

With your great Captain at your side, and your eye of faith on Him all the time, how could you doubt? What though difficulties, many and great, frown you in the face? They are nothing to Him—let them be nothing to you.

“Laugh at impossibilities,  
And cry, ‘They shall be done.’”

“Have the faith of God,” said the Master to His Church for all ages. Why not? Why should we have less faith in Him than He has in Himself? Howbeit, such faith cometh not but by prayer. And it is in vain that we go to battle until we get it.

2. Then “add to your faith virtue,” and the thing that God calls “virtue” is courage. But mark the order. The courage must follow the faith. It is impossible that it should go before. When faith has had its eyes anointed the second time, so it can see things as they are, how easy to add courage to it! When a man gets clear into the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, courage becomes as natural as his breath. Moses can now face the very king he fled from forty years ago, and, with a smile, demand the freedom of three millions of slaves. What does he care for Pharaoh’s wrath while he sees the invisible God at his side? What does Elisha care, if the hosts of Syria have surrounded him, so long as he sees the mountain covered with the horses and chariots of the Lord? Three times in one half chapter did the Lord charge Joshua: “Be strong and very courageous.” Our wants are not certainly less than his, neither will our ordeals be less trying; but the courage we need is not merely or mainly that which can face a frowning foe. A harder courage than this is the kind we need: that which nothing can discourage, which no amount of opposition can intimidate, which no array of difficulties can dishearten, which no delay in the expected triumph can shake; that which can grow bolder as the case becomes more forlorn, which can catch hope from despair, and snatch victory out of defeat. The one crying need of this generation is a class of men and women who are absolutely incapable of discouragement.

The “shibboleth” that will be used to master the final army, to crush the gates of hell, will be: “Can you be discouraged?” The man that can shall be dismissed to the rear. The rear is his place in all ages. Howbeit, this kind of courage is impossible, save to the faith described above. It is easy to that.

3. One thing more is indispensable in pressing the battle of the Lord—an undying perseverance. “Smite,” said the prophet to the king of Israel, as he was sorely pressed by his enemies. The king smote the ground thrice with the bundle of arrows. But the man of God was grieved because he stayed his hand. “If thou hadst continued to smite, then God had utterly destroyed thine enemies.” We are all descendants of the fitful king of Israel. God wants men who never stay their hand. As long as they continue to smite, He continues to conquer. Saul spared the enemies of the Lord, whom he was sent to destroy, and he spared himself out of a kingdom and into a grave. Let us press the battle—press it all along the line. The kingdom is retarded all over the earth, because we do not press the battle. The Church is languishing, and millions are lost, because we lack the “push” that is needed to save the world. If Methodism had perpetuated the faith, the courage, and the perseverance of its founders, it had been a mightier giant than it is to-day. There is no day in the year, no year in the century, and no century in the cycle, when the battle ought to lull. If we have a victory, press it. If we have no victory, win it. If we want to build up the Church, press the battle. If we want to establish young converts, press the battle. If we want to edify believers and perfect the saints, press the battle. Our only strength is in an everlasting advance—an advance on all lines, and an advance in all things. There is absolutely nothing that shall be able to stand before us if we only press onward. “Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward.”—*Christian Standard*.

When a man has no desire but to speak plain truth, he may say a great deal in a very narrow space.—*Steele*.