



Thursday, February 27, 2020

The Purpose of Practice

by Scott Stoner

Practice makes progress.

—Anonymous

You will notice that the title of this Lenten devotional is, “Practicing Courage with All Your Heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind.” It is worth noting that the focus is on “practicing courage.” We did not title the devotional, “Learning About Courage” or, “Readings About Courage,” although we certainly will be engaging in learning and reading together.

We focus on *practicing* because our desire is for each of us to strengthen our ability to act with courage, especially when we find ourselves in the midst of challenging circumstances. For example, in yesterday’s reflection, Jan Kwiatkowski wrote about her work as a hospice chaplain. In that work, she encountered patients and their loved ones who were facing enormous spiritual, emotional, and physical challenges. What moved her was not how often the people she met talked about courage, but how often they actually practiced it.

We grow in our ability to do something when we practice it. The truth is not that “practice makes perfect,” but rather that “practice makes progress.” Life is always presenting us with more than enough challenges. Our hope for the journey through this season of Lent is that we may see these challenges as opportunities to practice courage and, in the process, to grow stronger, both emotionally and spiritually.

Making It Personal: Have you ever had the experience of growing in your ability to do something through practice? Can you think of a time when, as you were facing some hardship, you discovered a level of courage that you had not previously known? Is there a particular challenge you are facing now that is presenting you with a chance to practice additional courage?
