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FOLLOW YOUR CALLING NO MATTER THE PRICE

By Tanya Curren

Pain is relative. If I printed and sent this month's article to a starving woman in Africa, my problems would seem ridiculously insignificant and extremely easy to solve. Yet, if I shared my struggles with a rich woman born into a life of luxury, they would think that the trials of my life have been very difficult and she would probably be surprised that we've made it so far on so little.

Even though trials, suffering and pain mean different things to different people, they all matter to God. This is why you should never feel guilty about how you express yourself throughout your life.

God had you born for such a time as this - in your country, with your circumstances, and with the ability to handle anything you face. Don't get caught in the trap of comparing your situation to anyone else's. If your problems are important to you, then they are important to God. I know that my trials and suffering are nothing compared to others in this world, yet I know that because they matter to me, God will show me ways to get through them.

My passion is for you to live your life in freedom, living free from guilt and burdens. I want you to take the things that God reveals to you through these Guilt Free Girls devotion articles and allow them to transform and renew your mind. Then, share them with your spouse, children, family members and co-workers. This is how we change the world and create lasting positive legacies for our families.

I see too many burdens passed from one generation to the next, and I am reminding you today that you have the power to stop any negative generational patterns that linger and you can begin to create Godly ones. Your legacy is yours to leave, and I want you to daily ask God to show you how you can live your life in a way that will forever change the lives of those you touch.

Saying that you want to live a guilt free life ~ daily living with no regrets ~ can be easy to say but so hard to do, can't it? Believe me I understand, and this month I want to share some of my personal experiences with you to show you how God is leading me to live like this.

I like practical teachings. I don't relate to people who make everything in life sound so easy and perfect; I relate to those who share their struggles and experiences with others and give practical ways that actually work so that I can have great ideas to follow.

This is why I urge you to pray for discernment as you listen to different teachings or see things on tv. There is a ton of nonsense out there that mixes just the right amount of the Bible in to sound true, yet it is all designed to have you "buy into" their teachings or give your money to their organization so you can reap a particular harvest or reward from God. Beware of these false teachings!

Starting and staying in ministry has been hard. Really hard. It is something I never even imagined I'd be doing, and yet here I am and I love it. I am living my life with such passion, peace and purpose and I can say with everything in me that it is only because of God. But, I have had to turn from SO many of my human mindsets, comfort zones and what I thought I knew about life. I have had to completely live my life by faith, which has been at times very hard.

When Rick first felt called into ministry, he had no idea what that meant or what it would look like. He just turned to me in church after service one day and told me that he knew God was taking us in a different direction and that he felt called. Inside I panicked a little and immediately told him that there was NO way we were going to start a church, because I'm not nice enough to be a pastor's wife!!! Even Rick agreed with me on that one! (Don't get me wrong, I have a lot of compassion and love for others, but I can promise you that I don't have enough long-term patience to be a kind or sensitive woman that a pastor's wife needs to be. If you are a pastor's wife, God bless you my sister! You truly have a special gift, and I pray for an extra dose of patience to come your way today!)

Here is something that was very frustrating to me at the time that Rick felt called. First of all, I didn't share the same feeling. We had been living a comfortable life and although I knew that Rick didn't love his job, I hadn't thought about other alternatives or ways we would provide financially. Second, it would have been amazing if God had given us a crystal clear vision of what He meant when He sent us this calling. Was He going to give us a building? What does "going into ministry" even mean? Don't you need to go to seminary before you run in the same circles and hang with other ministers? Where do you go to get guidance or mentorship? I had a ton of unanswered questions.

To add to those questions, I had probably the biggest one of all: how will God fund this? Listen, I get that He is the God of the entire universe and every single dollar belongs to Him. Therefore, I knew it was possible for Him to send us complete funding for the rest of our lives. Wouldn't that have been glorious? I believed He would make this part easy. He didn't.

In fact, one part that has been difficult is that no one came forward or offered to mentor us in any way. Actually, the opposite happened. We were turned away by many ministries and churches who didn't want us speaking or presenting in their buildings because they didn't want any so-called competition. This part of the process has been painful and confusing at times, because in my opinion we are all on the same team! We could care less about territorial denominationalism. There should be no competition in the body of Christ, and we aren't out to take anyone's pulpit or ministry. Plus, aren't there enough hurting people in the world to go around? Our job is to share Jesus' love, not hoard numbers of people to keep to ourselves.

The Bible says in Proverbs 8:29, "...He gave the sea its boundary so the waters would not overstep His command." What a fantastic visual - God creating the sea and setting the specific boundaries! If He does that for the clouds and sea and foundations of the earth, then I know that even our boundaries are ordered by Him. It's a beautiful and very freeing concept, because it reminds us that He gives us our territory or area of influence in His time.

There's never a need to feel competitive as a Christian because there are so many in our world who need Jesus and His forgiving love. What a crazy concept to think that a group of people are "mine" or that a church or ministry is mine. Boundless Limits isn't even "mine" and I'd never want to think of it that way, either. It's God's - all of it. Every person, every email, every CD, every word that comes out of our mouths is from Him.

Another massive leap of faith for Rick and I was taking our 401K and giving it all to God. Forget just giving God 10% baby, we truly put ALL of our money where our mouth is and went completely in. I remember telling my mom that I felt like I had jumped off of a boat into the deepest part of the sea and was completely out of my comfort zone and was so in over my head - trusting God with every cell in my body. I also remember crying as I talked with my best friend and asked her if she thought I was crazy to take our entire savings and push it forward to God as we went forward in ministry. Thankfully, she assured me I wasn't.

This is personal to me...very personal. I'm not just giving my money to God and this ministry - I am believing in Him so passionately that I am basing the eternal destination of my soul and that of my husband and child's on it! This has nothing to do with starting an organization or making any kind of name for myself in this world. This has EVERYTHING to do with believing in my God and following that calm yet very directive voice of the Holy Spirit inside of me.

This is why I am so serious about you hearing that voice too. I promise you, if I couldn't hear His voice and feel His promptings deep within my soul, there's no way I'd be in ministry, and Rick would have just gone to a different great paying job. And, to make the temptation greater, he got offers for other things, so it wasn't like we were just out of options and turned to starting a ministry. He's had other propositions come his way, and yet we both have a clarity, peace and unity that this is what we are supposed to be doing right now.

It is scary sometimes, I won't lie to you. I'm a planner and love to know what's coming next. I also love having enough money in the bank to feel comfortable. I've cried many nights as I've talked to God about His plan and not understanding the process. I've even told Him that I think He picked the wrong girl. There I've been, lying in my bed, telling the Almighty God of the Universe that He's made a mistake, reminding Him that there are many others who are more qualified, more funded and more knowledgeable of Scripture than I am.

But do you know what, with all of the tears, financial uncertainty, painful rejections, weeks without feedback, figuring things out day by day with Rick as a teammate without any guidance...even with all of that, we have had a peace that passes all human understanding. I shouldn't be surprised, because this is exactly what God promises in Philippians 4:7 when He says, "And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Even when I'm crying (and believe me, I've cried), the Holy Spirit comforts me in a way that only He can. I've asked God all of these questions and told Him how He could have made this SO much easier for us! Wouldn't this be an awesome story to tell and point people back to Him to show His faithfulness? If only He would have brought us a million dollar donor - this would show how powerful and mighty He is, wouldn't it??? Oh, how I wish God would do things my way sometimes! (By the way, if you do know of a million dollar donor lingering around in your neighborhood, give them our info, will you? Thanks!)

Instead, what God has chosen to do is to continually show me and others who are watching that His way is the perfect way. His way will grow my faith. His way will teach me how to lean into Him and press into Him with everything that is in me. His way teaches me not to rely on my bank account. His way shows me that it is He who provides, not another human. He is the one who doesn't just call the qualified, He always qualifies the called!

He reminds me in Proverbs 16:16, "How much better to get wisdom than gold, to choose understanding rather than silver!" He is our mentor. He is our provider. He is our sustainer for every single breath, for the clothes on my back, the food in my house, the safety of my child and my entire earthly and Heavenly destination.

No job can provide the things that my God does! No amount of money can buy me the peace that He gives. No amount of training or education can replace what God can instill through the gift of his wisdom. No person can give us a platform or audience like God can. He can, has and will continue to open doors of opportunity in places we never thought of!

Do you see what I'm saying? I could choose today to put my child in school, have Rick find a great paying job, and get a full time job so that I get more money back in our accounts. But, that would be living my life with regrets because God has called us to homeschool our son, start this ministry and use all of the pain and difficult experiences we've had so we can reach others and to show His faithfulness and love.

If God leads me to live my life in this way, then that's enough for me. I will trust Him even now, when the money is so uncomfortably tight. I will press into Him even though I don't know how His plan will work out. I will continue to love Him with every fiber of my being even if people reject the message and don't embrace what we have to offer. This is how I choose to live my life with no regrets.

If I can encourage you with anything today, I hope it is this: live your life with no regrets.

Make decisions based on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, not your bank account. Make decisions based upon your peace, not your friend's opinions. And choose to find the positive in your trials and suffering, instead of focusing on the negative.

You don't need to have all of your friends agree with your decisions - mine didn't, and yet here I am. People don't need to fully understand why you live the way you do. You won't answer to them when you die and stand before God in Heaven one day. You will stand alone and answer for your choices and the legacy that you left here on earth.

There is no way I'm standing before God and telling Him that I trusted Him with my eternal soul, yet I didn't trust Him enough to provide for me financially. It's a crazy concept when you stop and think about it, isn't it? We'll trust that we're going to be with God Almighty in Heaven forever, yet we won't take a leap of faith because we need to feel in control of every aspect of our lives.

I say this in love as a daily "trying not to be a control freak" type of person: release yourself 100% to the guidance and will of God. Ask Him how you can do this, and I promise He will show you practical and healthy ways that you can hear His voice and give up control. I know that for me I have to find quiet time to read the Bible and pray. I talk to God just like I'm talking to you. There are no secret tricks or awesome prayers that get you access to God quicker than others. Just talk to Him. He wants to guide you on a purpose filled path, but He can only do it if you release yourself fully to Him.

Be honest and objective about your financial situation as you follow Him, too. For us it has required pretty big sacrifices. But, I have been willing to make them to be on this path. I've given up my acrylic nails that I'd had for 22 years, we eat out far less than we used to, we travel a lot more while Rick works 2 other jobs, and we work more hours and harder than ever to continue to stay in ministry. But, it is a choice we freely and gladly make even though it is tough. While it would be awesome and amazing to have an anonymous donor give a ton to our ministry work, I am so deeply thankful for the precious and faithful few who monthly give to help us encourage others in our hurting world.

It would be so cool to sell out of our CD's and teachings at an event, but I am always humbled at the person who comes to the table to look for just the right one to get for someone who desperately needs to hear our

positive message. And, it would be neat to get tons of feedback after we pour ourselves into a talk, CD or event. But, I am so moved when we receive a heartfelt email or call from someone who needs a personal connection in a world of mega-ministries where there is no personal relationship.

It is a feeling like no other to live your life in God's will, and this is what I want for you!

We'll still be here for you no matter how God chooses to fund this ministry, HIS ministry, even if it is one dollar at a time. My promise to you is that I will continue to share my life's experiences with you - good and bad - to strengthen your faith and resolve so you can live your life the way He intended. This isn't easy, but it is so worth it. It has brought me an inner peace and confidence that is beyond words, and I know God's desire is for you to have this, too.

Here's to living your life with no regrets,

Tanya



Tanya Curren is the co-founder of Boundless Limits International, a ministry of encouragement and empowerment. In 2004 Tanya Curren was in a life threatening coma for 8 days as a deadly infection ravaged her body. Given two hours to live, she survived only to face the ordeal of a painful three year recovery. She is the author of *Broken Places*, *The Proverbs Devotion Guide*, *Embracing Change & Conflict*, and several other CD's. In her conferences and seminars, Tanya shares with others the life-lessons she learned through her journey to restoration. Tanya travels and speaks at local, regional and international venues, and is passionate about guiding others to have a personal, real relationship with Jesus Christ.