

Joyce Meyer: The Strategy to Conquer the Fear That's Holding You Back

God has a wonderful plan for each of our lives (see). And 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're 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 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 afraid. 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 "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7, NKJV).

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 (NIV) says, "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you

and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

–**Psalms 118:6** says, “The Lord is with me; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?”

–**Psalms 27:1** declares, “The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?”

–**Romans 8:31b-32** says, “If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave Him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?”

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! {eo}

For more on this topic, order Joyce’s two-teaching CD and DVD resource Living Courageously. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, Enjoying Everyday Life, by calling 800-727-9673 or visiting .

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