

How to Confront—and Defeat—Your Fears

Wrestling with fear is normal, but God wants you to push past it by listening to Him

Do you ever feel fear? We all do at one time or another. And that feeling is never going to go away permanently. The Bible says to fear not, but this doesn't mean you should never feel scared. It means when you do feel fear, keep going forward and do what you're supposed to do. Or as I like to say, do it afraid.

Confront Your Fears

It was a great revelation to me when I realized I couldn't control the feeling of fear but could keep it from controlling me. In those difficult moments in life when there are no answers or when unexpected change occurs, I've learned to not live by my feelings and instead face the fear head-on—even when I'm shaking in my boots.

The Israelites are a good example of people who had to face their fears. In the Old Testament, God brought them out of a terrible life of slavery to take them to the Promised Land, but they were then confronted with a different situation that was equally unpleasant: the Red Sea in front of them and Pharaoh's army behind them. When the Israelites saw their dilemma, they actually desired to go back to their former life of slavery instead of confronting the unknown ahead. They preferred going back to their former life even though it was miserable—all because of fear.

Just picture their situation: the Red Sea in front of them and the Egyptian army behind them. What are they going to do? Moses told the Israelites in Exodus 14:13, "Fear not; stand still (firm, confident, undismayed) and see the salvation of

the Lord which He will work for you today. For the Egyptians you have seen today you shall never see again" (AMP).

Sometimes you have to stand your ground and speak God's Word to get the courage you need. For example, Romans 8:31 says, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (NKJV). And Psalm 27:1 reminds us that if God is on our side, whom shall we fear?

Confrontation Is Not Comfortable

But there are also times when you must suffer through something to defeat your fear of it. For example, in the early part of my ministry I had to suffer the loss of reputation. Back then, many thought women shouldn't teach and preach, and that's what God called me to do. So when I stepped out in obedience to do it, it wasn't easy. I was asked to leave my church. I lost friends. And some people just didn't understand.

I had to confront those early fears of what others thought of me and of being different. Thank God, He helped me press through, because if I had chosen to run from those situations, I wouldn't be here today.

Become Bold and Courageous

The word *fear* means "to run or to take flight." So when we give in to fear, we're always running away from something we should be confronting. God wanted the Israelites to go forward into the unknown. He wanted them to be so fed up with bondage that they would be willing to risk drowning instead of going back to slavery. God wanted them to be bold and courageous. And He wants you to be bold and courageous too.

Notice how the Lord told them, "Stand still." That's interesting, because when the emotion of fear has hold of us and our minds are thinking one crazy thing after another, the first thing we need to do is get still—get out of the emotion,

out of our head, and check with our heart by asking, “What is God saying in this situation?”

Maybe you are in this position right now and feel like you are between a rock and a hard place. It’s like you are between the Egyptian army and the Red Sea, and all of your emotions are going haywire. You may feel tempted to call your friends and ask them what to do. Don’t do that. Start by going to God first and waiting on Him.

I encourage you today to stand still, to get wisdom and direction from God and His Word, and then to do what you believe He’s telling you to do. Ask Him for courage. Then you’ll see Him make a way for you to push past your fear and reach the promised land He has ready for you.

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