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Take a Stand for Yourself

By Claudette Rowley

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Thanks,
Claudette Rowley

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Take a Stand for Yourself

Maintaining balance in your life is a common concern these days, usually posed as an issue of work/life balance. People who seek work/life balance often want to work less and have more time and energy for family or for other interests. However, this month, I'd like to look at balance through a different lens.

At its core, I believe that maintaining "balance" means examining how fully we value and honor ourselves. And to fully value and honor ourselves, sometimes we need to take a stand. We already take stands for causes we believe in, we advocate for our children, and champion our friends as they go after their dreams. Yet sometimes we forget that the most important person to take a stand for is the one we greet daily in the bathroom mirror.

Taking a stand means different things to different people. Here are some examples:

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- In the midst of a successful career and a growing family, your political consciousness is activated and you join in a protest about an issue close to your heart.
- You buck the family expectation that you'll use your law degree in a big downtown law firm. Instead, you use your legal skills to protect the environment.
- You're from a family of artists and writers, but you go to business school instead.
- You tell your family and friends that you are going to take care of yourself first –starting now.

These are big, life–altering examples. You also take a stand for yourself when you say, for example, "I'm not cooking dinner on Friday nights" or "From now on, I'm leaving work by 5:30pm" or "I'm for the first time committed to losing these 20 pounds".

Sometimes the stand you've taken may not be popular amongst those nearest and dearest to you. And sometimes, you'll feel everyone is cheering you on! Sometimes it's a little of both. In any case, you have stretched into unknown territory.

Tips for taking a stand:

- Gain clarity: What do you want? What action, if any, do you need to take?
- Carve out some time and space to reflect and listen to yourself. What does your intuition tell you?
- Recognize that your energy for taking a stand ebbs and flows.
- Engage your support system. Talk about your goals with people who know you and truly listen.
- Know that you always have a choice. What may feel like balance one day may not feel like it the next.

When you take a stand for yourself, you contribute to the world in a bigger way than you could ever imagine. The ripple in the pond analogy fits: When you value yourself and what you need, you inspire others to do the same thing. What would the world be like if each of us took a stand?

Claudette Rowley, coach and author, helps professionals identify and pursue their true purpose and calling in life. Contact her today for a complimentary consultation at 781-676-5633 or claudette@metavoice.org. Sign up for her free newsletter "Insights for the Savvy" at <http://www.metavoice.org>.

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Stand Up for Jesus

By Joyce C. Lock

Stand Up for Jesus by Joyce C. Lock

"Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus" is a song that's been calling Christians for generations. The scriptures tell us to stand against evil, wherever we find it. For many, it seems we're just starting to get the idea, Je. 23:22.

It's wonderful to see Christians speaking out. Though, let us be reminded that our stand is also to be in our community, church, work, schools, home, and with friends ... wherever evil is. We're called to be peculiar people (in the world, without being like the world) and we've failed.

We carry the blame for America's problems. It's our heart that isn't humble, our laziness to pray, our not seeking God on every issue, our way that is wicked, and our sins that need forgiven.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land, II Ch. 7:14.

Only then can we begin to walk in righteousness, stand by faith, create a clean heart, and fulfill the requirements for healing our land.

We must also be careful that we stand in the right way, for the right reason...

- 1.) choosing our stand carefully, modeling Jesus.
- 2.) examining our heart and motives, along with God's direction, that we bring glory and honor to Him.
- 3.) to never attack people, Satan being the enemy.
- 4.) to put aside doctrinal differences for the sake of unity (united we stand, divided we fall).

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5.)to never think ourselves higher (only by the grace of God when it isn't me).

6.)to rejoice in each other's victories without name calling, envy, or competition (we're on the same side).

7.)to think of our neighbor in every way, as if he were us.

8.)to pray for friends that offend, as well as foes, Job 42:10.

We can make a difference once we decide to be the difference,
then do it all for the glory of God.

It begins within "OUR" heart.

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In addition to being a published author and poet, Joyce C. Lock created the religion column, "Christianity Made Simple" for Peru Daily Tribune, continues to write inspirational articles for area newspapers, and shares further in online and e-mail ministries.



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