

WEDNESDAY—Courage comes when we are courageous!

Big Point: *We don't need to pray for courage. We just need to be courageous and then, we will have courage!*

Spc. Ross McGinnis was traveling in a Humvee convoy in Northeast Baghdad. His convoy's mission was to patrol the streets as well as find a place to put a 250-kilowatt generator that would provide electricity for over 100 homes.

While stopped on the street, an insurgent dropped a grenade from a rooftop above Spc. McGinnis' Humvee, which was last in the convoy. McGinnis was manning the vehicle's machine gun. He yelled "grenade" and prepared to jump out of the truck according to those in his vehicle.

However, Spc. McGinnis realized that no one else would be able to get out of their positions soon enough to escape without injury or death, so instead of saving his own life, McGinnis threw his body against the grenade and smothered the explosive with his body. The grenade exploded as soon as McGinnis covered his body with it, killing him instantly. The others in the vehicle survived the explosion.

John 15:13 says that the greatest love we can have for others is when we lay down our lives for them. It takes courage to put someone else's needs above our own because we are naturally wired to seek fulfillment of our own desires and wishes. Courage doesn't come naturally. It only comes when we act courageously.

READ...What does the Bible say?

1 Corinthians 16:13 (New Living Translation)

¹³ *Be on guard. Stand firm in the faith. Be courageous. Be strong.*

THINK...Find the answers

In 1 Corinthians 16:13, the Apostle Paul is summing up principles for powerful living for the oft-wayward Corinthian church. Look at each of Paul's short admonitions. How are they related with each other?

LIVE...What will you do now?

We all want to think that we could be as courageous as Spc. Ross McGinnis. However, we never know if we are courageous until the moment that courage is needed arises. At that moment, we don't have a lot of time to decide if we are going to be courageous—we either act with courage, or we don't.

OTHER VERSES ABOUT BEING COURAGEOUS:

Psalms 27:14 (New Living Translation)

¹⁴ *Wait patiently for the LORD.*

Be **brave and courageous**.

Yes, wait patiently for the LORD.

Psalms 31:24

(New Living Translation)

²⁴ *So be strong and coura-*

geous, all you who put your hope in the LORD!

Joshua 1:9 (New Living Translation)

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."*

What is the most courageous thing you've ever done? Why did you decide to act? How did you feel once the situation was over and you could reflect on your actions?

When is the last time you took a stand for your faith? (Ex: inviting someone to church, sharing your faith, standing up for injustice, tithing, giving up a sinful pattern of behavior) Why did you feel compelled to act or speak? How did that act of courage change you?

If you haven't taken a stand recently, could there be an opportunity for you to try again? If so, what would you do?

PRAY...God, What do you want me to know & do?

We could pray for God to give us opportunities to be courageous, however, those opportunities are all around us. We just have to pray and ask God for a fresh perspective on the new ways He wants us to live out our faith with bold courage.

DAILY BIBLE READING COMMENTARY: Exodus 33-36

33:7 *“the tabernacle of meeting...”* In the time prior to the construction of the tabernacle, Moses' tent became the special meeting place for Moses to talk intimately with God.

33:12-17 *Again, Moses entered earnestly and confidently into the role of intercessor before God for the nation whom he again referred to as “Your people.”* Moses clearly understood that without God's presence they would not be a people set apart from other nations.

34:1 *“cut two tablets of stone...”* Renewal of the covenant meant replacement of the broken, original tablets on which God had personally written the Ten Commandments.

34:29-35 *The first time on the mount, unlike the second, had not left Moses with a face which was reflecting some radiance associated with being in the presence of the Lord for an extended period of time.*

35:1- 40:38 *In this section, the Israelites constructed the tabernacle as God so prescribed in chapters 25-31.*

35:30- 36:1 *The Lord also gave the two named artisans skill in teaching their trades. This substantiates that they were, most probably, the supervisors or leaders of the construction teams.*

26:2-7 *The people, stubborn and disobedient at times, nevertheless rose to the occasion and voluntarily brought much more than was needed for the building of the tabernacle.*