

Daring Faith – Part 5: Facing Your Fears

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October 18, 2020

Today is part 5 of a series we are doing called **Daring Faith**. Many people live in the realm of wishful faith, hoping that things will turn out ok. Even our prayers sometimes are more wishful than faith filled.

But the bible kind of faith is **daring, courageous, risky, proactive, and engaging**. It engages the fight, steps into the flood waters, marches around the city until the walls fall, faces the lions, runs toward the giant, and dares to confront injustice and governments at personal risk.

The Jesus kind of faith is not passive. **It keeps praying, keeps believing, keeps declaring, keeps engaging, and keeps praising until the breakthrough comes.**

It doesn't just sit and wait to see what God will do. Daring faith partners with God and says, "*Here am I, use me to bring change to my world*".

Our Daring Faith theme for this morning is **Facing Our Fears**. Daring Faith faces fears and overcomes them with God's help. Life is full of challenges and fears and phobias of many kinds.

Gallup did a poll asking American adults what they fear the most:

Snakes 51% - Public speaking: 40% - Heights: 36 % - Being closed in small spaces: 34% - Spiders and insects: 27% - Needles/getting shots: 21% - Mice: 20%

During my study I came across some phobia's I was not aware existed.

- **Pentheraphobia:** Fear of mothers-in-laws
- **Peladophobia:** A fear of bald people
- **Hippopoto/monstroses/quipped/alio/phobia:** Fear of long words

Most phobias come from a traumatic experience of some kind. We all have things that affect us more than others. I have a strong dislike for snakes and mice. I was bitten by a snake and I had a mouse run up my pant leg. That did it for me. I don't have a phobia about them, but I would never have them as a pet.

God wants to help us overcome our fears and live with a daring kind of faith. **Fear can hold us back and limit what God wants to do in and through us.**

This morning I would like to use the **story of three amazing women in the bible as examples of Daring Faith**. You may not be familiar with them, but God gives them special recognition. They are **Shiphrah, Puah, and Jochebed**.

They **risked their lives** in going against the Egyptian king's edict to kill Hebrew baby boys. They had daring faith! Jochebed was the mother of Moses and the other two were midwives.

Exodus 1:15-22 The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah, "When you are helping the Hebrew women during childbirth on the delivery stool, if you see that the baby is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live." The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live. Then the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and asked them, "Why have you done this? Why have you let the boys live?"

The midwives answered Pharaoh, "Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they are vigorous and give birth before the midwives arrive." So God was kind to the midwives and the people increased and became even more numerous. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families of their own.

Then Pharaoh gave this order to all his people: "Every Hebrew boy that is born you must throw into the Nile, but let every girl live."

Exodus 2:1-10 Now a man of the tribe of Levi married a Levite woman, and she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. When she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him for three months. But when she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and coated it with tar and pitch. Then she placed the child in it and put it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile. His sister stood at a distance to see what would happen to him.

Then Pharaoh's daughter went down to the Nile to bathe, and her attendants were walking along the riverbank. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her female slave to get it. She opened it and saw the baby. He was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This is one of the Hebrew babies," she said.

Then his sister asked Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?" "Yes, go," she answered. So the girl went and got the baby's mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take

this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you.” So the woman took the baby and nursed him. When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh’s daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, “I drew him out of the water.”

What powerful women of faith and conviction! Can you put yourself in the shoes of these midwives for a minute? This paranoid evil king specifically gives you an order which you dare to defy. At that point you are basically a dead woman walking.

And Moses mother, Jochebed, defied the king by hiding her son while others were being killed. What kind of faith did it take to put your baby in the crocodile infested river in a basket? Not knowing what would happen to him. But trusting God to somehow protect him.

How did these women overcome the fear they must have felt being in that situation? What can we learn from these three women this morning?

1. The fear of the Lord strengthened their faith.

These were women of conviction. I’m sure they were scared but the scriptures say they feared God more than they feared the king.

- The fear of God produced a daring faith in them.

Oswald Chambers: “It is the most natural thing in the world to be scared, and the clearest evidence that God's grace is at work in our hearts is when we do not get into panics....The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when you fear God you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God you fear everything else.”

These amazing women would rather risk their lives than disobey God. **It was wrong then and it is wrong now to kill babies in the womb or out of the womb.**

I believe the biggest scourge on our nation and the greatest reason for judgement against our nation is the sin of abortion. **Every follower of Jesus should make that the number one conviction for how they vote in 16 days.** Stand up for righteousness like these three women did in their day and vote for life.

One of the problems among Christians today is we have **many preferences but few convictions** we are willing to die for or stand up for. As a follower of Jesus, I cannot vote for anyone, of any party, who condones abortion.

- You are not just voting for a candidate. You are voting to implement the party's platform as the law of the land. That is serious.

When I stand before God, I want to be able to join these women of faith and say I too stood against the abortion holocaust in my generation.

These women feared God more than they feared man. They lived by biblical convictions and values which enabled them to exercise daring faith.

I am also very grateful for God's gracious forgiveness and removal of all guilt and shame for those who repent from an abortion. And we embrace them with open arms into our church family.

2. They had to stop listening to the voices of fear.

I'm sure there were many people telling them this was the end to the Hebrews. The **doomsday people** were probably discouraging everyone. *"We might as well give up. The king is too powerful. Let's not resist."* You always have these voices.

If we are going to walk with a daring faith, we need to stop listening to the naysayers around us. **Some mean well, but they are full of unbelief and fear.**

If you are struggling to keep a positive faith, stop listening to the media. Fear is highly contagious. Turn it off. I have become much more selective to the news I absorb. It affects me too much.

Begin to hang out with people of faith and take control of your own negative thoughts.

For God did not give us a spirit of fear. He gave us a spirit of power and of love and of a good mind. 2 Timothy 1:7

When we are able to connect to his perfect love, we are able to overcome our fears.

We should not be spreaders of fear but **hope and peace and confidence** that God is in control. That is the spirit we are to carry and share with people around us.

3. They chose courage and action.

They decided they weren't helpless. They would not act like victims. There was something they could do. **There is always something we can do but it takes courage.** The courage of these women is amazing.

Courage is not the absence of fear. Courage is moving ahead despite your fear with the strength God gives.

For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. Philippians 4:13

Prayer is critically important but there is a time to **translate prayer into action**. There comes a time when you must stop talking about it and thinking about it and complaining about it, and **just do something about it**. – Take the initiative

When the Israelites were between Pharaoh's army and the Red Sea the

(Then) the LORD said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the people to get moving! Ex. 14:15

There is a time to cry out to God and then there is a **time to get moving and do something to bring change to the situation**. The moment we step out in faith, God empowers us.

We will never experience the potential of faith and the supernatural if we choose to play it safe and just sit back and wait for God to move.

Biblical faith is believing to the point you take action. It's one thing to say I believe the bible and its promises and another thing to begin acting on them in faith.

What is God asking you to get involved in? What steps can you take? There is always something we can do. One person can make a huge difference.

- Jochebed's actions led to the deliverance of a whole nation.

There is an amazing story of Bishop Kiril of Plovdiv, Bulgaria, during the Nazi era. An order had gone out from Hitler to deport to the death camps thousands of Jews that the Nazis had already rounded up in Bulgaria and were in a holding pen to be loaded into boxcars. Bishop Kiril—a huge man—strode down to where the Jewish people were kept and stood between them and the SS soldiers. He boldly quoted the Book of Ruth: *"Where you go, I will go."* His courage shut down the deportation efforts, and it is estimated that that act—which gave courage to others—saved the lives of nearly 50,000 Jews during WWII.

You never know what your one act of courage sets in motion.

4. They didn't try to face their fears alone.

We know at least three of them stuck together against their enemy. I'm sure there were others covering for them and protecting them.

In God's kingdom we never fight alone.

It is important for you to be an active part of a church, a small group, men's group, women's group, prayer group, youth group, or mentoring relationship.

- I have a Prayer Shield of people committed to praying for Erma and me.

Lev 26:7-8 You will pursue your enemies, and they will fall by the sword before you. Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall by the sword before you.

There is a spiritual blessing and power when we are **in community and in unity** together.

Jesus said where two or three come into agreement he will join them with his power. Matt 18:20

God has called us to be a people of courageous daring faith. We know if God is for us, we have all we need for victory.

When we choose to face our fears and engage the battle, God fights on our behalf. There is a partnership between us and the Lord. **When we stand in faith the battle no longer belongs to us but to the Lord.** The Lord goes before us. He engages the battle with us and for us. And we know in the end we win!