

Living by Faith Amid Your Fear

Do you ever wonder what your life would look like if fear didn't exist? For example, what if you had the confidence to pursue every passion God gave you? Just imagine for a moment what that would look like. Well, God gives us a special gift called faith so we can do amazing things for Him. And I want to encourage you to step out of your comfort zone and exercise that gift full time.

Faith gives us so much potential because it motivates us to move forward in the plans God has for us. But fear is a feeling Satan uses to keep our focus inward. It makes us feel anxious, causes us to dread the future, and it can keep us from saying and doing things that would reveal more of God's love to the world.

We need to learn to interrupt fear at its onset—before it begins to settle in our spirit. The choice is to either let Satan stop us in our tracks or to go forward in faith, believing God is in control.

The good news is, when we're struggling with fear, we can turn to God's Word for an inspiring, encouraging reality check. Romans 8:31b (AMPC) says, "If God is for us, who [can be] against us? [Who can be our foe, if God is on our side?]" And Psalm 27:1 says, "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?"

These Scriptures are basically saying that if we believe God's Word, we have already won the battle we're facing.

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Jesus tells us in Mark 11:22 that we are to have faith in God *constantly*. God doesn't want you to be fearful at any time. He wants you to be bold, confident, courageous and full of faith every day of your life—not just until you have a problem or until someone mistreats you. There's no *until*. And no one can stop God from answering a prayer that lines up with His Word and His will for our life.

Throughout the course of a lifetime, we spend a lot of time waiting. And that is often the case with prayer. We can spend years praying for something to happen. And during that time, Satan will do everything he can to discourage us. He will try to convince us that God doesn't love us, that God's promises are for more worthy people or that we didn't really hear from God in the first place. But if we will choose to trust God continually, we can keep moving forward in His plans for us.

The truth is, even if you don't see the fulfillment of every dream or desire of your heart here on earth, God will be pleased as you continue to believe in His perfect plan. And in the meantime, your faith will fill you with hope, joy and peace.

Romans 15:13 says, "May the God of your hope so fill you with all joy and peace in believing [through the experience of your faith] that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound *and* be overflowing (bubbling over) with hope."

Now if you knew me years ago, you would know that I wasn't always bubbling up with hope. In fact, I was in agony whenever God made me wait for anything, so I would always try to make things happen on my own. And it eventually wore me out! I remember lying on the floor, sobbing, saying, "God, I've tried everything and nothing's working. I just give up!" At that moment, the Holy Spirit spoke to my heart and said: "Really, Joyce? You mean you're going to let Me take it from here?"

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You see, when we're ready to let go, God is right there to fight our battles. We just need to learn to trust Him—and that comes through experience, as we take each new step of faith.

Today, instead of trying to pray my problems away, I've learned to pray for things like strength and courage, and for the power to endure whatever comes with a good temper. With God's help, I can choose faith every time I'm confronted with feelings of fear or intimidation.

Philippians 1:28 says, "And do not [for a moment] be frightened *or* intimidated in anything by your opponents *and* adversaries, for such [constancy and fearlessness] will be a clear sign (proof and seal) to them of [their impending] destruction, but [a sure token and evidence] of your deliverance *and* salvation, and that from God."

With God's help, we can remain stable in the face of fear, putting one foot in front of the other—walking by faith *full time*.

Imagine again what it would be like to pursue your God-given passions in life. Don't let fear stop you! Keep seeking God. Stir yourself up with Scriptures on faith. And boldly say, "God is bigger. He's working on my behalf, and I trust Him *constantly*."

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For more on this topic, order Joyce's four-part teaching resource "Overcoming Fear With Faith." You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, "Enjoying Everyday Life," by calling 800-727-9673 or visiting .

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