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WHEN FEAR AND FAITH COLLIDE?

By Richard & Tanya Curren

“But how will you get health insurance?” she asked. “Oh, I am sure that won’t be a problem,” I replied. After finishing dinner, I got in my car and had this overwhelming sense of heaviness. The weird thing was that I couldn’t put my finger on WHY. Why was I feeling bad after just having a great dinner and conversation with my friend? Why did I feel sick to my stomach and fearful all over? And why did I feel like a door had been opened to attack me when I didn’t even see it coming?

Anytime I start to feel this way, I stop and reevaluate what just happened. So I started thinking through the events of the entire day, including the different conversations I had throughout dinner. Nothing odd stuck out to me at first – I hadn’t “sinned” in a super obvious way that required me to feel guilty for my actions and I hadn’t offended anyone that I need to go apologize to, so I kept thinking.

And then it hit me. The door of fear had been opened by one simple question. I had been feeling very confident up until that point. God was leading us into ministry – into this VERY new territory that required a HUGE leap of faith. We had decided to go all in and follow His guidance with passion and purpose. I knew we would be facing fear on a daily...and possibly hourly...basis as we lived on FAR less than we ever had and entered into a new career and ministry path with no formal training.

So I knew we would have to be on guard against fear. But what I didn’t expect was for it to sneak in through the comment from a friend. Has this happened to you? Have you chosen to step out in faith, yet you got blindsided from a comment? We all can be on guard against an enemy or someone we don’t trust. We have plenty of people who don’t necessarily like us or believe in what we’re doing. It’s easy to ignore them, because we don’t put any weight into what they think or say.

But it is different with our friends and those we trust and listen to for advice. When they say a comment that brings up doubts about what we are doing, it can be a very easy and very effective way for Satan to use their words to wreak havoc on your mind and in your heart. **This is where fear and faith collide, and in that moment you have to choose where you**

stand.

Maybe you've heard similar comments that weren't meant to be malicious or hurtful, yet opened the door to fear and doubt in your life. Have you heard, "What are you going to do?" "Are you sure?" "How are you going to pay your bills?" "Are you really qualified for this?" "Wow, I would never do what you are doing?"

These are just some of the comments we heard once we chose to go into ministry and start our non-profit organization. Here's the great thing, and we truly hope this encourages you today if you are facing any of this: You don't have to answer these questions! You don't have to ignore others in a rude way, but you certainly don't have to try to come up with different explanations to make others feel better about your choices. We have found that most people do this – they come up with excuses or long-winded explanations when they don't really want to answer someone, just to try and appease the other person's feelings or make sure they aren't offended with their answer. Just know this isn't necessary. If someone asks you a question or makes a statement you don't agree with, you have the right and owe it to yourself to answer honestly – whether they agree with you or not.

Remember, most people speak out of their own fears. So if you are talking to someone who has a deep fear of facing financial difficulties, they will have very strong opinions and advice about protecting your money. If you listen to someone who has a job high up in a company with a great title, their advice might be swayed towards warning you against doing anything that doesn't look fantastic on a resume. And this is super important – if you talk with someone who doesn't share the same passion or morals as you do, you will get advice based not only on their personal fears, but it will be swayed by what they believe. So, if they don't believe in the same God as you do and they don't value the concept of "being called," then they just won't get what you are doing and why you are risking so much to do it. They may respect you for it, but they won't get it, and therefore won't be able to fully support you in your faith walk.

We have shared this before: don't ask 1,000 people for their opinions, because you will get 1,000 different answers. It is wise to seek Godly counsel from those you trust, but know that this list should be very small. **Keep your circle of influence around your heart and mind very tight, so that fear won't sneak in when you least expect it.**

Fear and Faith always collide. They can't dwell in the same space because they are diabolically opposite. But here's the great news – faith always wins! **Your faith is ALWAYS stronger than the fear that attacks.** You just have to be constantly on guard and know how to use your faith to overcome any negative feeling, word or thought. This is why we want to share with you some very effective and practical ways to use your faith to defeat fear.

USING YOUR FAITH TO DEFEAT FEAR:

READ YOUR BIBLE AND PRAY

This will always be first. To know God is to know how to react to anything and everything you face. And knowing Him and hiding His Word in your heart is the very best way for you to have daily peace.

CHOOSE YOUR INFLUENCES WISELY

Listen to those who support you fully, cheer you on and encourage you in your calling.

LEARN THE ART OF BLOCKING WORDS

This takes time, and we have found that it truly is an art. You do not have to sit and listen to, or absorb someone else's negative words. If this starts to happen to you, practice stopping the person, changing the subject or leaving the area so that you are not subjected to negativity and words spoken out of their fears. The more you practice this and set this healthy boundary, the freer you will be as you move forward in faith.

WRITE DOWN YOUR GOALS, DREAMS AND PASSIONS

We have many lists like these, and we are always adding to them and talking about them. This keeps your calling fresh on your mind and gives you new ways to develop yourself as you do what you are created to do. This also is a great written reminder of God's calling on your life and this will help you fight fear when tough times arise.

ALWAYS LOOK FOR THE POSITIVE

This is huge! There are always going to be negative things happening in the world around you, and quite possibly there will be stressful things happening in your personal life as you enter a life of faith. But the most important thing is to always focus on the wonderful, amazing and incredible miracles that are happening all around you each day. This is one of the things that has sustained us! We choose to look at ALL that God is doing, versus looking at our bank account. When you choose to look at what God is doing and focus on the open doors, it closes off doors of negativity and doubt that try to pop in.

FIND FUN IN ALL YOU DO

This has been very therapeutic for our family! Let's be honest – life is tough. Many days are hard with super long hours and we don't get the recognition for the work we are producing. So it is vital to stop and have fun together! Even on some of our toughest days we have laughed, taken pictures, worked on something creative and fun with our son and have gone outside to create new memories together. *Making sure your life includes family fun time is very important as you overcome fear because it helps center you on your purpose. It will remind you why you are doing what you are doing, and it will keep your focus on the importance of following through with your purpose.*

Your purpose matters not only to yourself, but to those who love you and who will be here long after you are gone. Your obedience will pay off – not only in your lifetime, but in your generational line...never forget this! We know that our obedience and choices have directly and greatly impacted the life of our son, which will impact this family and the world. What a HUGE joy and HUGE responsibility this is! It is a blessing and opportunity that we have grabbed with both hands, and nothing – no fear, no negative words, no destructive thoughts, no guilt, no depression, no anxiety, no worry...NOTHING...can take away the opportunities and the calling that God has given. Nothing!

May this encourage and bless you today as you live a life of confident faith, passion and purpose.

In His Love,
Rick & Tanya Curren

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Richard R. Curren III is the co-founder and President of Boundless Limits International, Live Guilt Free and Best Life Strategies. He is a regular co-host of WATC TV's *ATLANTA LIVE*, an inspirational television show broadcast internationally. He is the co-author of **ON COURSE: Strategies For Successful Living** and its companion **ON COURSE: Life Application Study Guide**. He is also the producer of several inspirational videos including "*IT'S ABOUT TIME!*", which has been broadcast on television worldwide. He is also the developing producer for Scaly Adventures, a positive influential outreach to children using animals and nature to explore the wonders of God's creation. Rick's passion is to speak and motivate others to live to their maximum potential physically, mentally and spiritually. Through their events and publications, Rick and his wife Tanya inspire others and show that every person has boundless potential to change our world. He is a former United States Army Officer. Rick serves on the Board of Directors for the So Help Me God Project as an Advisor and is a founding Board Member. With a passion for health and fitness, he is a 2nd Degree Black Belt in Korean Olympic Tae Kwon Do, and serves as an Associate Instructor for Palmetto Martial Arts School.



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