

LESSON 12 Devotional

Courageous Faith

Bruce is a doctor who has a small medical practice. One day he was visited by Terry, an old friend whom he hadn't seen in a while. He recalled Terry's big announcement about starting a new business, so the first question Bruce asked Terry was, "How's the new business going?"

Terry softly said, "It didn't work out."

Bruce suddenly was struck with deep grief for his friend. He asked sincerely, "What are you going to do?"

Terry looked up with resolve, "I'm trusting God for His plan in all of this."

Without thinking, Bruce blurted out, "What's plan B when that doesn't work?"

In that moment, something dramatically changed in Bruce's life. He later shared, that when those words left his mouth, the small still voice of the Holy Spirit said to him, "**Terry is on the right track. He has courageous faith, but who are you trusting in your business?**"

That day, Bruce rededicated his business to the Lord and began walking in courageous faith.

Hebrews 11:6 teaches, "*And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.*"

There are many ways that a lack of courageous faith can be manifested, but a common one in business is when it comes to financing. The world has convinced many that debt is just an inevitable part of business; many immediately assume that going to the bank and borrowing the money is the only logical solution for their growth plans.

But for a person who desires to please God, this may be the ideal opportunity to apply courageous faith. If you allow God to lead your business, shouldn't He also have a say in how you fund an expansion? Is your God big enough to fund your business growth without debt?

COMMON BARRIERS TO COURAGEOUS FAITH

Let's examine some of the barriers that frequently prevent business owners from trusting God and operating with courageous faith that are referenced in Rick Boxx's book, *FIRE in the Workplace*.

Fear—Sometimes what God asks does not seem to make sense or seems uncomfortable. We wonder: What if we are wrong? What if God did not want us to do this or that? These are questions of fear and fear keeps us from taking courageous steps of faith.

Doubt—We doubt when we question God and God's character: Does God really exist? Will He really come through for me? Doubt causes us to question God and keeps us from living with courageous faith.

Self-Reliance—Sometimes we do not live with courageous faith, doing what God asks us to do, because we do not believe we need God. We think we're smart enough, rich enough, resourceful enough, and powerful enough to do it on our own. When we choose to rely on our own resources, we put up a barrier to live with courageous faith. It is then that we miss out on what God wants to do in our lives and our work.

Busyness—We live in a culture of busyness that can make us feel important and powerful. But busyness also keeps us from taking the time to listen to God, and our full schedules can make us believe we are "too busy" to do what God wants. In the book of James, we are told that faith without works is dead (James 2:17). Dead faith is not courageous faith.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of the four barriers discussed are the most challenging for you?

What are some ideas on how you might overcome those barriers?

2. Have you ever made a business or debt decision that might have turned out better if you would have applied Hebrews 11:6? How did you feel about the outcome?

Describe how it could have been handled differently.

3. What commitments might you make, and be willing to share with the group, that would help lead you towards a more courageous faith in your business?

Tell the group what actions will be needed to make these commitments a reality.

GOING DEEPER

So how do we do business with courageous faith? Here are some steps for you to consider:

1. **Self-Assessment**—How involved is God in your business decisions? If you were needing funding for business would you seek God or seek out your banker?

Your Personal Response

2. **Make a Commitment**—If you desire to change, make a commitment to God in writing (below) and keep it someplace in your office that is visible.

3. **Accountability**—Tell someone about your commitment and ask them to hold you accountable.

Person I'm accountable to: _____

Date in which I asked for accountability: _____