

Courage and Sacrifice

I. Introduction to Courage

The **ability** to do something that frightens

Strength in the face of pain or grief

Faithfulness to one's belief despite danger or disapproval

Peter's purpose: COURAGEOUS JOY [Slide 1]

1Pet. 5:12 NLT My purpose in writing is **to encourage you and assure** you that what you are experiencing is **truly part of God's grace for you**. Stand firm in this grace.

WHY WE STAND IN GRACE — The world is under the sway of evil.

GOOD and BAD THINGS HAPPEN

The tweet was curious, both in its content and in its timing.

WEDNESDAY – Pennsylvania state Senate made history by passing the popular Down Syndrome Protection Act, [Slide 2]

THURSDAY – Governor Tom Wolf issued a tweet “Another attack on abortion: VETOED.”

“**attack on abortion.**” As if there is **never a reason to stop**—an abortion. **As if abortion itself is a victim**, when it claims two victims: the preborn **baby** who dies, and the **mother** who is left to grieve that loss.

Not a surprise. Gov. Wolf once volunteered as an escort at a Planned Parenthood abortion facility. In 2018, his re-election campaign received a record \$1.5 million in support from Planned Parenthood. He also appointed several people from the abortion chain to his administration, including his chief of staff.

I remember the faces of the people with Down syndrome who had come to the Capitol so many times to lobby for the legislation. Lobbying for their lives, knowing that the majority of babies diagnosed with an extra chromosome are aborted. Each of these individuals had their own distinct beauty and talents—an irreplaceable creation on earth.

GOOD THINGS HAPPEN! [Slide 3]

Michelle is pregnant despite miscarriage and abortion. It turns out she was originally pregnant with twins, but only one was expelled. How the second baby managed to survive, even doctors can not explain!

'You will not believe us, but we have a heartbeat.' That was the **best feeling I ever had**," says Michelle. In the end, the baby Megan was born healthy and left the doctors and parents speechless."

II. Gift of Grace & Overflowing Joy

A. New Birth into a LIVING HOPE

1Pet. 1:3 **Blessed** be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!
[According to his **great mercy**, he has **caused us** to be **born again** to a **living hope** through the **resurrection** of Jesus Christ from the dead,] [vv. 3-5 baptismal confession]

THANKSGIVING! Creator and Incarnate Word
GREAT mercy LIVING HOPE
RESURRECTION

B. Joy beyond Words —

8 Though you have not seen him, **you love him**. Though you **do not now see him**, **you believe in him** and **rejoice* with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory**, 9 obtaining the **outcome** of your **faith**, the **salvation of your souls**. [Slide 4]

***jumping up and down** kind of **joy**

Joy OBTAINS the outcome of Faith — Liberation of our Souls

II. Courage and Sacrifice

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A. Get Ready — Preparation of Heart and Mind

- 13 Therefore, **preparing your minds for action**, and being **sober-minded**, **set your hope fully** on the **grace** that will be brought to you **at the revelation of Jesus Christ**;
- 1Pet. 3:15 but **in your hearts** honor Christ the Lord as holy, **always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you**; yet do it **with gentleness and respect**,
[Slide 5]

B. Remember Who You Are (and Whose You Are!)

1Pet. 2:4 As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, **5 you yourselves** like **living stones** are being built up as a **spiritual house**, to be a holy **priesthood**, to **offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable** to God through Jesus Christ.
[Slide 6]

Heb 13:15 Through him then let us **continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God**, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge (confessing, giving thanks to) his name. **16 Do not neglect to do good** and to **share** what you have, for **such sacrifices are pleasing** to God.

Rom 12:1I appeal to you ..., by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies as a living sacrifice**, holy and acceptable

1Pet. 2:9 But you are a **chosen** race (generation, people), a **royal** priesthood, a **holy** nation (Ex 9.6), a people **for his own possession** (Dt 7:6), that you may **proclaim the excellencies** of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
[Slide 7]

Why PROCLAIM the Excellencies? Gratitude! Sacrifice of Praise

Rom. 7:24 Wretched man that I am! **Who will deliver me** from this body of death?

25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

Life and Freedom are **gifts** bestowed by the gracious act of God to every **fallen, blind, dying, enslaved** sinner whom Jesus came to save!

Rom. 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. **2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.** **3 For God has done what the law,** weakened by the flesh, **could not do.** By **sending his own Son** in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, **4** in order that the righteous requirement of the **law might be fulfilled in us,** who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Rom. 8:9 **You,** however, **are not in the flesh but in the Spirit,** if in fact the **Spirit of God dwells in you.**

Rom. 8:31 **What then shall we say** to these things? If God is for us, **who can be against us?** **32** He who did not spare his own Son but **gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?** **33 Who shall bring any charge** against God's elect? It is God who justifies. **34 Who is to condemn?** Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. **35 Who shall separate us** from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

PRAYER FOR WISDOM THAT SHINES!

Dan 12.3 And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. **[Slide 8]**

Those who are wise shall shine
turn many to righteousness
like the stars forever and ever.

**May the God of hope fill you with all joy and
peace as you trust in him, so that you may
overflow with hope by the power of the Holy
Spirit!**