

WORD

In Jeremiah 29:11 God says, "For I know the plans I have for you. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future." God has a good plan for you. When God created mankind He said, "It is very good." God created us to be good. He has good plans. The question is do we believe it. Do we believe we can do really good or even great things for ourselves and others? In the Gospel of Mark Jesus said, "Everything is possible for the one who believes." We all have the capacity to do great things, if only we believe.

APPLICATION

- It has been said, "Sometimes the greatest rewards in life come from doing the things that scare us the most."
- Remember, almost everything you want in life, but do not have, is just outside your comfort zone.
- This week, ask God to help you to fulfill the greatness that He has put inside you.
- Trust that God will answer that prayer and act like it.
- Break down into small steps the actions you would need to take to achieve the goals you have or to fulfill the dreams inside you.
- Do not let fear stand in the way. Courage is not the absence of fear but doing something in spite of fear.
- Commit to taking the first step towards fulfilling your goal or living your dream this week.

Prayer: God, thank You for having good plans for us. Thank You that when You created us You said we were very good. Thank You that You have put greatness inside of each of us. Forgive us when we have bored to sleep the greatness within. Lord give us the strength to awaken the greatness within us. Lord give us the courage and strength to push past our fear and just do it, one step at a time. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Freedom Groups were created with the belief that we are all on a journey through life and that our heart's desire is to be free to be all that we can be. We all want to find effective ways of living and be successful. Trying to find these effective ways to overcome the challenges we face by ourselves just does not work well. We are all the same, no one is different. We need others to help us successfully walk our journey to effective living. Everyone is invited to freedom groups so we can journey together. Join in!



Pushing Past Fear

NOTES

WARM-UP

- My kids like to go on roller coasters. Over the past few years we have tried to go to an amusement park each summer so that they have a chance to ride them. Of course this means my kids want to get me on the rides too. I don't love the rides but I do them for my kids. I remember one year my 2nd oldest daughter really wanted me to go with her on the biggest rides at Kings Island. I told her I had to start with the smaller ones and build up my tolerance. The time finally came to ride the Drop Tower and the Diamondback, the two biggest rides at Kings Island at the time. I was scared, but after having built up my tolerance through the smaller rides, I found myself actually enjoying them.
- Do you enjoy roller coasters? If so, do you have to start out on the little ones to get ready for the big ones?
- What is your favorite amusement park or carnival ride?

So often doing new things makes us nervous, anxious or downright scared. Sometimes these new things are things we want to do or we simply have to do. Either way it can be rough to have to push past our nervousness and fear and actually do it.

I can remember when I was a little boy I was so anxious and excited to be old enough to go to school. Kindergarten was such a big step up into becoming a "big" man. I would be riding the school bus right along with all the other "big" boys from 1st graders all the way up to seniors in high school. To me, riding the bus to school was the big leagues. I wanted to go but it scared me to death.

When the day finally came I was both excited and scared. I had to go, and really wanted to go, so I had to push past the fear and just do it. The first bus ride was tough and exciting at the same time. I worked through all my fears and made it safely to school and back. Riding the bus quickly became routine until one day the next big challenge came. It was something I never even anticipated would be a problem until it happened.

The problem was this. What do you do on a 1/2 hour long bus ride if you have to use the bathroom? I never thought about it until I actually had to use the bathroom. What was I to do? If I tried to hold it I might not make it. If I raised my hand and asked the bus driver to stop everyone would make fun of me. If he did stop where would I go?

So I did what any boy in my position would do. I tried to hold it. Unfortunately, the roads the bus had to travel were bumpy. With each new bump it became harder and harder to keep holding it. Finally, I simply could not hold it any longer. Against my will, I peed myself! I sat right there on the bus and completely peed myself.

Often what we fear is worse than the reality of it however. You see in those days polyester pants and cowboy boots were popular. Polyester does not absorb moisture and boots hold a lot of water. The pee ran inside my pants, down my leg and right into my boot. I don't think a single drop of it escaped! When the bus stopped at my house I got off and no one but my sock knew the difference!

1 - Too Scared to Act

There are many things in life that we want to do and yet the thought of doing it scares us. It could be fear of what we might have to go through to achieve our dreams that scares us or it could be thoughts of all the possible consequences of our actions that scares us. What is it that you would love to do but are too scared to do it? What scares you about it?

2 - First Steps Break Fear

So often fear can be paralyzing. We are afraid to act even if it is something we really want to do. Our minds begin running through every possible bad scenario until it becomes overwhelming. Once we get overwhelmed, we stop in our tracks and go no further even if it is disappointing or downright painful to not do what we want to do. As in the silly but true story of my bus ride, the fear of something is almost always worse than the experience itself. Our minds dream up negative consequences that most likely will never happen or are imagined worse than they ever would be. How we overcome this though is the same way we would face and conquer the proverbial challenge of eating an elephant. How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. What is one small step you could take to overcome the fear of doing what you would love to do?

3 - The First Step Leads to The Second

It has been said, "Everything you want in life, but do not have, is just outside your comfort zone." This statement is so true. We want something because we do not have it. Often we do not have it simply because we will not do what it takes to get it. I believe we were all created to do great things. The potential for greatness lies inside each of us, but far too often it lies there dormant. Our potential has been put to sleep because it has become so bored by our normal, routine, cautious lives. I am not saying that we should all run out to do wild and crazy things. That would be crazy. What I am saying is that we need to awaken the greatness within us by taking one step after another to achieve it. What great thing would you do for yourself, your family, others around you, or even the world as a whole if there were no barriers?
