

Courageous and Dangerous Christians

By Rev. Dean Nadasdy

Opening: Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your study of the Word.

1. Dangerously Safe

Those who attended the 2007 LWML Convention in Sioux Falls heard the story of Pastor Erwin McManus, whose young son, Aaron, had come back from church camp terrified of demons. At bedtime, he asked his father to pray that he would be safe. After some thought, McManus said, “Aaron, I will not pray for you to be safe. I will pray that God will make you dangerous, so dangerous that demons will flee when you enter the room.” And Aaron replied, “All right. But pray I would be really, really dangerous, Daddy.” [From a sermon by Erwin McManus, “Seizing Your Divine Moment,” *Preaching Today*, No. 252]

It is not one or the other in the Christian life — being safe or being dangerous; it’s both. This is especially true in the spiritual warfare, where too often we choose our safety over our being a genuine threat to Satan and his demons.

2. The War Deferred

Around us a spiritual war rages — the forces of God and the forces of Satan (**Ephesians 6:12**). The war has been engaged since Satan’s fall from heaven (**Luke 10:18; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 12:7–12**). It will continue until Jesus returns in glory and sends Satan and his hoard of demons to eternal punishment (**Revelation 20:10**).

Although the Scriptures teach that the war is also ours to fight (**Ephesians 6:11**), we often take the role of non-combatants, seeking safety and protection. We let others do the fighting for us. In one sense, it’s no wonder — God has given us some great assurances that when threatened by evil we will be protected.

Look up the three Scripture passages below, paraphrasing each passage as if God is making you a promise. What does God promise in each of these passages?

Psalms 27:5–6 • Psalm 91:9–16 • 1 John 5:18

Our prayers are often prayers for safety when we consider spiritual warfare. Jesus Himself told His disciples, “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation” (**Mark 14:38**). Luther’s Morning and Evening Prayers, cherished by Christians for centuries, conclude with the petition, “Let Your holy

angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me.”

Safety is a promise and a prayer for sure, but in spiritual warfare it cannot be our only approach.

Reflection Point: In spiritual warfare, to what extent have I sought safety over confrontation, protection over engagement?

Truth Point: In spiritual warfare God calls us to both confidence in His protection and courage in confronting evil.

3. Good Reasons to be Courageous, Even Dangerous

There is probably good reason for fear where the devil is concerned. Read **Matthew 10:28** and **1 Peter 5:8**. Yet at the same time, the Bible gives us a strong confidence when facing off with this prowling lion. See **James 4:7**.

Saying that Christians can be courageous, even dangerous in the face of evil, is not just empty bravado. Such a bold claim is based on the true-blue assurances of God in the Scriptures. We are dangerous to Satan, and we can be courageous in our battles with evil because of what God provides in His grace.

Look at these passages and the reason each offers for confidence and courage in spiritual warfare:

Matthew 4:1–11 — Jesus defeated Satan with the Word of God when He was tempted in the desert; and so can we.

Mark 6:13 — Jesus’ disciples drove out many demons in their ministry.

John 8:44; James 1:13–15 — We know the enemy and his tactics, particularly lies and deception.

1 Corinthians 10:13 — God is faithful is providing all that we need to overcome temptation.

Ephesians 6:10–18 — God has provided powerful armor and weaponry for our spiritual battles, the foremost of which is the offensive weapon of the Word.

Colossians 2:13–15; Hebrews 2:14 — In His victory on the cross, Jesus not only won forgiveness for our sins



but also defeated and disarmed Satan and His forces. Satan, therefore, is a loser.

Revelation 20:10 — Satan’s ultimate defeat and punishment are sealed.

Reflection Point: Which of the reasons for courage above is most significant for me right now?

Truth Point: By the grace of God, I have what it takes to be dangerous in spiritual warfare.

4. Your Dangerous Christian Quotient

Just how dangerous are you in spiritual warfare? If “1” is hardly at all and “10” is always, rate your readiness (from 1 to 10) for spiritual battle on each item below:

____ I take Satan seriously as an enemy of my faith (**1 Thesalonians 3:5**).

____ I have committed Scripture passages to memory for use against the devil in times of temptation (**Psalm 119:11**).

____ I use the gift of discernment to cut through what is of God and what is of Satan, what is good and what is evil (**1 Corinthians 12:10** and **1 John 4:1**).

____ I keep good company, surrounding myself with strong Christians (**Psalm 1**).

____ I have confidence in God’s promises (**Psalm 119:66**).

____ I am sure that Christ is at work in my life, and that gives me courage (**Philippians 1:20; 4:13**).

____ My courage is upheld in prayer — my own prayers and those of others. (**Ephesians 6:19–20**).

5. For Reflection or Conversation

When have I especially struggled with temptation?

Who can I count on to be in my “platoon” of dangerous Christians?

What Scripture passage in this Bible study do I cherish so much that I want to memorize it?

What evils in the world today especially call for courageous witness?

Closing: Pray for a more courageous faith and a more courageous church.

Dean Nadasdy is Senior Pastor of Woodbury Lutheran Church, Woodbury, Minnesota, and serves as 4th Vice President of the LCMS.



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