

Chapter 4: Fortitude to Live the Truth

With God's help, we can overcome fear and pursue what is good.

Chapter Summary

The cardinal moral virtues are the hinges to the virtuous life and to the other moral virtues. If we are going to be virtuous, we must have the cardinal virtues. Fortitude is one of these cardinal virtues. Fortitude strengthens us to overcome fear and to pursue what is good even if it is difficult. Those who are courageous do not fear death; they are confident in God's promises. There are three other virtues that are parts of fortitude. Perseverance is the virtue that enables us to act for what is good despite lasting hardships. Patience is the virtue that enables us to endure hardships calmly and peacefully. Finally, magnanimity is the virtue by which we can confidently do great and noble things for God and others.



Looking to Scripture for Fortitude

We all experience fear, and sometimes we allow it to cause us to give up pursuing what is good. Christ taught us that to live as His disciples requires us to live with fortitude:

From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me; for you are not on the side of God, but of men.” Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” (Matthew 16:21–25)

As a family, take time to reflect on these questions:

1. What does Jesus say we will gain if we face the fear of our crosses?
2. When have you rejected a cross out of fear, like Peter, instead of following Jesus' example of fortitude?
3. How can you as a family encourage one another to practice fortitude?

Family prayer tip: Pray the Stations of the Cross as a family and reflect on Christ's example of fortitude.

For more family faith formation resources, go to the parent portal.