

Courage

Getting Out of Your Comfort Zone

AT A GLANCE:

The title of the talk series is Courage because it is about taking brave steps to be able to do what you want to do in your life and, most important, to obey God and do what He wills for you.

AFTER THE SERIES:

There's a whole new world out there that's waiting for your life and presence and gift. This series will help you realize the cause of your fear of rejection, how to overcome it, and finally have the courage to do what God wants you to do.

Talk 3: "Courageous Love"

WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT:

Talk 3 is titled Courageous Love because it is about God's brave act to express His Love for mankind— for us.

The key message of Talk 3 is God is madly in love with you. This kind of love sounds not only mushy or corny. It is foolish.

We've often heard that God's Love is Unconditional— meaning He cares for us, takes care of us, no matter who, or what kind of person we are.

Now, one needs courage to be able to love without condition. Like Je-sus bravely carried the cross and went through crucifixion for us.

Can we also have the courage to love God as well as the people He wants us to love —without condition?

I. REVIEW THE KEY BIBLE VERSES:

Review how deep the love of Christ is:

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that sur-passes knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. (Ephesians 3:17-19 NIV)

Review the 7 Parallels Between Jesus and Isaac:

1. Both are loved by their fathers yet sacrificed by their fathers.
2. Both are only sons. God tells Abraham, "Take your son...your only son, Isaac, whom you love so much..."(Genesis 22:2 GNT). And when Jesus is baptized, God announces, "This is my own dear Son, with whom I am pleased." (Matthew 3:17 GNT)
3. Both obey their father's will.
4. Both carry wood up the mountain.
5. Both are sacrificed on the same geographical location—the Hills of Moriah. (Trivia: When I'm in Jerusalem, I always walk between Calvary and where Abraham offered Isaac, now a mosque called Dome of the Rock.)
6. Both are tied up. Genesis (Septuagint Version) and the Gospel of John use the same Greek Word for it—Aqueda. John said they bound Jesus (see John 18:12, 24). I do get chills down my spine when I read in Genesis that Abraham *tied up his son and placed him on the altar, on top of the wood.* (Genesis 22:9 GNT). What a perfect picture of what happened to Jesus!

BREAKING NEWS

Talk 1:
Courageous Obedience

Talk 2:
Courageous Faith

Talk 3:
Courageous Love

Talk 4:
Big Day

Notes:



7. Both are resurrected, though in a different way.

II. ASK FOR REACTIONS AND REFLECTIONS

We do all sorts of religious activities, devotions, and studies, but if we lose our grip on the most important truth—that God is crazy for you—all this will become grind instead of gratitude.

Ask members’ reflections on the three kinds of Churches today:

1. Jaded Church: These people know God loves them. But that truth doesn’t change their life.

Ask: Were you like this at one point in your spiritual journey?

2. Judgmental Church: They’re always afraid that God would have a temper tantrum. They imagine God as a cranky 80-year-old Uncle who has a permanent frown on His face and whose constant disposition is constant disappointment on who they are, what they do. If God were a car, His neutral gear is a deep suspicion that “you’re doing something wrong”.

Ask: When are you afraid of God?

3. Joyful Church: God’s people are a happy people. Joy is the essential mark of Jesus Followers. The Joyful Church believes that if God were a car, his neutral gear was a fondness for you. God really likes you. God believes in you. God is not mad at you. He’s madly in love with you.

Ask: What’s the difference between a happy Christian and a joyful Christian?

NOTE:

Happy connotes a giddy feeling when things go well.

Joyful connotes feeling good even in the midst of adversaries.

III. PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray that members will not be afraid to be stripped away from their attachments so they will experience overflowing peace.

Pray that members will have the courage to love as God loves us— without condition.

Notes:

