

The Best Things Happen to Those Who Decide to Try

So many people, including myself, regularly come to places in our lives where we haven't been before. And when you're inexperienced in an area, your natural tendency is to move back into the familiar. Fear always comes against us when we face new things. But if you think about it, everything you're doing right now is something that at one time you had never done before.

I often think of Joshua, a man who was given a huge task by God—one I'm sure he didn't feel ready for. Can you imagine how he felt when Moses died and God told him that he was going to take over and lead Israel into the Promised Land? Fortunately, God knew Joshua was up to the task. In Joshua 1:6, the Lord commanded him: Be strong (confident) and of good courage, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

That day, Joshua had a choice. He could step out in faith and watch the Lord do the impossible through him...or he could stay in his "safety zone" and never find out. Instead of being afraid of new things, you and I ought to be excited about the new challenges and opportunities that God brings into our lives. Even when everybody else tells us it's impossible, if we will step out in faith like Joshua and follow God, He will give us the grace to go forward.

I'll never forget the day (in the late 1970s) when God first showed me His plans for my future as a teacher of the Word. I was making my bed when He spoke to my heart and said, "Joyce, you are going to preach my Word all around the world and have a large teaching ministry."

Now, at the time, this seemed impossible to me. I was a

housewife from Fenton, Missouri who wasn't teaching anybody. I decided to share what God spoke to me with some of my friends. To put it mildly, they were not very encouraging. One friend even told me, "Joyce, we've been thinking about what you said, and we just don't think that's possible with your personality." However, over the years, God continued to lead me, step by step.

For five years I taught a weekly Bible study at my home. Then the Lord directed me to quit my full-time job and devote myself completely to studying His Word and preparing for ministry. After going through a season when I felt like God wasn't doing anything at all, I was asked to be an associate pastor at our church. This is where my weekly women's meetings began. Then, five years later, in 1985, the Lord called my husband, Dave, and me to begin our own ministry.

All along the way, I faced many obstacles. I battled the fear of failure, the fear of not having enough money, and the fear of what others thought. But it always came down to the same question: Am I going to do what God has put in my heart to do? I've certainly made my share of mistakes over the years. But through all of this, I learned a valuable lesson: When we step out in obedience to God while we feel afraid, then that releases the grace (or power) of God to do what needs to be done.

It is unbelievable what God can do if you'll fight your way through all the opposition that comes against you and say, "If God says I can, I can." It's important to remember that when the Lord calls us to do something, He also gives us the motivation and energy to press on through each challenge that comes. Maybe you're thinking, Yeah, I've missed a lot in my life because I was afraid to step out or fearful of what others might think. You know what? I believe God has you reading this for a reason!

You can't change the past, but you can begin today to follow

your heart and step into the things God has for your life. Sure, there will be obstacles, and sometimes you will make mistakes. But you must be true to what God's calling you to do if you want to be happy. Friend, I encourage you to find God's destiny for your life.

Find what's going to fulfill you and all you're meant to be. Then choose to be bold enough to step out into an amazing, memorable, life-changing journey. When you step out into the unknown to do what you believe is God's will, He may not give you an exact blueprint to work with, but He will guide you step-by-step all along the way.

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