

FOLLOWING THE CROWD

1Cor 15:33 - Gal 2:11-14

INTRODUCTION:

- A. As a child you may have been called names to get you to do what others are. Maybe called "chicken," "yellow," "coward," or "weakling."
- B. Those referred to in that way would very often refuse to dance, or go public swimming, drink, or smoke to be a part of the group and this name calling would be the result or they would be made fun of in some way.
- C. Peer pressure, then, as now, was and is very, very, strong.

DISCUSSION:

I. DON'T DO WHAT OTHERS DO, JUST TO BE DOING WHAT OTHERS DO!

- A. Tempting to fall for the Devil's lie: that if a person really has courage, he will do what others do, whether in school, or on the playground, or in an automobile, in a dark alley, or on the job, etc.
- B. Many a parent has pointed out to a son or daughter, it takes no courage to go with the crowd; however, to go against what others are doing, to refuse to do evil and choose to do good, does take real courage.
- C. "If everybody else is going to jump off the cliff, are you going to jump too?"
- D. Same principle involved when brethren try to get others to do things not authorized in Scripture
- E. Satan has devices, deceiving people by giving false labels, calling "...evil good and good evil..." Isa 5:20; 2Cor 2:11
- F. Satan's followers use ridicule, slurs and deception to cause child of God to violate his sacred trust Ex 23:2

II. ENCOURAGEMENT TO DO AND STAND FOR TRUTH COMES FROM GOD!

- A. Jehovah commanded Joshua, Be strong and of good courage Josh 1:6 Paul urges us to stand fast 1Cor 16:13
- B. Is the crowd going down the broad way to destruction, courageous? No Matt 7:13,14
- C. The person concerned that people will slurringly label him a coward or "anti" can read Lk 6:26; Matt 5:10-12
- D. Examples of those who demonstrated cowardice in their lives at times
 1. Peter when he denied the Lord Matt 26:69-75
 2. Demas when he left the Lord's work and returned to the world 2Tim 4:10
 3. The Corinthians who refused to discipline the adulterer 1Cor 5:1-13

4. Those at Pergamos who held the teaching of the Nicolaitans Rev 2:15

F. Those who bow to the fashion and compromises of the world, in word and/or deed are not courageous!

1. World's stand on dress, abortion, homosexuality, marriage - vs - living together, etc
2. Christian must be courageous and let their convictions be known
3. One way for us to do this is at the ballot box. Each one must decide for themselves what is in the best interest of Christians

III. IT TAKES COURAGE TO FOLLOW AFTER CHRIST

A. Cowards do not follow Christ, living lives of purity and uprightness

1. Joseph fled from adultery Gen 39:7-23 – lost position of authority and caused him to be imprisoned
2. Vashti refused to dress immodestly and dance before king and his court Est 1:9-12 - required her to defy the king and she was deposed as queen
3. Daniel refused to drink alcohol and eat defiled food Dan 1:8 - Defiance of king's command later in life, jeopardized his very life - cast into a den of lions
4. Apostles prayed for all boldness, being threatened with death Acts 5:29 - Paul stoned and left for dead Acts 14:19
5. Martyrs refused to be "afraid of them that kill the body" Matt 10:28 - Stephen stoned to death Acts 7:58-60

B. Christ is our example 1Cor 11:1; 1Pet 2:21

1. Was he a coward when He endured buffeting, beating, scourging, mockery, cursing, dying on the cross to redeem you and me?
2. He resisted Satan's temptations Matt 4:1-11

CONCLUSION:

- A. The penitentiaries, county and city jails, half-way houses, hospitals and premature graves are full of young people (and older folks) who could not resist temptations when the world called them a coward.
- B. Have the courage to say NO to the Devil and YES to the Lord!
- C. It takes courage, REAL, courage to stand when you are in the minority Matt 7:13,14
- D. Don't be destroyed by deception of your greatest enemy, Satan
- E. Be saved by your greatest friend, Jesus Christ, who died for you and prepared a place for your eternal habitation.