



Cowardly or Courageous?

God doesn't want life to
leave you quivering in fear.
Learn what He offers
instead



December 2014

By Sister Jessie DiBattista

As I was dashing through the hallway in a full dead sprint towards the cafeteria with an EpiPen in my hand, two things were going on in my head: 1.) *Do not* freak out if you see blood. 2.) Stay strong for your friend.

Fear is described in the dictionary as "a distressing emotion aroused by impending danger, evil, pain, etc." Ah yes, fear, everyone's favorite emotion! For me, I am sometimes still like a little kid afraid of the dark. I know,

embarrassing, but I am still learning to conquer my fears. Trying to do that by myself is a battle that is not easily won; however, learning to conquer my fears with God is a completely different ball game.

Allergy Emergency

Back to the story. My best friend is allergic to latex, an uncommon allergy, and in an even more uncommon turn of events, she came in contact with someone wearing latex gloves while working at a soup

kitchen. When the lady with the gloves touched her, I could see the fear in my friend's eyes, and I knew that I had to keep calm for her, even though I was crying like a baby on the inside.

"Hey, hey, are you OK?" were the first words I could scramble up in my brain to say.

As she stood there scared, our Youth in Action director gave me the keys to the van to get her EpiPen out of the car. Yeah, I felt a lot of pressure at that moment. As I sprinted outside to get the pen, all I

could feel was fear. All I could imagine was not being able to find the EpiPen in the van, or — worse — not being strong enough to use it on my best friend.

Fear Is Not Your Friend

As I came back inside, she seemed calm with no signs of an allergic reaction. Perfectly healthy. As we stood next to each other, isolated from the group, my job was to use the EpiPen if she went into shock, and keeping my cool in that hour of fear was insanely hard.

Thankfully, my friend was fine, and the EpiPen was only needed as a safety blanket; although, looking back on that moment, all I could feel was fear. All I could think about was my selfish, irrational fear of not being able to handle the task. That is not OK.

God says in the Bible countless times that He is with

us and never leaves us, but somehow I still manage to be afraid; I still let that fear consume me. I decided to choose it over the obvious choice of trusting God. I find myself doing this more and more as I grow older.

Cultivating Courage

As a freshman in college, fear is an easy lens through which to see things. I mean, deciding my major, finding new friends, getting involved in different clubs — that is scary stuff, but it is important that I trust God's plan and constantly pray. What is equally important is that I have courage.

To me, courage is the opposite of fear. Being courageous in the face of fear is all I can ever hope for. Having courage is strongly walking into the one thing that seems impossible and feeling peace.

The one thing that makes courage powerful and so much sweeter is that it comes from God. He doesn't just tell us not to be afraid, but He also gives us courage. All we have to do is use it.

Looking back at my distressed, EpiPen-in-hand self, I know that I did not have courage. I am thankful for that moment because I now know that feeling that way was an awful choice compared to what God offers me. He allows me to have courage and faith to know that everything is going to be OK.

As for now, I still find myself metaphorically running through a hallway trying to keep my cool in the face of fear from time to time; however, I know what God wants me to do. "Courage, yes, go now."

Reflect

1 Samuel 15:24-26 – Do you fear your friends more than God?

2 Kings 6:15-17 – Afraid you're fighting a losing battle?

Isaiah 51:7-8 – Do you dread others make fun of you?

1 John 4:18 – What is the antidote to fear?

Proverbs 8:13 – Ever wonder what the "fear of the Lord" is?

Psalms 46 (whole chapter) – Read it when you need to calm down

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