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Don't Put Off Faith Until Tomorrow

By Joel Garfinkle

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Most people misinterpret faith as the belief that something totally unforeseen will miraculously happen to them to improve their lives. Some of them use faith as a disengaging excuse for procrastination by internalizing a mentality such as, "I hope things will work out for me," or "Things will get better for me tomorrow."

These viewpoints relegate the empowering attributes of hope and faith to nothing more than dumb luck. But faith isn't something external or future-based. Faith is internal and fully grounded in the present. It's the belief that you have the power to control your actions within the current circumstances and that what you do or create today ultimately impacts your destiny.

Examples from History

In order to better help you distinguish the inherent differences between internal and external-based faith, let's take a look at two real-life examples:

1. America's first commercial jet service began with a Boeing 707 flight in 1958. The next month, according to National Public Radio's "Morning Edition," a passenger on a nearly obsolete propeller-driven DC-6 airliner struck up a conversation with another passenger who happened to be a Boeing engineer.

The curious traveler asked the engineer about the new jet aircraft. The engineer spoke convincingly about the rigorous testing Boeing had completed on the cutting-edge model. He went on to explain Boeing's extensive experience in designing jet engines. Then the passenger asked the most critical question: "Have you flown on the new 707 jet?"

The engineer's testimony, which had been grounded in external faith, crashed and burned with his reply. "I think I'll wait until it's been in service awhile," he said.

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Although the Boeing engineer believed a great deal in his company and in the aerodynamic principles of jet flight, until he actually flew on the Boeing 707 his faith would lack credibility.

2. In the late 19th century, Susan B. Anthony, a delegate to the Sons of Temperance Meeting in Albany, NY, was denied the right to speak from the platform due to her gender. She put her faith into action by organizing a group of like-minded advocates. Together they formed the Women's State Temperance Society of New York, an organization dedicated to the pursuit of securing a Constitutional Amendment that established a woman's right to vote.

Anthony's campaign to include women in the 15th Amendment failed and she was never to cast a vote herself. However, her dream was realized just before her death in 1920 with the ratification of the 19th Amendment. Unlike the Boeing engineer, Susan B. Anthony had the courage to act on her faith rather

than waiting for happenstance or for someone else to get the ball rolling.

Putting Faith into Action Today

Once you realize that true faith is a present-moment activity, you'll see procrastination in a whole new light.

Putting off an action until tomorrow robs you of an opportunity in the present moment to start creating the future you want. Here are some tips for putting your faith into action right now:

- * Create tomorrow; don't maintain yesterday.

Abandon anything that doesn't support what's most important to you. For example, when my clients come to me for help in landing their dream job, they are making a statement to themselves that this is one of the most important aspects of their lives and should be treated as such.

- * See your challenges as opportunities.

We often procrastinate because a challenge or obstacle in our path causes us to freeze up and say, "Not today." Viewing what's presented to you as an opportunity is a gift that will enable you to learn, grow, evolve, and create the amount of change necessary to stop procrastinating.

- * Use resources wisely.

Resources come in a variety of forms, including energy, money, and time. Instead of procrastinating, always question how you can best use your resources in each minute of the day.

- * Take action today for what you want tomorrow.

When you procrastinate, you aren't remaining focused on what you truly want. Taking action today is

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about actively embracing the concepts of discipline, motivation, and pursuit.

* Plan, then act.

When you decide to take action, your steps should be specific, achievable, realistic, and timely. But "careful planning" is no excuse to procrastinate. Plan first, then act on your plans.

By taking action today, in the present moment, you are tangibly demonstrating that you have faith in your future.

You are proactively making decisions to align your current status in life with what you want to achieve in the

long run. John Dryden once said, "They can conquer who believe they can." And I say that those who act on their

faith today rather than putting it off until tomorrow will conquer the future.

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Joel Garfinkle helps individuals transition into their dream jobs and leads managers and executives to higher levels of professional and personal achievement. Visit Joel on the web at Dream Job Coaching (www.dreamjobcoaching.com) and Garfinkle Executive Coaching (www.garfinkleexecutivecoaching.com).

Fear is Faith Inverted

By Ellen M. DuBois

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The first thing to come to mind at this moment is this saying: Fear is Faith inverted. I think there's a lot of truth to that.

I have a lot of faith and it's carried me through some of the rockiest times of my life. But, I'm human and I feel, cut, bleed and cry like the rest of us. And, no matter how much faith I have, there are those moments when I simply "lose it" and am scared out of my mind. It feels like all my faith is gone.

Thank God that after these moments, I sense the gentle hand of God calming me down and I know that everything is going to work out...somehow.

But, why can't I just have faith all the time and avoid those moments where I can't give my life to God completely? Why do I sometimes get paralyzed with fear?

I don't know. I guess it's because I just haven't learned to do it yet. I wonder if anyone ever can? Are there people out there who are so confident and full of faith that they never become fearful?

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I'm not one of them.

The other day we found out that a family member has cancer. At least that's the first call the doctor who did the examination made. As far as I am concerned, the jury is still out until the biopsy results come in.

I prayed and prayed and am still praying. I am visualizing the body healing itself through the light of Christ and I am boldly asking for a miracle. Why not? I have the right to, just like anyone else. The thing about miracles is this: you have to believe in them for them to happen. I do, and I am not afraid to ask for one because I've gotten over the "I don't deserve to ask for one" stage of my life. God wants me to ask, He wants to give and He wants me to believe that He can and will help. So, I asked for one.

However, fear lures its ugly head once again and I find myself alone and crying. I am saying, "God, please help me to be strong. Please—help—me."

Another family member, my Dad, is scheduled for an echocardiogram. Wait a minute! My Dad? An echocardiogram? No, this can't be. He's my father! No, he can't have a heart problem. No way. He's the guy who plays the piano like there's no tomorrow and is my musical hero. He's the guy I gigged with for the first time at sixteen. He's active. People love him.

God, what's happening?

I am afraid again.

Where'd my faith go? Is it still there? If it is, why am I so full of fear? It's too much at once, God.

I need your help. Please help turn my fear into faith. Please help me to take comfort in You.

God, please help me walk the walk and not just talk the talk.

And then I realize that it's okay to be afraid. It's normal. If I weren't ever scared, I don't think I'd be human.

And through that fear comes faith. It's a metamorphosis of sorts. If not for the fear, I wouldn't turn to God for help. That act of turning IS faith.

© Ellen M. DuBois

Ellen M. DuBois, MA – Ms. DuBois is engaged and has a dog who loves to critique her work. She is published in vol.2 of God Allows U-Turns with her piece, "The Angel in the Dumpster". She writes to touch the hearts of others. Please visit Writings of the Heart, her award winning writer's resource site—<http://writingsoftheheart.homestead.com/index.html>

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