe even the world, would be like if Christians everywhere embraced this week's idea.

US

Remember: There is no chance for a miracle until you're staring at the impossible.

Our problem is not the size of our problem. Our problem is our limited view of God. If we will right size our God, it will right size our problems. The possibilities will become clearer than the problems.

Prompt Questions:

- "If there were no restraints, no impossibilities, what would you believe for in your workplace, in your family, in your own life?"
- "We believe He was born of a virgin and rose from the dead, but in our daily lives we tame Him. What would happen if we lived our lives with a, "Perhaps God" kind of courageous faith? What would change in our families, marriages, relationships, finances, etc.?"
- What if we were all willing to risk our everything to give God the chance to show Himself? What would that look like?"
- "If needed, how do we change our limited view of our God? What would life look like if we did?"



COURAGEOUS FAITH

General Guidelines

- Roadmap: Know where you are going before you start the conversation.
- Be OK with silence. People are processing, digesting, and thinking through it.
- If people move into another area of the flow, use it to segue into the next portion of your discussion.
- You do not have to go through every question in the template, because these are only prompts to help you facilitate the discussions.
- Your Coach has been involved in the development of this template. If you have any questions, please contact them.