

# Spirit-Infused Ways to Face Your Most Daunting Challenges

Recently, my little grandson Cayden (2) was climbing up his slide, chanting exuberantly, complete with his pacifier in his mouth, “Take that wall!”

Clearly, Cayden loves *American Ninja Warriors*. He and his brothers and cousins all love to watch the series together. On the show, athletes take on a timed competition where they make their way through a challenging obstacle course. While the exact course may change season to season, it always culminates in a massive wall that the athletes have to climb in order to win. As they try to climb the wall, the fans all chant and scream, “Take that wall!”

I gotta admit, I love *American Ninja Warriors*, and I especially love watching it with my aspiring little ninjas! It reminds me of the Psalmist’s words, “For by You I can run through a troop, and by my God I can leap a wall” (Ps. 8:29). I imagine the scene in heaven. According to Hebrews 12:1-2, we are surrounded by a great crowd. Sometimes life’s challenges feel overwhelming, yet there on the sidelines are those who have gone before us: Abraham, Moses, Daniel, Esther, Mary and Martha, and Jesus Himself—Almighty God! As we try to navigate the obstacle course of life and finish well, they chant and cheer, “Take that wall!”

Friend, sometimes life is going to feel challenging. No kidding, right? But here’s the thing: don’t shrink back! You’ve got a whole crowd and *Jesus Himself* cheering for you!

**The next time you feel afraid of a new challenge, try these suggestions:**

**Rehearse Christ’s promises rather than your problems.** Your self-talk is huge in influencing your actions. Instead of

rehearsing the worst that could happen, turn your focus on the promises of God. Speak those promises over your problems. Repeat them over in your head until you begin to feel faith rising. He promises you that nothing you face is greater than His ability (Luke 18:27). He promises that by faith you can move mountains (Matt. 21:21).

**Listen for Christ's voice rather than your own self-doubt.** I'm convinced that no one really has to speak negative messages into our minds because we are often our own worst enemy. Satan uses self-doubt to convince us that God can't use us, or that we're too young or too old, or that we can't overcome that addiction, or that we're unlovable, or that we can't be forgiven—we're too far gone. Hey friend, those are lies! Don't give them the time of day. Listen to the voice of the Spirit who quietly speaks to your mind, "You are chosen, holy, dearly loved, appointed and anointed!" (Col. 3:12, John 15:16, 1 John 2:27). You are here *on purpose* and *for a purpose*. Live confidently on behalf of Jesus.

**Take a risk rather than retreating from your challenge.** The temptation when you face a challenge is to retreat rather than advance. Here's the thing: if you retreat, you'll never know what might have been had you taken the challenge. So what if you don't succeed? Give it a shot. You can always learn from your mistakes and try again! Remember, as you're moving forward, Jesus Himself stands at the finish line, cheering loudly, "Take that wall!" {eoa}

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