

Saturday 7th September



Be Courageous

In one of the churches where I minister we have been studying the book of Daniel, one of the Old Testament prophetic books, in our Bible study. For those who don't know the book well, Daniel is one of many Israelites who are taken in to exile in Babylon, then later with the Medes and the Persians.

One of the major themes in the book of Daniel is courage. Daniel bravely refuses to eat the rich food of the royal court; his friends refuse to bow to Nebuchadnezzar's golden statue and are thrown into a fiery furnace; and later Daniel refuses to pray to the king Darius rather than to God, and so is thrown into a lions' den.

Daniel and his friends showed great courage and faith in the challenges that they faced in a strange land. They held firm to their belief in God no matter what happened. It is an inspiration to us as Christians today, reminding us to be brave when sharing the good news, and to stand by our beliefs in what is often a difficult world for people of faith.

There are many hymns that remind us to be brave in our faith, such as 'Be bold, be strong, for the Lord your God is with you' by Morris Chapman. If you prefer a more traditional hymn, 'Courage brother, do not stumble' by Norman MacLeod reminds us to be brave even when things are difficult.

*Mysterious and powerful God,
how can we ever hope to stand in your presence?
How can we hope to understand the enormity of your power and majesty?
Yet you call us, whoever we are and wherever we are from.
To follow you takes more courage than we could possibly know.
We pray for the courage to face the situations we find ourselves in,
the courage to stand up for what is right,
the courage to truly be followers of you.
Walk with us Lord; help us to know you are with us, no matter what.
Amen*