

Courageous Living

Inspired By God
and
Inspiring To Others!

What Does A Courageous Christian Look Like and From Where Does Courage Come?

Today is Pentecost

It Is The Birthday Of The Church.
If Our Calendar Is Correct, She Is
1987 Years Old.

Courageous Christians
Have A
Healthy Church Community!

A Divine/Human Organism

- Established by Jesus Christ
 - *“...on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.”* Matthew 16:18 (NIV)
- The dwelling place of the Holy Spirit collectively
 - *“Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?”* 1 Cor. 3:16 (NIV)
- Occupied by Human Beings indwelt by the Holy Spirit
 - *“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.”* 1 Corinthians 12:27 (NIV)

Has Had A Checkered Past.

- Confession is good for the soul both individually and collectively. The church must own her sins and repent.
 - We have been complicit.
 - We have been cowardly.
 - We have been distracted.
 - We have been divided.





The Church Has Carried The Message Of Forgiveness And Hope In Christ To The World



The Church Advanced Medicine



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SAMARITAN'S PURSE HELPS TREAT COVID-19 PATIENTS

CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC



Yes, The Church is Been Unworthy To Be Called The Body Of Christ.

1. She is made up of unworthy people.
2. She exists for unworthy people.
3. She constantly calls unworthy people to her ranks.
4. She proclaims her Master, Jesus as the standard and in that message shows her critics how to critique her, for all are found unworthy of his name.
5. She is called the church, the body of Christ, by grace not by merit, just as those individuals who inhabit her.

Who Most Critiques The Church?

- Outsiders or Herself?
- She has often held herself up to the standard of Christ.
- She has weighed herself in the balance and been found wanting.
- Virtually every sermon that is preached to her masses is a call to repentance and an encouragement to be more holy as He is holy.
- Name one nation, organization, political party, or politician doing the same?

Yet, She Still Survives!

- She survives because she is indwelled by the Spirit of the living God.
- She survives by a power, not her own.
- She continues the onslaught of the gates of hell by the power of that same Holy Spirit.
- She is the clearest expression of the Kingdom of God this side of heaven.
- She survives because she is of God and we NEED her!

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 Is right...

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Together is Better

We are more Courageous in her presence.

If it were left up to us alone to promote what is good, evangelize the lost, and minister to the needy, we would soon grow weary of compassion fatigue.

She wanders less than an individual. As a whole she is stronger than any individual. Her witness to the mission of God is more consistent than any individual. While even wonderful individual examples come and go, she stands!

Courageous Christians Need The Roots That The Church Provides.

- There are two Essential Rites that speak of who we are.
- Baptism: In the New Testament, when people believed that Jesus was the son of God, they asked what to do to be saved. They were told to trustingly and penitently be baptized into a relationship with their Lord Jesus Christ.
- Communion: Those who were baptized would meet together to eat a meal and by means of bread and drink celebrate what the Christ had done for them in his death, burial and resurrection.

Courageous Christians Need Her Assemblies

- Throughout Christian History, there have been two constants in the church's assemblies. Word and Table.
- Table: Sharing the Supper with Christ and each other.
- Word: A Message of God, from the Word of God, delivered by a Person of God.
- I believe people assemble seeking at least these five things from the Word: Consolation, Inspiration, Challenge, Conviction and a Context of Praise and Thanksgiving.

Consolation:

- Sometimes we have failed miserably and we know we have failed miserably.
- In our godly sorrow, we need someone to remind of a God who is rich in mercy and delights in showing it.
- Sometimes we have been failed or hurt miserably and we need someone to reassure us that this too shall pass and “the judge of all the earth will do right.” The guilty will be punished and the innocent ultimately exonerated.

Inspiration:

- The Word of God is God Breathed, and Courageous Christians need that Breath in their spiritual lungs.
- We need that Spirit to moves us to follow in the steps of Jesus .
- We want to say in the words of the old song:

*I am resolved no longer to linger,
Charmed by the world's delight,
Things that are higher, things that are nobler,
These have allured my sight.*

Challenge:

- Courageous Christians need to be challenged to repent of selfishness and to embrace the sacrificial call of Christ.

(Jesus) said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.

Luke 9:23-24 (NIV)

Conviction:

- I believe Courageous Christians want a clear word of what God has said is sinful and unholy.
- They need to hear Sins of the Tongue called out.
- They need to hear Sins of Omission brought to the light.
- They need to hear Sins of Commission named.
- They need to hear who they are whose they are.
- They need to hear that if they have come for forgiveness that Jesus offers to unburden them..

We Need A Place To Collectively Praise And Thank God.

- Courageous Christians can also sensitive people with the need to be grateful.
- We gather as a church (in person or electronically) to say Thank You to God and to Praise in the presence of others.
- Truly thankful people cannot keep their gratitude to themselves. They have to share it.
- **Hear this! There is No Such Thing as a Self-Made Man.**

This Is A Healthy Church Environment.

Consolation, Inspiration, Challenge, Conviction
and

A Context of Praise and Thanksgiving
and

Courageous Christians Have It!

Much more could be said.
What about prayer or benevolence or
missions or...?

What I've said surely makes it clear,
Courageous Christianity
is not lived out in isolation.

We Need The Noble Fellowship
Of The Church.

A Prayer For The Church

We thank you, Heavenly Father for giving us a place in your *Beloved Community*, the church. Help us, as we make our way through this world to our eternal home, to value this place and people who are the Body of Christ. Bless us with His heart, hands and voice for people, both in and yet outside of the church. Help us to represent Jesus as we stand for loving others and oppose hate in every form. Bless us to bring peace, unity and justice to the oppressed of our community. May we salt and light.

In His name I pray, Amen.