

"Upon this rock I will build my church"

**Matthew 16:18**

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## THE VALIANT MEN IN YOUR LIFE

### INTRODUCTION:

Webster defines valiant as full of or showing courage; brave. Let's look at some Bible men who have shown this type of character and try to gain some insight into ways we too can be valiant.

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. VALIANT MEN STAND FOR WHAT IS RIGHT EVEN WHEN ALL OTHERS ARE DOING WRONG.

A. In Daniel 3, we read about three young men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who would not bow down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, had set up. The king had made a decree that when the people heard the sound of a horn, flute, harp, lyre,

or psaltery, they were to bow down and worship. Those who would not bow down were to be cast into a fiery furnace.

1. Some went and told King Nebuchadnezzar that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were not worshipping the idol, and he became very angry. Nebuchadnezzar called the

three men in for questioning. Their reply was that they would only worship the true

God. King Nebuchadnezzar became furious and ordered the men to be thrown into a

furnace that had been heated seven times hotter than usual. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were bound and thrown in to the fire. The fire was so hot that it burned up the men who threw them into the furnace.

2. Nebuchadnezzar looked in the fire and could see four men, the fourth man being an

angel sent by God. King Nebuchadnezzar, along with his counselors, satraps, administrators, and governors, could see the three men of God were not burned; their

hair was not singed, their clothes were not burned, they didn't even smell like smoke (Daniel 3:27).

3. King Nebuchadnezzar changed his mind and would not allow anyone to speak out against the true God (Daniel 3:29).

B. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were up against a pretty powerful person. THE KING OF BABYLON! They had gained favor in King Nebuchadnezzar's eyes and knew it would be

possible to lose this if they didn't do what he said. But these valiant men stood firm and

Daniel 3:30 tells us they were promoted.

1. We need to stand firm when others try to persuade us to do wrong.
2. We need to have the courage to say we will do what God wants us to do even at a risk of losing all or some of our friends.

## II. VALIANT MEN ARE NOT AFRAID TO OPEN THEIR MOUTHS AND SPEAK OUT AGAINST WRONG.

A. Let's consider Stephen in Acts chapter 7. Stephen preached to a crowd who began to throw stones at him and eventually killed him. They didn't want to hear the truth. They rejected God.

1. We probably won't be stoned to death for following the Bible but our enemies have vast arrays of weapons to use against us. Lies, evil speaking, and name calling are just a few.

2. How do we stand for truth and right?

- a. Put our own notions about what "ought" to be done away and allow God's word to instruct us.

- b. Pray for our enemies (Matthew 5:44).

- c. Keep any desire for vengeance out of the picture. God will take care of that. He tells us in Romans 12:17-21: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

B. Valiant men will keep their lives pure and free of sin.

1. The great man Noah preached for 120 years to a world so wicked that God wanted to utterly destroy it. Can you imagine how wicked it must have been? Those people didn't care what God said. They did what they wanted to without allowing God's word to guide them. But Noah and his family stayed faithful to God.

2. Doing the right thing is not always easy but God gives us a way of escape every time we are tempted

(I Corinthians 10:13). Let's consider some possible ways to keep pure.

- a. Choose good friends. Your friends can have a lot of influence on you.

- b. Listen to your parents. Your parents have probably experienced the same temptations you have, so talk to them.

- c. Pray and ask God for courage to do what is right now as you get older.

- d. Study your Bible to know right from wrong.

## VALIANT MEN WILL CHANGE THEIR WAYS WHEN THEY REALIZE THEY HAVE NOT BEEN DOING WHAT GOD WANTS THEM TO DO.

A. The apostle Paul (known as Saul before his conversion) persecuted Christians for many years. He thought he was doing right by putting them in prison or torturing them. He even had some Christians put to death in very cruel ways.

B. In Acts chapter 9 we read where Paul was on the road to Damascus

and a great light shown

down upon him. God asked Paul why he was persecuting Him.

C. When Paul realized he was wrong, he immediately repented, was baptized, and began doing right. What courage it takes to say, "I have done wrong, I'm sorry, and I don't want to do wrong any more."

Sometimes we have to swallow a little pride, don't we?

D. Look at Paul's life after he became a Christian.

1. He did missionary work.

2. He was beaten, shipwrecked and imprisoned.

E. Paul didn't allow his past mistakes to drag him down or excuse his previous behavior.

1. Some will say, "I've been so bad God could never forgive me." But he will forgive

us if we truly repent and change our ways.

2. Don't give up when we fail. Mistakes will happen but we need to allow these to be

steppingstones to success. Have you ever known anyone to win a race by looking backward?

3. Let's not blame others for our mistakes. Be willing to accept responsibility for your own actions.

CONCLUSION:

V - Value God's word.

A - Allow God's word to guide us.

L - Live our lives free of sin.

I - Invite others to hear God's word.

A - Answer those who oppose truth with kindness.

N - Say "No" to peers who want us to do wrong.

T - Trust God and do right even if no one else stands with you.

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