



CAREER CHANGES: FROM FEAR TO FAITH

Topic: "God meets us as we struggle with fears, helping us to take the footsteps of the weak and slow in faith toward the plan He has for us. As we take each

step, we will need a Christian family around us to guide us through the hills and valleys that come when we live by faith. "

Bible Reading: Proverbs 3:5

Start Questions: What do you fear? How could that fear be holding you back from God's best?

Proverbs 3:1-7

My son, do not forget my teaching,
but keep my commands in your heart,
2 for they will prolong your life many years
and bring you peace and prosperity.
3 Let love and faithfulness never leave you;
bind them around your neck,
write them on the tablet of your heart.
4 Then you will win favor and a good name
in the sight of God and man.
5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
6 in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.
7 Do not be wise in your own eyes;
fear the Lord and shun evil.

Reflection Reading

When I fill people in on my plan, they look at me like I'm crazy. In the midst of our move to a different state, I have been carving out a new career for myself and facing the fear-inspiring moment where I tell others about my seemingly foolish scheme. One guy responded bluntly, "You're a brave man."

Translation: You're nuts!

Starting a new career is daunting enough, but I never anticipated how difficult it would be to share my plans with family, friends, and acquaintances. I also never knew how important their support would be.

God has been nudging me to make this change for over a year, but our recent move made it possible. The idea first came while going to a rare speaking engagement. While walking up the steps to the conference room, I prayed, "God help me, I'm not sure I can do this."

"You were made for this," boomed into my head with a force that almost knocked me over. Sure enough, my typical stage fright dissipated while giving a well-received presentation.

With that experience in mind, I began asking God about my career. Should I take the leap and change it? Such a thought brought a great deal of fear and anxiety, to say nothing of actually telling my friends and family.

"You're doing what?" I could hear them asking.

However, several speaking engagements came up on the previous topic, and sure enough, my usual anxiety about speaking in front of groups vanished. In fact, each organization wanted me to come back—soon.

While putting together some rough plans about what my career change could look like, I reluctantly brought my idea up during a prayer meeting. After praying my friend said, "Wouldn't it be great if you could take six months to work on doing what you love?"

I still didn't think it would be possible, but my wife began to ask God for those six months. She sensed that it could work and soon figured out a financial strategy to give it a fighting chance. With her encouragement, I finally faced my fear of telling our friends and family about my career plans.

One relative received an immediate sense from the Spirit to go forward and another friend at a prayer meeting shared a specific word that God was blessing this career change. In the meantime, emails for work continued to come in. My schedule wasn't full, but I had a glimpse of this new path.

Each encouraging word and detail helped us to finally take the leap.

I initially wrote off my career change as a foolish pipe dream. However, God not only walked me through it step-by-step, but also provided the friends and family who prayed with me and helped confirm God's leading.

Each of us needs to figure out where God wants us to be. For me, it meant seeking out a career change and challenging my fears of disapproval and failure before friends and family. As it turned out, it was their leading and counsel that gave me the strongest sense of confirmation to pursue a new career.

God meets us as we struggle with fears, helping us take weak, slow steps of faith toward the plan he has for us. As we take each step, we will need our Christian family around us to guide us through the hills and valleys that come when living by faith.

Dynamic Reflection

1. God may not be calling you to a new career, but you may feel dissatisfied with your current job. How can you find contentment where God has put you?

2. List some people who can discuss these fears with you and pray for you.

Application

1. How did your mindset and actions change after reflecting on this?

2. What can you do to practice this teaching in your work environment?