

**No. 11 Courage Weakens Versus Courage Strengtheners (Symposium)
—Worldly Wisdom Versus Personal Study**

[PLEASE NOTE: This symposium discusses Psalm 27. Discuss only the verse that is included in your outline. The talks include video dramatizations that feature the same family. In each talk, a member of the family is confronted with a challenge that tests his or her courage. This talk contains two videos. The first video presents the challenge; the second video demonstrates how the challenge can be overcome]

HOW WORLDLY WISDOM WEAKENS COURAGE (5 min.)

As you watch the following dramatization, notice how the older of Leah's two children, Taysha, is confronted with a challenging situation at her workplace

[Video crew begins two-minute video]

If you were in Taysha's situation, what would you do?

Would you boldly identify yourself as a Witness, even though others might criticize you?

Many ridicule the Bible and put their confidence in the world's wisdom

The world preaches acceptance of immoral behavior; the Bible tells us to "abhor what is wicked" (Ro 12:9)

Human reasoning says to follow your heart; the Bible cautions that the heart is treacherous (Jer 17:9)

Worldly wisdom says that we should love ourselves first; the Bible teaches that we should love Jehovah first

The world teaches that life evolved; the Bible teaches that life was created

At times, worldly philosophy may seem compelling, but it does not provide trustworthy guidance (Mt 11:19)

Allowing ourselves to be influenced by the world's wisdom can weaken our confidence in God's Word and our courage to defend it

Adopting worldly wisdom can weaken our determination to be different from Satan's world and cause us to lose sight of the urgency of the preaching work (Ro 12:2)

HOW PERSONAL STUDY STRENGTHENS COURAGE (2 min.)

David knew that Jehovah's Word provided the best instruction, which he eagerly sought [Read Psalm 27:11] (w02 6/15 12-13 ¶5)

The Scriptures contain positive examples of those who had godly courage and warning examples of those who lacked it

Personal study strengthens us to take a courageous stand when confronted with pressure to compromise our faith

In the following dramatization, note how personal study helps Taysha to respond to her coworkers

VIDEO (2 min.)

WHAT YOU CAN DO (4 min.)

Did you notice in the video how personal study helped Taysha develop courage?

How can we similarly build courage? By diligent study of God's Word! (2Ti 3:14-17)

Choose personal study projects that relate to your circumstances in life and the challenges you face

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For example, if you are in school and feel intimidated by the subject of evolution, do personal study to strengthen your conviction in the reasonableness of the Bible's creation account

Schedule regular times for personal study

Start with shorter sessions, and gradually increase the duration
Take time to meditate; do not rush through your study material, but reason on it and discern why godly wisdom is superior to worldly wisdom

[Share additional practical suggestions from the February 2012 *Awake!* pages 19-20]

When you read about servants of God who displayed courage, put yourself in their place

Consider how you can imitate their faith when facing trials

[Discuss how a person might benefit from the example of Michiko, whose experience is related in the March 15, 2015, *Watchtower*, page 31, paragraph 5]

When you reject the world's wisdom and instead engage in meaningful personal study, you will strengthen your courage

Brother _____ will consider the last part of this symposium, "Courage Weakens Versus Courage Strengthens—Doubt Versus Faith"

TO BE COVERED IN 13 MINUTES

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