

How to Live Beyond Fear

God has a wonderful plan for each of our lives. Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV) says, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” When we put our faith in Jesus as our Savior, we put ourselves in a position to walk out our God-given destiny.

Sadly, many believers in Christ aren’t living out their destiny because of fear. The fear of man is a common problem that causes us to worry about things like, “What will they think of me? What are they going to say about me? What will they do if I don’t do what they want? What if they reject me? What if they don’t like me?”

Everyone struggles with insecurity and the fear of rejection to some degree. And there’s nothing wrong with wanting people to like you. But when we are so focused on being people pleasers that our fear of being rejected, judged or criticized controls our choices, we’re being controlled by the fear of man.

If we’re going to get free of fear and really pursue everything God has for our lives, we have to make a decision that we won’t let fear be the ruling factor—we will not live with fear! Instead, we can learn how to live courageously by the grace and strength we have in Christ.

The True Meaning of Courage

It’s important to understand what it means to live courageously. It doesn’t mean we will never feel fearful, because the truth is, we will never completely get rid of the feeling of fear. But it does mean that when we feel afraid, we can do whatever we need to do through Christ who gives us strength. (See Phil. 4:13.) We can follow the leading of the Holy Spirit and do what God puts in our hearts to do, rather

than settle for an OK or average life. And God wants to do amazing things in our lives that will likely pull us out of our comfort zones and require us to walk by faith to do them.

Now, I'm not talking about making foolish choices or doing things that are dangerous because you don't want fear of those things to hold you back. Living courageously means we can be bold and take risks instead of just doing what seems "safe" and keeps us from becoming everything God has created us to be.

I remember when I had to make some bold, scary choices so I could move forward in God's plan for my ministry. I had friends who didn't think I had the right personality to be a Bible teacher. There were people in my church who didn't think women should teach the Word. And there were family members who didn't understand the call of God on my life, and they rejected me because of it.

It was a very hard time, but I'm so glad God gave me the courage I needed to do it. And now, it's scary to think about where I would be if I hadn't trusted God and followed His plans for me because I was afraid I'd lose my friends and not be well thought of by others.

The Strategy to Conquer Fear

The only way you can conquer fear is to confront it—to keep going forward with God while the enemy of fear is trying to drive you backward. Remember that "God did not give us a spirit of timidity (of cowardice, of craven and cringing and fawning fear), but [He has given us a spirit] of power and of love and of calm and well-balanced mind and discipline and self-control" (2 Tim. 1:7, AMP).

When you're struggling to do what you know God wants you to do, go to the Word for encouragement. Here are a few powerful Scriptures you can use to conquer fear:

- Isaiah 41:10 says, “Fear not [there is nothing to fear], for I am with you; do not look around you in terror and be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen and harden you to difficulties, yes, I will help you; yes, I will hold you up and retain you with My [victorious] right hand of rightness and justice” (AMP).
- Psalm 118:6 says, “The Lord is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?” (AMP)
- Psalm 27:1 declares, “The Lord is my Light and my Salvation—whom shall I fear or dread? The Lord is the Refuge and Stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?” (AMP)
- Romans 8:31-32 says, “...If God is for us, who [can be] against us? [Who can be our foe, if God is on our side?] He who did not withhold or spare [even] His own Son but gave Him up for us all, will He not also with Him freely and graciously give us all [other] things?” (AMP)

The Word of God has power to set you free from fear! Take time to study these verses and pray for God to help you live courageously in His will for your life. You'll discover there's nothing more exciting than being the person God has created you to be!

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