

judge a man by any solitary word or act, for if you do you will surely mistake him. Cowards are occasionally brave, and the bravest men are sometimes cowards.”

Knowing the weakness of our flesh and the ubiquitous pressures of the unbelieving culture, we must commit all the more to being courageous Christians. We need to boldly address the sinful state of the world and the eternal consequences its rebellion requires. As John MacArthur writes,

Christians are right to repudiate sin, and to declare without equivocation that sin is an offense to our holy God. That includes sins like abortion, homosexuality, sexual promiscuity, and any other sins that our corrupt culture says we must accept.

We need to remember that throughout Scripture, God’s people are called to act courageously.

- The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life; whom shall I dread? When evildoers came upon me to devour my flesh, my adversaries and my enemies, they stumbled and fell. Though a host encamp against me, my heart will not fear; though war arise against me, in spite of this I shall be confident. (Psalm 27:1-3)
- Then David said to his son Solomon, “Be strong and courageous, and act; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the Lord God, my God, is with you. He will not fail you nor forsake you until all the work for the service of the house of the Lord is finished.” (1 Chronicles 28:20)
- Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. (Ephesians 6:10-11)
- Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. (1 Corinthians 16:13)
- When I am afraid, I will put my trust in You. In God, whose word I praise, in God I have put my trust; I shall not be afraid. What can mere man do to me? (Psalm 56:3-4)
- Be strong and let your heart take courage, all you who hope in the Lord. (Psalm 31:24)

Conversely, to act cowardly is to walk in a manner that is wholly antithetical to the divine promise that “God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline” (2 Timothy 1:7). Ultimately, the key to being courageous Christians who do not conform to the world is summed up in the words of the Puritan William Gurnall: “We fear man so much because we fear God so little. One fear cures another . . . . When man’s terror scares you, turn your thoughts to meditate on the wrath of God.”

As followers of Jesus Christ—who, on behalf of unworthy sinners like you and me, courageously endured the shame of a humiliating death on a cross “for the joy set before Him” (Hebrews 12:2)—let us do likewise for the joy set before us (1 Peter 4:13).



## POPLAR POINTERS

Published by: Poplar Springs Baptist Church  
Post Office Box 124  
Ware Shoals, South Carolina 29692-0124  
Tel: (864) 861-2196  
Lucas Mann, Pastor  
Tel: (864) 909-7564

*Rooted in trust and hope in the Lord.  
Branching out in ministry and service in our community.  
– Jeremiah 17:7-8*

VOLUME LXVI

NUMBER 187

August 27, 2020



### *2020 Season of Prayer for State Missions and the Janie Chapman Offering September 13-20 State Goal: \$1,800,000*

#### **TAKE COURAGE By Darrel B. Harrison**

*God’s people must not collapse or compromise in the face of the fear and intimidation that dominate the world. This series is a timely reminder that cowardice is contrary to authentic Christian living, and that Christians should find courage and confidence in the truth of God’s Word.*

Scripture is clear that believers are divinely equipped by Christ to overcome the threats of this world (1 John 5:4–5). That means we don’t need to yield to the mounting pressure to conform to the world’s skewed values, sinful social norms, and ever-shifting morality. We don’t need to acquiesce to a world determined to sideline the church and silence the proclamation of the gospel.

At the same time, we must not make the mistake of thinking we’re incapable of caving in to such pressure. We need to remember that none of us is impervious to momentary compromise, and we must not be quick to judge others who stumble and fall. As Charles Spurgeon said, “Do not  
(continued on back)