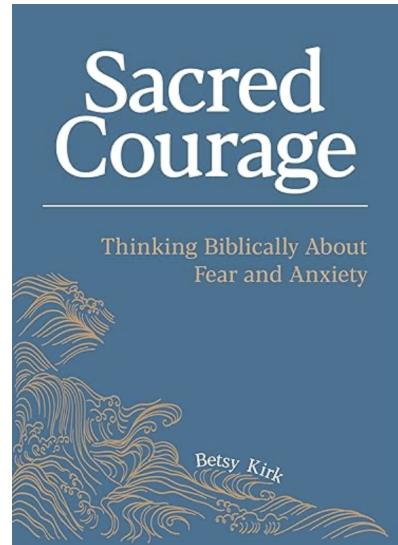


Kirk, Betsy. *Sacred Courage: Thinking Biblically About Fear and Anxiety.* Littleton, CO: William Carey Publishing, 2025.

Reviewed by Adaline Parker, IMB Personnel, Asia Pacific Rim

In many Christian circles, fear is often treated as a weakness to be conquered—or worse, a temptation to be ignored lest it lead us into sin. Yet in *Sacred Courage*, Betsy Kirk offers a refreshingly honest and profoundly hopeful alternative: not a denial of fear, but a transformation of it.

Drawing from her experiences as a missionary, Kirk weaves Scripture, story, and stunning prose to offer a deeply personal and artistic exploration of fear in the light of the sacred courage it calls forth. She affirms fear as a natural response to living in a broken, sin-stained world, yet she does not leave us there. Instead, she gently leads readers to see fear as an invitation: a call to surrender the fears that bind us and to step forward in obedient, Spirit-empowered courage. Alongside this, she invites us to rediscover a holy, life-giving fear of the Lord—the One who is both our refuge and our strength. Kirk reminds us that our heavenly Father is not repelled by our fear but receives it with gentleness, gathering us close in times of need. In this surrender, a profound freedom awaits: the freedom to live as we were created to—grounded not in self-reliance but in holy reverence and trust. This journey—of releasing what weighs us down and embracing the fear that sets us free—is the heart of this beautiful, transformative book.



Kirk's vulnerability and spiritual insight create a safe, reflective space for readers to examine their own fears. With wisdom and grace, she calls readers not to flee or suppress their fear, but to face it—head-on and heart-open—because of the Cross. Through Christ's finished work, she reminds us, we are already victorious. Our courage, then, is not rooted in self-confidence but in the faithful presence of the One who goes before us and fights beside us.

What sets this book apart is its rare combination of theological richness, lyrical elegance, and deeply grounded practicality. Kirk skillfully bridges the gap between the abstract and the everyday, bringing concepts often confined to metaphor or academic discussion into tangible, lived experience. Each chapter pairs poetic insight with real-world application, guiding readers to not only reflect but also respond. With thoughtfully designed discussion questions and accessible wisdom, this book is a valuable tool for personal devotion, small group study, and church-wide discipleship. Missionaries, ministers, and laypeople alike will find it a profound and practical companion on the journey toward sacred courage.

In *Sacred Courage*, Kirk has given followers of Christ a rare gift: a call to courage that neither shames our fears nor glorifies our strength but magnifies the One in whom true courage is found.