

Key Takeaway

True courage comes not from fearlessness, but from acting faithfully despite fear when God's purposes are at stake. We find bravery through grace to speak truth, return after failure, and trust God's timing over our strategies. Our courage flows from God's empowerment, not our own strength.

Notes

Biblical Foundation

Supporting Scripture.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we may walk in them. ¹

Ephesians 2:1-10

Paradoxical Truth.

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but does not have works? Surely that faith cannot save, can it? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

James 2:14-17

Dig Deeper!

Here are additional texts that show God's boundless nature:

Ezekiel 2:3-7 – Courage to speak truth

Joel 2:12-13 – Courage to return

Hebrews 11:1-6 – Courage to trust

Lutheran Lens

Grace Alone (Sola Gratia)

Sola Gratia is the foundational Lutheran conviction that salvation (and indeed all spirit-led courage and action) comes entirely from God's unmerited favor, not from human effort or worthiness. Luther taught that we are simultaneously saint and sinner. We are fully justified by grace while still struggling with fear. This frees us to act courageously because our standing with God is secure regardless of outcome.

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Week 5. "I am Brave"

The Chosen, Season 2, Episodes 5-7

Small Group Discussion

John the Baptist's Costly Courage

(S2, E5) – Luke 3:1-20; Matthew 14:3-4

I am brave... enough to speak truth to power.

1. **Divine Compulsion:** John tells Jesus he cannot remain silent because God has called him to prepare the way. Describe a time when you've felt divinely compelled to do something that scared you.
2. **Costly Truth-Telling:** John confronts Herod about his unlawful marriage knowing it will likely lead to imprisonment or death. When has speaking the truth cost you something significant?
3. **Beyond Human Capacity:** John's courage comes from understanding his divine calling - his "Elijah-ness." How does knowing God's purpose for your life give you courage beyond your natural capacity?

The Courage to Return

(S2, E6) – Mark 2:23-3:6; Luke 15:11-32

I am brave... enough to return after failure; to accept grace and try again.

1. **Brave Return:** Mary Magdalene flees to Jericho in shame but finds the courage to come back to Jesus. What gives us courage to return to God after spiritual failure or running away? How does grace make return possible?
2. **Brave Mercy:** Jesus heals on the Sabbath and defends his hungry disciples, knowing it will increase religious opposition. How does showing mercy to others sometimes require courage? When has extending grace felt risky?
3. **Brave Vulnerability:** In the tent scene, Jesus tells Mary "I just want your heart." How does accepting love after failure require its own kind of bravery? Why do you think receiving grace is sometimes harder than earning approval?

PERSONAL CHALLENGE

Identify one truth you've been afraid to speak (to yourself, to someone else, or in a situation). This week, pray for the courage that comes from grace - not earned courage, but empowered courage - to speak that truth in love.

Wisdom's Courage

(S2, E7) – Luke 1:1-4; Isaiah 53:7

I am brave... enough to trust God's time; to pray with honest dependence.

1. **Strategic Silence:** Jesus shows discernment about when to speak and when to remain silent during Roman interrogation. How does the church learn brave wisdom about when to engage opposition and when to trust God's vindication? Can silence ever be an act of courage?
2. **Trust vs. Strategy:** The disciples argue about whether to wait peacefully or take action. How does our church practice brave trust in God's timing rather than falling back on human strategies and control?

CHURCH CHALLENGE

The disciples recognize their spiritual inadequacy and ask for prayer instruction. How can our church model the courage to admit what we don't know and ask for help in our spiritual lives?