

**In the greatest act of courage in the history of the world
Jesus Christ went to the cross.**

Why?

For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:2

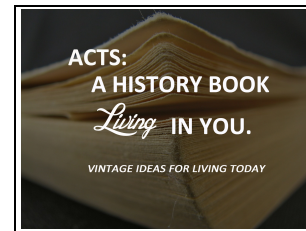
12 we and the local believers all begged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. 13 But he said, "Why all this weeping? You are breaking my heart! I am ready not only to be jailed at Jerusalem but even to die for the sake of the Lord Jesus." Acts 21:12,13

And why is courage so important Paul tells us in closing.

But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God.... 26 I declare today that I have been faithful. If anyone suffers eternal death, it's not my fault, 27 for I didn't shrink from declaring all that God wants you to know. Acts 20:24,26,27

Notes:

Sierra Community Church July 13th, 2014-Dan Wilvers



Part 23:
Acts 22:1-22
**The Courage of Paul
How Can I Be Like Paul?**

The Riot in Jerusalem

Paul was grabbed and dragged out of the Temple, ...31 As they were trying to kill him, word reached the commander of the Roman regiment that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. 32When the mob saw the commander and the troops coming, they stopped beating Paul. 33 ...the commander arrested him and ... ordered that Paul be taken to the fortress. 35 As Paul reached the stairs, the mob grew so violent the soldiers had to lift him to their shoulders to protect him. 36 And the crowd followed behind, shouting, "Kill him, kill him!"

Note Two Things about this story:

I. Paul's courage

As Paul was about to be taken inside, he said to the commander, "May I have a word with you?" "Do you know Greek?" the commander asked, surprised. 38 "Aren't you the Egyptian who led a rebellion some time ago and took 4,000 members of the Assassins out into the desert?" 39 "No," Paul replied, "I am a Jew and a citizen of Tarsus in Cilicia, which is an important city. Please, let me talk to these people." 40 The commander agreed, so Paul stood on the stairs and motioned to the people to be quiet. Soon a deep silence enveloped the crowd, and he addressed them in their own language, Aramaic. Acts 21:37-40

- **Why would the commander give Paul permission to speak?**
- **How does Paul quiet a crowd bent on killing him?**
- **What does this tell you about Paul?**

Paul:

For I am not *the least bit* embarrassed about the gospel. *I won't shy away from it*, because it is God's power to save every person who believes: first the Jew, and then the non-Jew. Romans 1:16

With Christ as my witness, I speak with utter truthfulness. My conscience and the Holy Spirit confirm it. 2 My heart is filled with bitter sorrow and unending grief 3 for my people, my Jewish brothers and sisters. I would be willing to be forever cursed—cut off from Christ!—if that would save them. Romans 9:1-3

II. How can I be as courageous as Paul?

- **There are two practical out workings of the Gospel:**
The **Unique Humility** that is required to receive it.
- The **Unique Hope** that it brings when we have received it.

Steps to Courage

1. Paul looked away from himself.-**He was Humble.**

Then Paul said, "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, and I was brought up and educated here in Jerusalem under Gamaliel. As his student, I was carefully trained in our Jewish laws and customs. I became very zealous to honor God in everything I did, *just like all of you today.*" Acts 22:3

(Ananias to Paul at his conversion) What are you waiting for? Get up and be baptized. Have your sins washed away by calling on the name of the Lord.' Acts 22:16

Let me remind you what the Gospel should do in all our lives:

- It should flatten our egos completely

Courage comes when we have the ability through humility to not make it about ourselves.

Culture tells us that courage comes by gaining control over our fear by getting rid of the fear willfully.

3 Reasons Why This Approach Won't Work:

- Courage isn't about the absence of fear, it's about responding a certain way in the face of fear.
 - Attempting to banish fear is just another way of living in denial. *Fear is a good way to warn us that danger is afoot. If you get rid of fear you're going to get clobbered because you're going to get over confident and unrealistic.*
 - Banishing fear doesn't work because you're looking to yourself. *You'll either be scared of harm or too confident and you'll not see it coming.*

2. Paul's looked to the **incredible hope** he possessed in Christ. "As I was on the road, approaching Damascus about noon, a very bright light from heaven suddenly shone down around me. 7 I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' 8 **"Who are you, lord?"** I asked." And the voice replied, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene, the one you are persecuting.' Acts 22:6-8

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. Romans 8:18

**Real courage isn't the absence of fear;
Real courage is born in the presence of genuine hope.**

Real Courage comes from absolutely knowing your future.

For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better. ...23 I'm torn between two desires: I long to go and be with Christ, which would be far better for me. 24 But for your sakes, it is better that I continue to live. Philippians 1:21,23,24