

## Courage!

Life can sometimes be overwhelming. Like standing on a beach, one wave of trouble can be followed by another. The Lord made us - so He knows exactly how we feel.

Think about the Apostle Paul, whose messages stirred both riots and revivals. The Lord introduced him to a companion, Barnabus, whose name means “son of consolation” or “son of encouragement”. No doubt, there were times when Paul needed encouragement. We all do. Later, the Lord Jesus Himself appeared to Paul, saying, “For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this city” (Acts 18:10).

Likewise, Moses led the children of Israel for forty years. When Moses died, the Lord commissioned Joshua to take them into battle on the other side of the Jordan River. Understandably, Joshua may not have felt ready for the task, so the Lord said, “Be strong and of a good courage . . . Only be thou strong and very courageous . . . Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest” (Joshua 1:6-9). It looks like Joshua needed encouragement to go forward and take command, and the Lord provided it.

Just before King David died, he summoned his son Solomon, who would succeed him as king, and told him, “I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man” (1 Kings 2:2).

And, the Lord told Jeremiah at the outset of his ministry: “Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee . . . for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee” (Jeremiah 1:17-19).

While the Lord understands that we might be fearful and uncertain, He doesn't accept it as a valid excuse for inaction. Philippians 4:6 reminds us not to worry, but to pray, “Be careful (i.e., worry) for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto God.”

Like Peter, when he thrice denied Christ, we can all lose courage. So, let us always ask the Lord for courage, lest we too be asked by the Lord, “Lovest thou Me?” (John 21:15-17)