

COURAGE

There are times in life when we need someone to say to us, “Take Courage!” or “Take Heart!” Like the time I was in the middle of a divorce. I have heard a divorce is worse than death.

When we are discouraged we need to hear someone say, “Take Courage.” Maybe you are facing an overwhelming situation. Maybe you were recently been laid off or face an uncertain future. Perhaps you are facing a serious health challenge. Maybe you’re not facing a life-and-death situation, but you’re facing several crazy kids who have the gift of making noise. But at one time or another we all need to hear God say, “Take courage.” Here are a five reasons we can be take courage:

1. Because God Himself is with Us

Joshua 1.9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

Deuteronomy 31.6 Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.” We can take courage because we aren’t facing our challenges alone. God, the creator of the universe, the all-powerful One, is right here with us. He’s not far off and uninvolved. When we don’t know what to do, he does. He’s never tired, never weary, never takes a break.

2. Because God Has a Plan for Us

While Paul was in prison: The following night the Lord stood by him and said, Acts 23.11 “Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome.”

God has a plan for each one of his children, and he will fulfill that plan. We don’t have to fulfill some destiny for ourselves; God is accomplishing his work through us. And he never fails to complete his plans.

3. Because Jesus Has Overcome the World

John 16.33 I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

Jesus said we will have tribulation in this world. We shouldn't be surprised by it. If we look at this world only, we will lose heart. But we can “take heart” and take courage, for Jesus is greater than the world and he has already overcome it. Nothing in this world can defeat our Mighty Conqueror. And he has overcome the world for us—for those he redeemed.

4. Because Nothing Can Separate Us from God's Love

(Romans 8.35) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

(Romans 8.38–39) For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

No matter what we are going through, we can be assured that it hasn't separated us from Christ's love. And if he loves us, we can take heart that he will protect us, provide for us, guide us, and help us. Nothing in all creation can separate us from his love. Whether we lose our jobs or our homes or our health or even our loved ones, Jesus will hold us in his love and never let us go. So, take courage.

5. Because God himself will strengthen us

Isaiah 12.2 “Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.”

Isiah 41.10 Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

We don't have to somehow summon up strength from within ourselves. If you don't think you have the strength to make it through, well, you're absolutely right. You don't. We don't have the strength to part the Red Sea or be cheerful in the midst of kids being destroyed, but God does. And he will pour his strength into us.

Don't worry if you'll have enough courage for tomorrow. God will give you all the strength you need for today. And he's got bags and bags of love stored up for tomorrow, a whole warehouse of love stored up for the future.