

She IS CLOTHED WITH
strength
AND *dignity*; SHE
CAN LAUGH AT THE DAYS
TO COME.
PROVERBS 31:25





CHAPTER 5

She is Courageous

SCRIPTURE FOCUS: ESTHER 4

The first date I ever had with my husband? Total disaster.

He invited me to the lake—which sounded romantic in theory—but I knew right away this meant one thing: baring my glowing white legs in public. So, naturally, I reached for a can of spray tan. Problem solved, right? Not even close. Instead of a soft golden glow, I ended up with streaks so bad it looked like I hadn't bathed since the eighth grade. I was mortified. The only solution I could come up with was to keep my feet under water as long as humanly possible.

What I didn't realize then was how dangerous that water could be. Those rapids? They're no joke. Algae-covered rocks and rushing water make for a slippery combination. One wrong step and I was swept away—sliding, tumbling, flailing—trying to get a grip while the current pulled me under.

I honestly thought that was it. I panicked. People have died in that exact spot, and I knew that all too well.

But God had other plans. Right when I was sure I'd reached the end, I hit something solid. A rock—big enough to stop me in my tracks. And just like that, I threw my hand in the air. Michael reached down, grabbed hold of my arm, and pulled me out.

What could have ended in tragedy became a clear reminder of God's mercy. Because isn't that the way our God is? Just when you think you're going under, He places a Rock beneath you—Jesus, the One who steadies, the One who saves. And while you're still catching your breath, a hand reaches down to pick you back up.

He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the
mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and
gave me a firm place to stand.

— Psalm 40:2

SHE REACHES FOR GOD

That moment taught me something I've carried with me over the years: real courage doesn't come from having it all together. It's born in that sacred space between reaching for God, trusting His heart, and knowing He's never too far to save. It rises when you're face-down in the rapids, and you choose to reach for God's hand.

And, it doesn't have to come in loud, dramatic waves. Most of the time? Courage is quiet. It's steady. It looks like a heart that's trembling, but choosing to trust. It's standing in the middle of uncertainty and choosing to follow God's lead, even when fear whispers that it would be easier to stay still.

We tend to picture courage as something bold and fearless—but let's be honest. Most of the time, it's the opposite. It's obedience *in spite* of our fear.

And fear takes the wheel, you can feel it—can't you? We start shrinking back. Our thoughts race, our hearts get tangled in all the *what ifs*, and before

long, our faith starts to feel small. But Jesus reminds us, that worry doesn't add anything to our lives. Not a single hour. Not a single solution.



*Can any one of
you by worrying
add a single hour
to your life?
Matthew 6:27*

What strengthens us isn't getting control of everything—it's learning to let go. To lay it down. Because the power isn't in the plan... it's in the surrender.

Something starts to shift when we stop allowing fear to call the shots. When we stop making excuses for it like—*"That's just how I am,"* or *"This is too much for me"*—and start trusting God with the outcome instead, we see His power show up in ways we never expected.

SHE IS WILLING TO FOLLOW GOD'S CALL

Look at Gideon—he didn't feel brave. He saw himself as the least of the least. And Ananias? God asked him to go lay hands on a man who'd been persecuting believers. That wasn't a casual errand. That was risky obedience. But here's the truth: God's not asking us to be the most gifted, the most experienced, or the most confident. He's simply looking for someone who's willing to answer His call.

And sometimes, courage is a lot quieter than we think. It's not always going to battle or facing our worst fear.

Sometimes it shows up like this:

Choosing peace when stress is yelling that you're losing control.

Speaking truth with grace, even when you know it might be misunderstood.

Showing kindness when your heart is still feeling the sting.

Saying "yes" to God before you see the full picture.

It's willing to say:

I might get hurt, but I won't be crushed.

They might not accept it, but I'll try to make peace.

I might get rejected but I'm choosing love.

I could get shut down, but I'm going to try.

This might not be easy, but God's in control.

The verses below give us a beautiful picture of courage—what God asks of us, what He promises us, and how He steadies our hearts. Read each one and answer the question that follows.

Psalm 56:3-4

According to this passage, what should we do when fear rises in our hearts?

Isaiah 41:10

What three promises in this verse help you overcome fear?

Psalm 112:7

What does this verse say about fear and "bad news," and where does a steadfast heart come from?

Deuteronomy 31:8

What four assurances does this verse give when you're facing fear or uncertainty?



SHE IS CLOTHED IN STRENGTH AND DIGNITY

All throughout Scripture, God calls His people to be strong and courageous—not because we’ve got it all together or know how things will turn out, but because He walks with us. He’s the One who leads the way, opens doors, and softens hearts. And even when things don’t go the way we hoped, here’s what we can count on: our future is still in His hands. Every outcome still belongs to Him.

Proverbs 31:25 tells us:

She is clothed with strength and dignity;
she can laugh at the days to come.

— Proverbs 31:25

That verse gives us a glimpse into what’s fueling her courage. It doesn’t stem from herself—it’s a deep-rooted steadiness that God plants in her heart. And dignity? That’s the quiet confidence that flows out of that strength. It

shapes the way she shows up in her life, especially when things are uncertain. One keeps her steady; the other shapes her response.

This doesn't mean she never feels fear. She's human. We all have those moments. What it's telling us is that her trust in the Lord is so strong and so steady that fear doesn't get the final word. Her view of the future is shaped by her understanding of God.

She's trusting God with her children, her marriage, her health, her decisions—those places where fear likes to whisper the loudest. She remembers that the Lord is with her in the late-night worries, the unexpected phone calls, and the moments that push her past her comfort zone. Because He holds her life in His hands, she can face the future with a steadiness that doesn't come from herself, but from Him.

Fear often whispers through the "what ifs." What "what if" has been loud in your heart lately, and how might trusting God with the outcome bring peace?

That's why strength matters. Because the enemy? He loves to use our insecurities to weaponize our thoughts, undermine our faith, and draw us away from God's purpose. But when we're looking to God as the source of our strength, we don't just stand—we stand strong.

SHE KNOWS HER LIFE IS IN GOD'S HANDS

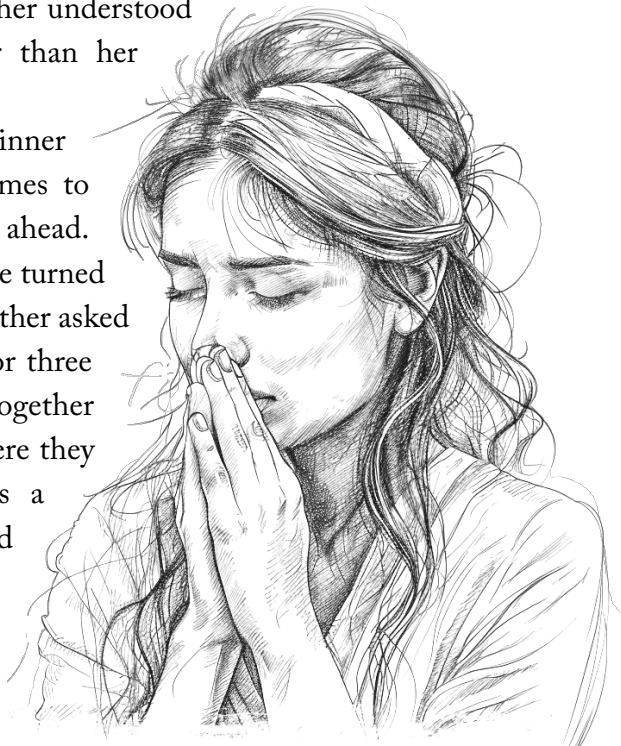
And this is where another woman steps into view—Esther. Her story shows us what courage looks like in motion. When she said, “If I perish, I perish.” She wasn't fearless—she was faithful. Her courage came from knowing that her life was in God's hands.

Esther had every reason to be afraid. The law was clear—anyone who approached the king without being summoned could be put to death unless he extended his golden scepter. She wasn't sure how the king would respond, and there were no guarantees that her courage would be rewarded.

But when Mordecai reminded her that perhaps she was in the palace “for such a time as this,” Esther understood that her calling was greater than her comfort.

And this is where that inner strength we talked about comes to the surface. She didn't rush ahead. Before taking a single step, she turned her heart toward the Lord. Esther asked her people to fast with her for three days—an act of seeking God together and asking Him to move where they could not. That decision is a powerful reminder to seek God first in everything we do.

But we don't always do that, do we? If you're anything like me, you might



SHE IS TRANSFORMED BY THE POWER OF PRAYER

Prayer might not change our circumstances right away, but it changes us in several ways, because:

1. It shifts our focus from fear to faith.
When we pray, we move our eyes off the problem and place them on the Lord. Philippians 4:6–7 reminds us that prayer guards our hearts and minds with God’s peace.
2. It quiets the noise inside us.
Prayer slows us down and helps us hear the Lord’s voice over the loudness of our worries. It settles our hearts and reminds us that God is near, steady, and in control.
3. It aligns our heart with God’s will.
Instead of pushing our own plans, prayer prepares us to walk in His. Jesus prayed, “Not my will, but yours be done”—and prayer helps us follow that same posture.
4. It strengthens our obedience.
Prayer helps us walk in faith even when the next step feels uncertain. It’s in those quiet moments with the Lord that our hearts become willing, our fears lose their grip, and obedience becomes a response of trust rather than pressure.
5. It produces spiritual fruit.
When we pray, the Holy Spirit works in us—building patience, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22–23).
6. It steadies our emotions.
Prayer settles anxious thoughts and gives us clarity that doesn’t come from within ourselves. It replaces panic with peace.
7. It reminds us that we’re not alone.
Prayer draws us near to God, and as James 4:8 tells us, He draws near to us. That nearness changes how we walk through whatever comes.

I didn't expect that list to be as long as it is, but the more I thought about the ways prayer changes us, the more I saw the dynamic power behind it. We need that reminder more often—that we're not facing our fear alone.

That's what Esther was holding onto. She knew that prayer was not only her greatest weapon—it was also her greatest defense. When she stepped into the king's court, she wasn't standing alone. God went before her, prepared the king's heart, and turned what could have been her destruction into deliverance for an entire nation.

Her courage teaches us that bold faith is born in quiet surrender. Before we act, we pray. Before we speak, we listen. And before we step out, we remember Who goes before us, and Who stands beside us.

Do not be anxious about anything, but
in every situation,
by prayer and petition, with
thanksgiving, present your
requests to God.

— Philipians 4:6

That's the strength that fuels our courage.
That's the heart of a P31 Woman.



The P31 Challenge

Describe a time when you struggled with feelings of worry and fear. What can you glean from this chapter to challenge those thoughts?



This week, practice quiet courage.

When fear nudges you to stay silent, stay still, or stay safe, pause and pray first. Then take one small step of obedience—make the call, speak the truth with grace, choose peace, or say yes to what God is asking. Let your courage be rooted not in confidence, but in trust.