

## **“The S.S. Courage”**

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Many of us have memories of things our fathers have spoken to us. Some of us have good memories of encouraging words... and others of us may have memories of a father who didn't really know it meant to be a father. Those of us that had a Godly father can look back and see where his advice helped direct our lives. Those words are strength to you, and they can be a guiding point for your life. I was thinking of what I might speak on tonight and I remembered some words my father shared with me... They're probably not original, but they were the right words at the right time. Let me share them with you.

**“A ship is safer in the harbor, but that's not what a ship was made for.”-Dad**

The truth of those words sunk into my heart... and I believe they've helped to direct the course of my life.

Imagine a beautiful ship... built with the best wood, and decorated with great sails and flags honoring the ships country of origin. Master craftsmen spend years putting her together with great care. She is the pride of the port. She's the fastest, and strongest ship ever built. Then they give her a glorious name... the S.S. Courage. They give her a great christening and bust an expensive bottle of wine on her haul... everybody cheers... and then they go home. The S.S. Courage remains in the port. They decided they want to save her for a really important battle. She never leaves the port... Then one day the country goes to war...and a Naval Officer asks if the S.S. Courage can be launched. He even volunteers to captain the ship. The Naval General looks at him with a stern look, and says, “Son, we can win this war without the Courage... lets save her for a bigger war.” They do win the war... and years later the Courage still rests in her safe harbor. She no longer looks so beautiful as the day she was built... she's been neglected for so long. She has moss growing on her haul... and her anchor chain is badly rusted from never leaving the water... Then another country again wages war... and finally the Naval General says, “It's time to launch the S.S. Courage.” They go to her in their most desperate hour... the enemy's fastest ship is

closing in on their harbor. If they reach the harbor, their Capital will surely be lost. They send a crew aboard the Courage, and they begin to raise the anchor... only to find the links of the chain are rusted to one another. Finally after much struggle they get the anchor lifted. The captain tells the first mate, and he shouts the order, "HOIST the SAILS!!!" The crew hurriedly hoists the sails... and when raised it is obvious to everyone there is a problem. There are holes all through the canvas!!! Apparently the moths got to the sails in all the time the S.S. Courage sat in port. The ropes are dry-rotted and weak. The wind begins to blow and immediately one of the main ropes snap. They manage to swing her around... and now the enemy ship barrels down on her. "Load the canons!!!" Shouts the first mate. They begin to open the barrels of powder... only to find that the powder is wet... in all the time they sat... the weather got to them... the powder is useless... An officer informs the Captain of their situation... and the Captain proclaims, "If only we had used courage before this... she would serve us well now. It is too late all is lost..." He barely finished his statement when the enemy ship fires 6 canons from her portside and demolishes the ship and crew. The city was soon lost. "If only we had courage before this..."

**"A ship is safer in the harbor, but that's not what a ship was made for."**-Dad

The Apostle Paul knew what this meant...

## **2 Cor. 11:26 NIV**

I have been constantly on the move. I have been in **danger** from rivers, in **danger** from bandits, in **danger** from my own countrymen, in **danger** from Gentiles; in **danger** in the city, in **danger** in the country, in **danger** at sea; and in **danger** from false brothers.

Despite ALL of these dangers, Paul went throughout the known world winning people to Christ, and planting Churches. Paul was a man who lived dangerously.

If he had been overly concerned for his own welfare, he never would have fulfilled his calling. He would have quit after they stoned him the first time!!!

We are not all called to the same ministry of pioneering as Paul, but we are all called to make BOLD moves for Jesus.

“A ship is safer in the harbor, but that’s not what a ship was made for.” -Dad

### **Proverbs 28:1 NIV**

The wicked man flees though no one pursues,  
but **the righteous are as bold as a lion.**

As Christians **we should be known for our boldness!!!**

To often Christians are looked at as being fearful, quiet people who will do whatever it takes to stay out of conflict. We are looked at as timid and fearful, when we are supposed to be AS BOLD as LIONS.

**“The righteous take risks.” –Karen Hursten (full time missionary)**

### **2 Tim. 1:7 NIV**

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, **but a spirit of power**, of love and of self-discipline.

God’s given us the Holy Spirit...a spirit of POWER. We need to walk in that power, and in the boldness of a lion.

Q: How many of you have ever felt a nudge from the Holy Spirit to go tell someone about Jesus, and you didn’t do it?

I have... Why? Fear... Uncertainty... Timidity... We are naturally afraid of people’s opinions. Most people have a desire to please people, and they don’t want to be rejected... that’s normal, and to a point it’s ok... but when our desire for acceptance keeps us from obeying God we are in the wrong.

Our fear of God, needs to always surpass our fear of other men.

### **Proverbs 1:7 NIV**

**The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge,**  
but fools despise wisdom and discipline.

The Word of God makes it clear that fearing God is important...but I've never seen a scripture that implied it was wise to fear other people. In fact I see the opposite.

Consider Gideon...

**Judges 6:14-17 NIV**

The Lord turned to him and said, "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?"

[15] "But Lord," Gideon asked, "how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family."

[16] The Lord answered, "I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites together."

The Midianites were no match for Gideon and God.

Consider David...

**1 Samuel 16:3-13 NIV**

Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you what to do. You are to anoint for me the one I indicate."

[4] Samuel did what the Lord said. When he arrived at Bethlehem, the elders of the town trembled when they met him. They asked, "Do you come in peace?"

[5] Samuel replied, "Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come to the sacrifice with me." Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

[6] When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and thought, "Surely the Lord's anointed stands here before the Lord."

[7] But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. **Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.**"

[8] Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, "The Lord has not chosen this one either."

[9] Jesse then had Shammah pass by, but Samuel said, "Nor has the Lord chosen this one." [10] Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel, but Samuel said to him, "The Lord has not chosen these."

[11] So he asked Jesse, "Are these all the sons you have?"

"There is still the youngest," Jesse answered, "but he is tending the sheep."

Samuel said, "Send for him; we will not sit down until he arrives."

[12] So he sent and had him brought in. He was ruddy, with a fine appearance and handsome features.

Then the Lord said, "Rise and anoint him; he is the one."

[13] So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on **the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power**. Samuel then went to Ramah.

You see that with God... the youngest of men... the least of families... the weakest of tribes... can become mighty warriors.

Man looks at the outward appearance, but God certainly looks at the heart.

My question then to you tonight is this:

Where does your heart stand? Are you fearful of what people might think of you? Do you walk in constant timidity? Or are you a person which has true courage? Do you live in boldness constantly, or do you try to keep the S.S. Courage for a more important time... Will your courage hold up in time of need, or will it fail when tested?

The answer to those questions can only found in God. He is the one who makes LIONS of children. He is the One who raises up warrior kings from shepherd boys. He is the One who can make you courageous enough to walk in your destiny. He's called us His children and He's given us His Spirit of Power... now let's walk in it... only as we walk in Him.

Prayer: Lord let us always be people of boldness. Let us walk in the power you've given to us. Help us to always rely on YOU, in Jesus name. Amen!!!