

# Courage: Almost A Contradiction In Terms

***“Courage is fear that has said its prayers.” Author Anne Lamott***

We all admire courageous people who sacrifice greatly for the work of God and the good of others. We intuitively know courage when we see it, but how do we define it and live courageously? So often the movie and literary images we see are people with unshakable resolve, laser focus, and that can walk into the most terrifying conditions and accomplish the impossible. As a boy I loved war movies where the hero fearlessly charged into the fiercest battles to save the day. But I knew that I was an ordinary boy, sometimes courageous, and often fearful of even descending into my family’s dark basement. But God wants each of us to grow beyond children scared of the dark, to boldly take bigger risks of faith despite our fears.

Courage seems to be an odd, conflicting reality for people. Author G.K. Chesterton defines courage by his wise, paradoxical description: *“Courage is almost a contradiction in terms.* It means a strong desire to live taking the form of a readiness to die. ‘He that will lose his life, that same shall save it,’ is not a piece of mysticism for saints and heroes. A soldier surrounded by enemies, if he is to cut his way out, needs to combine a strong desire for living with a strange carelessness about dying. He must seek his life in a spirit of furious indifference to it; he must desire life like water, and yet drink death like wine.” So the essence of living with courage is not an absence of fear; it is allowing God’s work in us to redistribute fear to get the job done. The jobs God asks us

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are usually scary ones way beyond our control and abilities, requiring trust in his goodness and gracious provision.

*Our Ministry Center-A Courageous Work in Progress:* We come to you in this letter to ask for your prayers and financial help as our ministry center is in need of a new roof. A client recently asked me about the history of our ministry center and ministry growth over the last six years. “You must have had great faith and courage to buy without knowing where the financial resources would come!” My immediate response to him was “No, I had to pray through many fears of my own!” Our board prayed diligently and trusted God on this move with so many visible obstacles and very limited resources. We are trusting in God’s provision now as we bring this current need to you. Our team has an ongoing vision of Kingdom impact to touch

thousands of lives with the gospel. We took the courageous step of faith to ask God for this ministry center in spite of the fears as we witnessed Him provide. So remember, “Courage is fear that has said its prayers” and then watch God’s amazing work in each of us!

Warmly in Christ,

*Dave*

Executive Director

