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**THE VIRTUES: THE SEVEN HABITS OF CHAMPIONS –  
SHOW #5: FORTITUDE  
BY: DR. MARCELLINO D'AMBROSIO**

**I. Intro**

- A. Peter Kreeft, Back to Virtue. Society was good at the hard virtues a century ago. Now we are good at the soft ones.
- B. Epidemic of fear and weakness. We are overly tolerant of evil
- C. Fortitude & courage synonyms. Deal with 2 diff emotions Fear & Anger
- D. Definition of Fortitude: ***willingness to suffer personal injury, even death, for the sake of truth and justice.*** The virtue that enables us to take risks. Virtue of irascible (fear & anger) passions. Preserves the good. Clears the way for doing it. (CCC 1808)

**II. Fear**

- A. We are vulnerable, fragile, creatures. We can use life & health. Given to animals & us. Impulse to cause us to flee from danger, death, hurt.
- B. But we often fear the wrong thing. Peer pressure causes us to do dangerous things: drunkenness, premarital sex, drugs. Fear disapproval of friends more than
- C. Prudence helps you know if a fear is rational, whether to flee when fear
- D. Fear of failure: ridicule does not kill you. Genuine fear: Neglecting a serious responsibility. Failure to take initiative.
- E. Fortitude is the strength that makes fear subordinate to what is right & true. Keeps you from acquiescing, giving in to, cooperating with evil

**III. Anger**

- A. God's wrath:
- B. Given to us to provide us with the energy to go after and attack evil and injustice.
- C. Love the sinner and hate the sin. Anger gives you the energy to go after the sinner and restrain him from doing harm.
- D. Duty to attack evil: In Old Testament. God gets angry when people fail to go after the enemy, dislodging the Canaanites. David's response to Goliath a good example of righteous anger and aggressive fortitude.
- E. Anger is the proper response to injustice.

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#### IV. **Fortitude**

- A. Passive: Keeps us from running away from a confrontation
- B. Attack: use anger right to go after evil and attack it.
- C. Fortitude is not foolhardy and wasteful: mean between cowardice and rash, foolhardy daring
- D. Thomas More as example of passive fortitude & the balance involved
  - a. Balance: prudence
  - b. Fool throws self against something that is evil with no chance of victory. Waste.
  - c. Coward: shrinks from duty due to fear.
  - d. Friend & Chancellor under Henry VIII. Did not rant & rave against the king. Family. Did not need to speak. Strong signal to those in Europe. No legal grounds. Preserve his life while protesting.
  - e. Thomas would not compromise with evil.
  - f. Caving in to the king and lying would injure his own integrity, greater injury than the king could inflict upon him.
  - g. Fortitude understands that the loss of life is not the greatest tragedy, but rather the loss of one's soul

#### V. **Doing the Good involves injury and hardship: Annexed Virtues** of fortitude

##### A. **Patience**

- a. Be careful what you
- b. Dealing with hardships with serenity and cheerfulness
- c. Children a gift

##### B. **Perseverance**

- a. Go out start doing something. Didn't know it was going to be so hard.
- b. Sticking with your call as multiple obstacles crop up
- c. Thomas Edison: 10,000 failures. Turns misfortune into a learning experience.
- d. Maintains vision

#### VI. **Dimensions of Fortitude**

- A. Lack of Fortitude one of the biggest problems in the church
- B. Bishops fearful of confronting priests; priests of people, people of others
- C. Attack: not necessarily violent Aggressive
- D. Catholics are not pacifists. Couldn't have a police force. Sniper in Wash DC: must be stopped, even if it takes deadly force. Just war theory.
- E. Only the state can do this: not take justice into ones own hands
- F. Taking initiative to confront and restrain evil
- G. Evil: the lack of a good that ought to be there:
  - a. Example of loss of 18-35 yrs olds.
  - b. Lack of evangelization
- H. Poverty: an objective evil
- I. Sickness & disease
- J. In Acts: boldness is one of the most common words
- K. Gift of the Spirit of Fortitude. Peter proves that fearful people can change!

VII. **4 Cardinal Virtues**

- A. When you have all 4, you are a leader
- B. All of us are called to be leaders.
- C. Most are called to be parents; parents must be leaders; therefore most are called to rise to leadership and must acquire the character necessary
- D. Sheep who become Shepherds
- E. Can't happen without grace

VIII. **Discussion Questions**

- A. Name some irrational fears that paralyze people. How about you?
- B. Name some things we really should fear.
- C. Which annexed virtue under fortitude do you need most? Patience or Perseverance?
- D. Discuss examples of fortitude in Scripture.

This outline appears in the [Virtues & Christian Character](#), [Christian Lifestyle](#) and [Prayer & Spirituality](#) sections of [The Crossroads Initiative Library](#).

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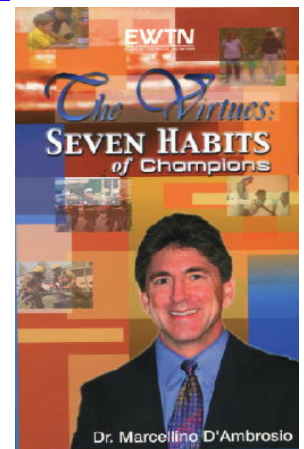
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