



Sermon Title: Keep Up Your Courage!

by: Pastor Rock Dillaman

Scriptures: “Keep up your courage! For just as you have testified for me in Jerusalem, so you must bear witness also in Rome.” [Acts 23:11 NRSV]

1. Faith **ends** some struggles, but **introduces** others.
2. Paul didn't allow his **caring** friends to keep him from obeying his **best** Friend - because his best Friend was also his **Lord**. [John 15:15]
3. When you know and love **Jesus** you want others to know and love **Him** also.
4. There's no following Jesus without **discouragement** – even when we're **obedient**.
5. Where God commands God **provides**. He increases our courage by increasing our **understanding**.
6. Diminished courage is a symptom of poor spiritual **eyesight**! We lose our courage because of **distorted appearances**.
7. When believers view **life** through the lenses of unbelief and fear rather than God's character and promises - the view will be **distorted**.
8. Sustained courage requires stubborn **discernment**; the ability to continually look **behind** appearances and see God at work.
9. God often permits **evil** to serve **His** purposes.
10. Unbelief didn't **defeat** God's purpose, because God's purpose was to **speak** to unbelief one final time!

Growth Group Questions
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KICK-OFF

1. What are some things you're looking forward to as we finish out 2017?
2. Do you ever feel like the enemies of God are gaining more control of the world around us? How does today's message help you to overcome those fears?



THE GAME PLAN

1. What points from today's sermon challenged you, impacted you, or caught your attention and why?
2. Was there ever a time in your life when your "obedience" to God led to difficulty and discouragement? Explain.
3. Share about a time when your view was so "distorted" you needed God to open your eyes to see things from His perspective? Explain.
4. What are the things you fear most in life?

OVERTIME

1. Read 2 Kings 6:15-16. How does this passage relate to today's message and what lessons can we draw from it to apply to our lives today?
2. Can you think of other accounts or stories in Scripture where things weren't what they initially appeared to be? What was God really up to?
3. Break into small groups and pray for each other asking God to increase your courage by increasing your understanding in areas of current difficulty or discouragement.


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