

# 3 Session Three: Courage

Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; **be men of courage**; be strong. Do everything in love.

1 Corinthians 16:13-14, NIV

## Consider This ...

Old westerns and Clint Eastwood movies can give us a false characterization of what real courage is. Many times, the lead characters who stand triumphant in the end are not courageous, but fearless. In fact, they are often without any emotion at all. They seem bored and cynical—not brave.

Courage is not the absence of fear, as Mark Twain pointed out, but rather the mastery of it. Courage is the ability to move forward *in spite of* fear—not with no fear at all. In fact, moving forward in total fearlessness is often actually recklessness. Courage allows you to move within the boundaries of cowardice and recklessness, taking appropriate risks. Where does this courage come from? For the Christian, it is based on whom we trust.



In the sport of rock climbing, the climber depends on the person he's attached to below—his "belayer." The belayer is on the other end of his rope, freeing him to attempt difficult moves. Even if he falls, he knows he will be alright because his belayer won't let him fall too far.

In the same way, you are free to take risks and face challenges when you know Christ is holding the other end of the rope. Trying to hold your own rope will keep you trapped on the same routes within your comfort zone, and the belief that no one is holding the rope will keep you standing on the ground in fear. True courage comes from knowing a powerful, gracious God is with you on the climb.

## KEY PASSAGE



After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: "Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. [...] As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them. Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

– Joshua 1:1-9

## MEMORIZE THIS



## Rock Solid Tool: WORSHIP

*Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.*

*Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.*

– Psalm 100:1-3, NIV

The act of worship draws us closer to God and the overwhelming, awesome sense of who He is. **Dwelling on the truth that "it is He who made us and we are His," through worship enables us to place our trust in Him and live with courage.**

## Talk About It

1. How did you do on last session's Rock Solid Challenge?
2. Where do you live on this continuum most of the time? Use the scale below and discuss.  

Cowardice	Recklessness			
Courage				
1	2	3	4	5
3. Think about a time in your life when you experienced true fear. Why were you scared? Did the fear paralyze you or were you able to overcome it?
4. In this week's Key Passage, how many times does the Lord direct Joshua to be strong and courageous? What does He suggest are the sources of the strength and courage?
5. Do you find it difficult to trust God? How do you think courage might relate to standing firm in the faith?
6. Is there an area in your life right now that you need courage in? Share that with your brothers and pray for each other.

# ROCK

## SOLID CHALLENGE:

### Find every opportunity to worship God.

Many of us attend a weekly service at church, which often includes a time to worship God through song (among other ways). Are you engaged during this time—either by focusing on the words, praying, or singing along with other members? Or does your mind wander? This week, commit to participating in this time of worship with other believers. The Bible sets a precedent for praising God through music: "Oh come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!" (Psalm 95:1, ESV).

How will you worship God this week on your own? "Worship is a personal expression of being overwhelmed by God's goodness and

greatness," writes Patrick Morley. "[It] includes any activity that enhances or expresses your understanding of God's supremacy and your submission to Him. Your communication of that concept is limited only by your creativity" (*A Man's Guide to the Spiritual Disciplines*, 76). So what does this mean? You can worship through music during your morning commute, through contemplating creation and praising the Creator during a sunset, by thanking the Lord and dedicating the day to Him with your family over breakfast, etc.

As you focus on Him and give Him praise—as you grow smaller and allow Him to grow bigger—think about transferring trust over areas of your life to Him so that you might grow in courage.

Psalm 42:2 says, "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?" When will you go and meet with God this week through the act of worship?

### Prayers for my brothers...

THREE WAYS I WILL WORSHIP GOD THIS WEEK...

1.

2.

3.

## Activity Idea

Discuss a challenging activity that your group would like to do, and do it! Go rock climbing, play paint ball, try bungee jumping, ride a big roller coaster, or come up with your own.