

Courage, Commitment, and Confession

Introduction

1 Timothy 6:12-14

1. **In explaining the Parable of the Sower, Jesus spoke of some who "have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away" (Luke 8:13).**
2. **Others, Jesus said, "are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity" (Luke 8:14).**
3. **The sad truth is, many individuals never complete the process of discipleship.**

2 Peter 1:8-10

- A. **Sometimes (though not always) the problem is that those who appear outwardly to have obeyed the gospel have not really been "converted" to Christ.**

Matthew 18:3 and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

- B. **And this problem may sometimes (though not always) result from people not having been taught what is really involved in turning to Christ from the world.**
4. **In this lesson, we will be looking at three things that are very important to our "conversion" to Christ, and leading to our continued faithfulness and growth after conversion.**
5. **These things are essential to spiritual progress, whether we've not yet obeyed the gospel or have been a Christian a long time.**

Courage

1. **First, consider that faithfulness to Christ requires courage: fortitude in the face of danger or difficulty.**
2. **Courage is an indicator of our faith: our willingness to take real risks based on our trust in what God can do.**
 - A. **Leaving our “comfort zone” and moving forward toward God can be frightening. (Abraham)**

Hebrews 11:8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.

- B. **The dangers are not imaginary. The risks are very real.**
- C. **If there were no real risk, faith would be of no real virtue.**
- D. **Are we attempting to find a risk-free faith that “costs [us] nothing”**

2 Samuel 24:24 Then the king said to Araunah, "No, but I will surely buy it from you for a price; nor will I offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God with that which costs me nothing." So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

- E. **There is a very real “cost” that has to be “counted.”**
Luke 14:25-33
- F. **The individual whose main concern is to “play it safe,” will never make any significant progress spiritually.....or otherwise.**

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- G. We must have the faith and courage to deal with the consequences of following Christ — whatever the consequences may be!**
 - H. Faith and courage do not mean the absence of danger. They mean facing that danger with fortitude.**
- 3. In the final analysis, courage comes down to a matter of character.**
- A. What kind of people are we? Do we have any “root” in ourselves? Do we “have what it takes” to deal with difficulty?**
 - B. THEODORE ROOSEVELT:** “It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doers of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes short again and again because there is no effort without error and shortcomings, who knows the great devotion, who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at best knows in the end the high achievement of triumph and who at worst, if he fails while daring greatly, knows his place shall never be with those timid and cold souls who know neither victory nor defeat.”
 - C. The cowardly will be lost.**

Revelation 21:8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

- 4. The courage that comes from character (being a “rooted” person) is a matter of choice on our part.**

Commitment

1. **Without the making of a genuine commitment, we will not stand up against Satan, our adversary.**
 - A. **Our salvation requires of us more than a whim or passing mood.**
 - B. **There is a difference between commitment and “wishful thinking.”**
 - C. **JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE:** “We cannot dream ourselves into a character; we must hammer and forge our self one.”
 - D. **There is also a difference between making a commitment and merely “giving it a try.”**
2. **A commitment involves not only a conscious decision to act but also the making of a bona fide pledge or promise to do what we’ve decided: commitment is where we actually “sign our name to the contract” so to speak.**

2 Corinthians 8:10-11 And in this I give advice: It is to your advantage not only to be doing what you began and were desiring to do a year ago; but now **you also must complete the doing of it**; that as there was a readiness to desire it, **so there also may be a completion out of what you have.**

- A. **ALBERT SCHWEITZER:** “Progress always consists in taking one or another of two alternatives, abandoning the attempt to combine them.”

3. Commitment involves the “committing” of our very selves to God.

1 Peter 2:23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, **but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;**

1 Peter 4:19 Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God **commit their souls to Him** in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.

2 Timothy 1:12 For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able **to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.**

4. The Bible emphasizes the need for decisiveness.

James 4:8 **Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.** Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

James 1:6-8 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. **For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;** he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

5. We cannot indefinitely “think about” what we are going to do — we’ve got to make a commitment and actually do it!

Confession

1. Our commitment of faith must be openly acknowledged. We must place ourselves on public record as having made a commitment to Christ.

A. We are to confess our faith.

Romans 10:9-10 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and **with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**

1 Timothy 6:12-13 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and **have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.** I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate,

B. We are to confess our sins.

James 5:16 Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

C. We are to confess the truth.

Ephesians 4:15 but, speaking **the truth in love**, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—

2. We are to imitate Jesus, who is always “the Faithful and True Witness” (Revelation 3:14)

A. A “martyr” is a “witness” who will die rather than renounce his “testimony.”

Revelation 1:9; 6:9; 20:4

3. Many are unwilling to make a public commitment to what they say they believe in private.

A. Some are unwilling because of what it will cost them.

John 12:42-43 Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

B. Others simply want to “keep their options open” in case things just “don’t work out.”

4. It is true that we ought not to confess Christ if we don’t intend to remain faithful.

Ecclesiastes 5:1-5

5. But it is equally true that the person who does not continually confess his faith is not likely keep it. Secret “commitments” simply don’t hold up as well as public ones.

A. We must confess the truth in deed as well as word

Titus 1:16 They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.

B. We must confess the truth publicly as well as privately.

Luke 22:54-62

6. We must be willing to bear witness to the truth in every situation and verbalize our commitments to live for Christ.

Matthew 10:32-33

7. Lifelong faithfulness comes down to maintaining our confession.

Hebrews 10:23

Conclusion

- 1. God calls upon us to make a commitment to truth.**
- 2. A real commitment to truth requires courage, and it must be confessed in word and deed.**
- 3. Having obeyed the gospel, we will only “get out of” Christianity what we actually “put into it.”**
 - A. Our joy will be in proportion to our commitment.**

2 Corinthians 9:6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

- 4. Let us all take courage, make a commitment to Christ, and hold fast to our confession to the very end of our life so that we can gain our home in heaven with our blessed Savior!**

