

What Do We Fear?

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Some of my favorite movies and stories are the ones where the good guys have a major disadvantage and the bad guys are extremely powerful that have the ability to wipe out the heroes easily. And as usual with these stories, the heroes go up against incredible odds and emerge victorious. But what is very interesting is the attitude that the heroes have in the stories. They have the chance to run away, to live today and fight tomorrow, but they stand strong and fight for what they believe in. This makes you look at our own world and society today. How many people do you know that believe in something so much that they would be willing to go straight into the grips of death? Too many times the media and "top minds" will tell us that nothing is really worth dying for. Most people today believe that as long as they save themselves then everything is ok. I associate this courage with the first century Christians. These people were persecuted for what they believe in. The Christians were highly outnumbered with insurmountable odds, as they had to go up against the most powerful nation the world had ever known. But they did not back down, even if it meant days of torture, they went straight into the jaws of death because of what they believed in. They believed that Christ is the Son of God and followed His word all the way to the Roman executioner. It was the peace of God that was instilled in their hearts that gave them courage because they knew a greater reward awaited them. Do we share that same courage? Many times we have a strong sense of fear in actively going against someone or standing up for what we believe in. Deuteronomy 31:6 tells us, "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you." Sometimes we have to ask ourselves, what do we have to fear? We shouldn't have the strong fear of death that most people today have because we know that the greatest reward can come from it. If God is for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31) Fortunately, today we are not persecuted in our country for our beliefs. But it would seem that we are given a false sense of security, we don't have to see our friends dying for Jesus, and we don't live in fear every day. We become relaxed and feel we have all the time in the world and unfortunately our own arrogance takes hold of us. We come to the belief that we can just sit at home and go to church two times a week. Our faith should be an active faith in favorable situations and even in the unfavorable ones. So, let's look back at the courage that the apostles had, the courage of the first century Christians and ultimately imitate the courage that Christ had for all of us.