

Why God Wants You to Take Risks With Your Faith

Throughout my years in ministry, I've discovered that living by faith requires us to take risks, because God's plans for us are always bigger than what we could ever do on our own. I love Ephesians 3:20 (NIV), which says that God "is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us."

The bottom line is anybody who is not willing to risk anything will never do much in this world. I know this is true from personal experience.

When God put it in my heart to start teaching a home Bible study, I had a full-time job and made good money, so we didn't have any financial pressure. But I didn't know the Bible very well and needed more time to study. I couldn't do that with a full-time job and three children, and I knew God was speaking to my heart to quit my job.

Now, I'm a responsible person, and that didn't make any sense to me, because our bills would exceed our income if I didn't work. So, I bargained with God and quit my full-time job but got a part-time job.

It's like I was telling God, "I don't want to do that, but how about I do this? I'm still obeying You, but I've got a back-up plan." But God didn't want part-time obedience! I had to let go of my back-up plan and learn to trust Him completely.

Well, I got fired from my part-time job. I was a good worker, and yet I couldn't do anything right at that job. It became obvious that God wanted me to totally trust Him and stay home full-time.

At that time, we were short \$40 a month to pay our bills. It

wasn't a huge sum of money, but it meant we needed to believe God for a miracle every single month to meet our needs. And I had to take a step of faith to do that.

You know, sometimes we think when we take a big step of faith, God is just going to shower us with blessings right away. It's easy to have the attitude, "Look at this sacrifice I made today. I can't wait to see what God is going to do for me tomorrow!"

But for six years, we had to trust God to provide for our most basic needs. I found a journal where I had written a prayer list to God, asking for 12 new wash rags and a new skillet. I can't even tell you how excited I got when the doorbell rang one day and a woman I didn't really know was there and she said, "I hope you don't think I'm crazy, but I felt like God told me to bring you 12 new wash rags."

When you're learning to trust God, and He does something for you—even if it's a tiny thing—that's what prepares you to believe for bigger things later on in your life.

I didn't know then why I had to go through all those hard things, but I know now. In the ministry we have today, we need a lot more than \$40 a month to pay the bills. And God is faithful to provide everything we need! Our bills are paid on time and we aren't in debt.

I don't think that anybody will ever do anything of any magnitude without going through some tests. If you're going to live by faith, it means you'll have to take step one before you know what step two is. And you won't have everything figured out before you move forward, doing what you can do to follow God's plan for your life.

The amazing thing is that you get so close to God when all you have to depend on is Him. And that's when life is really adventurous and exciting!

I want to encourage you today to refuse to settle for a life that doesn't fulfill God's plans for you. Don't let the devil discourage you with his lies, telling you that you can't do it or you're not good enough for God to use you.

It's so important for you to see yourself the way God sees you, because what you believe about yourself is much more important than what anybody else believes about you. When you really know He loves you, then you can boldly approach God's throne of grace with confidence, knowing Jesus will give you grace to help you in your time of need (Hebrews 4:16).

The truth is God loves you and Jesus gave His life for you so you can be filled with His love, joy and faith that will take you places you never thought you could go. Get up every day determined to follow God's leading, wherever He takes you. Step out in faith and watch Him do great things through you!

*For more on this topic, order Joyce's six-CD series **Discover Your Adventure**. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, Enjoying Everyday Life, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting .*

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