

Courage To Change

Psalm 31:24

24 Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.

Courage is...

- Feeling Fear Yet Choosing to Act
- Following Your Heart
- Persevering in the Face of Adversity
- Standing Up For What Is Right
- Expanding Your Horizons; Letting Go of the Familiar
- Facing Suffering With Dignity or Faith...

Change.

No body likes change.

- Some things have taken a long time to get them where they are.
- There was a certain cost involved.

- The way things are is comfortable.
- The way things are is normal.
- The way things are is the way most people like it.

Most people don't like change.

- They are used to things just like they are.

But what if how things are is not how God wants them to be?

- What if He is not pleased by what it is right now?
- What if it would please Him if some Change could happen?

Matthew 5 14-16

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

- In the absence of light darkness prevails.
- Before there was light there was darkness.

Gen 1:1-5

1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

You and I have a choice to make.

- Are we going to allow darkness to prevail in our lives and in the lives of those around us or are we going to let His light shine.

When darkness surrounds you, it is sometimes scary to pull out you're your light.

But when I think of change, I think of the effect that light has in dark place.

- A place or condition that is dark and void completely changes when light comes into the situation.
- Light has courage.
- It doesn't take much.
- Just a small flame can light up a deep and dark canyon that has never see light.

John 1:5

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

It's interesting to me that light has the ability to overcome darkness, but that darkness has no comprehension of the work that Light is doing.

The rest of the world may not comprehend or understand the change that God is making in your life.

- They may say, "We liked it better when everything was dark."
- We liked you better when you were a partier.
- We liked you better when you told dirty jokes.
- We liked you better when we could act the way we wanted to around you.
- We liked it better when there was darkness in your life.

When I think of courage, I think of...

- William Tyndale Who in the early 1500's translated the Bible into English, which at the time was forbidden and punishable by

execution. For his controversial views and belief that everyone should be able to read the Bible in their native tongue, he was later arrested and executed.

- Winston Churchill. When in 1940, Britain stood, alone against Nazi Germany. Some in Britain wanted to seek a deal with Hitler, but Churchill wanted to fight on, and he inspired his country and the rest of the world through their darkest hour.
- Rosa Parks who On December 1, 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, refused to obey bus driver James F. Blake's order that she give up her seat in the colored section to a white passenger. Her act of defiance became an important symbol of the modern Civil Rights Movement. She became an international icon of resistance to racial segregation.
- Helen Keller - Overcame her dual disability of being both deaf and blind and championed to improve societies treatment of deaf people.
- The Unknown Rebel at the 1989 Tiananmen Square Protests who faced-off with the tanks of the People's Liberation Army on June 5. Stuart Franklin's famous photo of the stand-off went on to become one of Life's Magazine's "100 Photos that Changed the World" and TIME listed the obscure and Unknown Rebel as one of the 100 most influential people of the 20th century.
- Malala Yousafzai (1997) - Pakistani schoolgirl who defied threats of the Taliban to campaign for the right to education. She survived being shot in the head by the Taliban and has become a global advocate for human rights, women's rights and the right to education.
- Jesus Christ who in spite of the shame suffered the death of the cross for you and for me.

The thing that limits so many people to a common, normal, ordinary life is fear.

- Fear of an undesired outcome
- Fear of other people's opinion
- Fear of failure

But understand something, these are all natural fears.

- We all have these fears.
- But the difference between someone being fearful and someone being courageous is the fact that in the face of their fears, they attempted and even accomplished what they were afraid of.

Courage.

- It takes courage to stand up for what is right.
- It takes courage to make a difference.
- And it takes courage to live a life that is pleasing to God when the rest of the world would condemn you for it.

Change does not come easy.

- Most people do not like change.
- Change exposes some things
- Change reveals some things
- Change means that what we had before was not enough.
- Change means something better has come.

John 3:19

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

I found out the day I was baptized that not everybody was going to understand my decision.

- My friends laughed at me.
- My family made fun of me.
- My own father called me a fool.

No one else in my entire family went to church or lived for God at that time.

- I stood alone in a dark place.
- Just my little light and me.

But change was needed.

- My life couldn't continue in the direction it was going any longer.
- I couldn't allow my soul to be destroyed by what was going on in my life at that time.

Change had to happen.

Repentance had to happen

- Regardless of what other people thought
- Regardless of how it would affect their thinking
- Regardless of the family traditions
- Regardless of how they were brought up
- Regardless of who their God was or what their religion was

I needed Change in my life.

- My world was a pretty dark place and I needed God to shine some light into my life.

It takes courage to say yes to God when everyone around you is laughing and pointing their fingers.

- It takes courage to do what is right not only for yourself, but for the people you love even when they don't understand your actions.

These people here today who have made a decision to be baptized are heroes in my book.

- Some of them are facing ridicule from their family and friends.

- Some of them are facing the generational curses of their life and saying, “It stops here.”
- It takes courage step out of the crowd and says, “I want change”.
- It takes courage to admit that you need His help!
- It takes courage to face your demons and say I choose Jesus Christ.

It takes Courage to Change.

A courageous person is not absent of fear. But in spite of their fear, they do what they feel in their heart needs to be done.

It takes courage to be able to look at your life from an outside perspective and be able to say, “I am willing to change”.

It takes an incredible desire to decide that you are no longer going to let life live you and that you are going to stare it in the face and take it back.

If you are tired of feeling worthless and not ok with life, then it is time to let go and step bravely ahead into a new life.

Do not allow another day to go by without knowing in your heart that you have made a decision to do what you know God is asking you to do.

Courage to change