

Joyce Meyer: Embracing Freedom Over Fear

Fear is an enemy that torments the soul and seeks to steal our life. Conquering it is not something we do in one day; it's something we conquer one day at a time with God's help.

Fear can show up unexpectedly. One of our goals should be to recognize it so we can deal with it right away.

I remember a time when I was waking up at about 2 or 3 in the morning and then having difficulty going back to sleep. After two nights of that, I found myself going to bed with a vague sort of fear that it would happen again, and it did until God reminded me that I could pray and resist Satan—the source of all fear. According to God's Word, the sleep of the righteous should be sweet (Prov. 3:24). So I prayed immediately and went back to sleep, and have not had any problems since then.

Being free from fear doesn't mean that we will never experience fear or be confronted by it. It means that we are committed to not allowing it to rule our lives, and when necessary we will do what we need to do, even if we have to "do it afraid."

Each time you feel fear and decide to do it afraid, you will experience a new freedom and become more determined to end your days of slavery to fear. That doesn't mean you won't still need to confront your fears, but it does mean that you will be more and more resolved to keep confronting them.

Galatians 5:1 (NIV) says, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." This Scripture is very clear that even though we have been completely liberated from a yoke of bondage, we will need at times to "stand firm," and not allow ourselves to be entrapped by it again.

Satan is very shrewd and he doesn't give up easily. I guess we can say that he never completely gives up the hope of drawing us back into bondage. We must live watchfully, ready to recognize and immediately confront the things that steal our liberty in Christ.

The Bible says that the righteous man falls seven times and gets up again (Prov. 24:16, ESV). I love that Scripture and I'm greatly encouraged by it. Even the most righteous person fails to do everything he knows to do all the time, but he is committed to not giving up. So when you have a weak moment, that doesn't mean you have lost your victory.

But if we give up, even God can't help us because we receive His help through faith, not through hopelessness. We need to stay positive, hopeful and filled with faith, and when we do, we can overcome anything with God's help. I often say that anyone can succeed if they refuse to give up!

Some fears are more deeply rooted in us than other ones are, and we need to be more aggressive against them. Mine is the fear of making people angry. My father was always angry, and I never really knew if I had done something to make him that way or not. I would like to be able to say that after all of these years of teaching others, I no longer have to deal with this fear, but that's not the case. However, the good news is, I recognize it and deal with it, so I still have the victory.

Being able to recognize the lies, deceits and strategies of the devil is so important. We should always be ready to resist him at the onset of his attacks. Because the longer we let a fear remain, the more difficult it is to get rid of. So make a decision to be a person of action, and remember that in Christ, you have what it takes to win!

The Word of God says that we are more than conquerors through Christ who loves us (Rom. 8:37). God has given us everything we will ever need to overcome our fears through Christ, every

spiritual blessing (Eph. 1:3) and His power and authority to overcome the power of the enemy (Luke 10:19). We have what it takes, but we must be active and never give up.

I want to encourage you to be patient with yourself. Possessing the full freedom that is yours in Christ is a journey. And it's important to enjoy your progress instead of merely looking at how far you have to go. Today is a new day, and every day you can be one step closer to conquering your fears! {eoa}

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