



Facing Fear

■ by Kathy Krentkowski, MA, LCPC, LMHC

A few years ago I was faced with a decision: Do I stay in the place where I have been for years, waiting and hoping that change will come to me, or do I make a decision to step out in faith, not knowing what the results of my choice would be, but believing it would bring me closer to my goal?

What helped me make the decision was answering the following questions:

What is my hope?

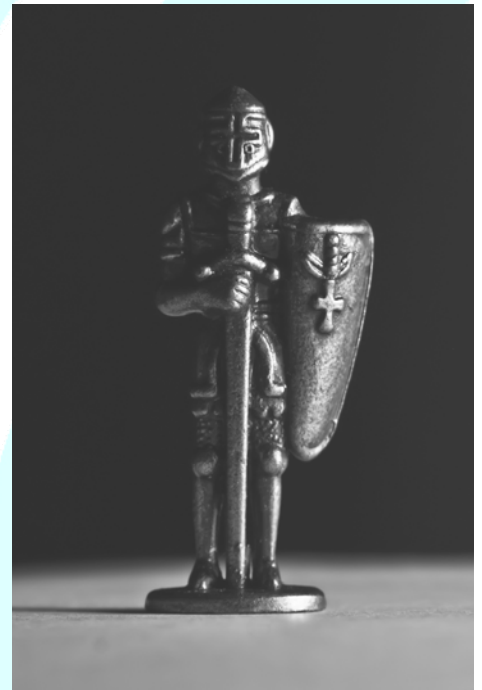
What goal am I fixing my eyes upon?

What is God requiring of me?

The one thing that caused the greatest hesitancy in making this decision was fear. Fear is common to us all. Too often fear is what drives people's decisions and the result tends to be regret. There is a different way to live. What option is there if you eject fear from the driver's seat?

Faith

The bible describes faith as a shield that extinguishes fiery darts from the evil one (Ephesians 6:16). In this scripture, Paul is not referring to a "Captain America" sort of shield, but rather, a large shield that can cover most of the body, strong enough to survive direct blows from an enemy sword. This is the type of faith that is needed if you are going to not only face fear, but advance towards it.



Living By Faith

Faith is a word often talked about in Christian circles. Talking about faith is not the same as having faith.

What does it look like to live by faith, and put action to it? When I was faced with that difficult decision, I considered my hope and the related goal. My desire was not one that was directly addressed in God's word (such as whether or not I steal that SUV, or cheat on my spouse), and so I talked with trusted friends, prayed and sought godly counsel in regards to what I was considering, and then came time to take action. The bible says that faith without works is dead (James

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Article taken from the May | Jun 2019 issue of *PRESSING ON*, a Publication of Chicago Christian Counseling Center
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2:17). It wasn't enough for me to "have faith that it will all work out". I had to have faith AND make a decision, without evidence that it would work out in the end. I would be required to trust God.

Fear tried to intimidate me, saying that if I made the wrong choice, I'd regret it. However, I knew that if I lived my life with ME as the sole conductor of things working out, I'd be led astray and gravely disappointed. My faith told me I was not alone in this life (Ezekiel 36:27). I believed the Holy Spirit was with me and that I could seek him and trust the leading that followed (Proverbs 3:5). My faith told me that God has a purpose and a plan for me and that it was a good one (Jeremiah 29:11). My faith said, "Do not fear" (Isaiah 41:10).



So, with my eye set on the goal, I picked up my shield of faith and I stepped out. That shield of faith covered me as I advanced, even in the face of fear.

The bible says that faith is the evidence of things hoped for (Hebrews 11:1). What are you hoping for? What decisions are you considering? Is fear playing a role in how you are considering your options? I've been told that courage is decisive and deliberate action in the face of fear. Faith says God will keep his promises. What would it look like if you lived like you believed that?

opportunity I was longing for came to me, and I was already well into the preparation stages of what saying "yes" would entail. It's one of my favorite life moments. I wonder what yours will be. ■

If you would like to explore the role of faith on a deeper level, consider [The Armor of God bible study](#) by Priscilla Shier.

P.S. In the end, I made the decision to make a life altering change. Weeks later, the



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