

Cell Group Lesson: The Courage to Continue

Ice Breaker: Tell us about something daring that you did when you were growing up.
(ex. jumping off a rooftop, climbing a tall tree, etc.).

Facilitator's Comments: *Let's start our lesson on the Courage to Continue by reading the following quote:*

Read

1st Quote:

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal; it is the courage to continue that counts." – **Winston Churchill**

Facilitator's Comments: *We often need the courage to continue, the courage to keep going, to keep striving, to keep living for God, in the face of the problems and pains of life.*

Question: How would you define the word "*courage*"?

Answer: Courage is going forward even in the face of our fears. It's the mental or moral strength to persevere and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty, with confidence.

Facilitator's Comments: *The Bible frequently talks about courage. As in the following verse:*

Read

Deut 31:6 – *Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.*

Facilitator's Comments: *The word "Encouragement" means to fill with courage or strength of purpose. Let's discuss our sources of encouragement that give us the Courage to Continue. First, let's read about God giving us encouragement in the following verses:*

Read

Rom 15:5 - May the God who gives endurance and **encouragement** give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, (NIV)

Psalms 10:17 - You hear, O LORD, the desire of the afflicted; **you encourage them**, and you listen to their cry,

Question: How do we receive encouragement from God?

Read

Rom 15:4 - For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (NIV)

Question: In your walk with God, in what ways has the Bible given you encouragement?

Facilitator's Comments: Next, let's talk about encouraging each other. Let's read the following verses:

Read

1 Thessalonians 5:11 - Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

Question: How can we encourage each other and build each other up?

Answer: Reminding each other of the goodness of God

Reminding each other of the miracles that the Lord has done in the past.

Read

1 Samuel 23:16 - And Saul's son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him find strength in God. (NIV)

Question: Can you recall a time when someone provided you encouragement and helped you find strength in God, during a difficult situation? What did they do to help you to find this strength?

Read

Acts 4:36 - Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), (NIV)

Facilitator's Comments: There are people in the church that have a "Barnabas-type" ministry of Encouragement.

Question: Who in our (your) church are examples of people that you believe, have a *ministry of encouragement*?

Facilitator's Comments: The following quote is a wonderful definition of the type of courage we should be seeking in our lives.

Read

2nd Quote

Dorothy Thompson once said that, "*Courage...is nothing less than the power to overcome danger, misfortune, fear, injustice, while continuing to affirm inwardly that life, with all its sorrows, is good; that everything is meaningful, even if in a sense beyond our understanding; and that there is always tomorrow.*"

Facilitator's Comments: Satan is trying to steal our tomorrows, by using one of his greatest tools: Discouragement

Question: How does Satan try to bring discouragement into our lives?

Answer: He tries to make us think that our situation is hopeless.

He tries to make us believe that God does not care or hear our prayers.

Facilitator's Comments: We need to be careful, how we talk, because discouragement can be contagious, as shown in the following verse:

Read

Deuteronomy 1:28 - Where can we go up? Our brethren have discouraged our hearts, saying, "The people are greater and taller than we; the cities are great and fortified up to heaven; moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakim there." (NKJV)

Question: What are some of the potential effects of discouragement in our lives?

Answer: Depression, isolation, less prayer, less church attendance?

Facilitator's Comments: *We can take courage in knowing that the Lord is there and is fighting our battles.*

Read

2 Chronicles 20:15 - He said: "Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the LORD says to you: 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's.' (NIV)

Question: What does it mean that the battle is not ours, but the God's?

Facilitator's Comments: *Finally, let's end with a story that encourages us to never give up.*

Read

Final Story

Not long ago I stopped by a local playground to watch a Little League baseball game. To get myself up to speed, I asked one of the youngsters what the score was. "***We're behind 16 to nothing***," he answered. "***I must say you don't seem discouraged***," I said. "***Why is that?***" "***Discouraged?***" said the boy. "***Why should we be discouraged? We haven't even been up to bat yet.***" (so keep swinging, it's not over yet!)

Facilitator's Comments: *Let's stand and pray and ask the Lord to fill us with courage and the faith in knowing that, as it says in Luke 1:37, "***.. For with God nothing shall be impossible.***"*

Cell Group Reading Material:

The Courage to Continue

1st Quote:

"Success is not final, failure is not fatal; it is the courage to continue that counts." – **Winston Churchill**

Deut 31:6 – *Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.*

Rom 15:5 - May the God who gives endurance and **encouragement** give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, (NIV)

Psalms 10:17 - You hear, O LORD, the desire of the afflicted; **you encourage them**, and you listen to their cry,

Rom 15:4 - For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (NIV)

1 Thessalonians 5:11 - Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

1 Samuel 23:16 - And Saul's son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him find strength in God. (NIV)

Acts 4:36 - Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), (NIV)

2nd Quote

Dorothy Thompson once said that, "*Courage...is nothing less than the power to overcome danger, misfortune, fear, injustice, while continuing to affirm inwardly that life, with all its sorrows, is good; that everything is meaningful, even if in a sense beyond our understanding; and that there is always tomorrow.*"

Deuteronomy 1:28 - Where can we go up? Our brethren have discouraged our hearts, saying, "The people are greater and taller than we; the cities are great and fortified up to heaven; moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakim there." (NKJV)

2 Chronicles 20:15 - He said: "Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the LORD says to you: 'Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God's.' (NIV)

Final Story

Not long ago I stopped by a local playground to watch a Little League baseball game. To get myself up to speed, I asked one of the youngsters what the score was. "***We're behind 16 to nothing,***" he answered. "***I must say you don't seem discouraged,***" I said. "***Why is that?***" "***Discouraged?***" said the boy. "***Why should we be discouraged? We haven't even been up to bat yet.***" (so keep swinging, it's not over yet!)