

THERE WAS SOMETHING IN THE POOL

Facing Fear, Finding Faith



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Introduction

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Conclusion: Faith is Still the Way Forward



Author's Note

If someone had told me years ago that I would write a book about faith overcoming fear, I probably wouldn't have believed them. My own journey with fear and agoraphobia lasted for more than fifteen years-long enough that I wondered if I'd ever really be free. But grace moves quietly, and God has a way of meeting us exactly where we are.

Writing these pages wasn't easy. Some days, memories from my hardest years echoed loudly, and it felt risky to look back. But I want you to know: I'm not writing this as an expert who never struggled, or as someone who's now immune to fear. I'm writing as someone who still has to choose faith, one uncertain step at a time.

Why tell my story?

Because maybe you'll see a bit of your own in it. And if my story can remind you that you're not broken, not forgotten, and never alone, then these chapters have already done their work. I pray that, as you read, you'll give yourself grace in your own journey. Faith grows little by little. Sometimes it's messy. Sometimes you'll fall. But every moment you choose to trust- even if all you can do is whisper a prayer- you're moving forward. Thank you for letting my story join yours for a while. May God bless you as you keep taking the next step, and may courage always find you-right where you are.

With God's love, Jan



Chapter 1: Understanding Fear-Where It Comes From

Fear. For some people, it's a flicker that comes and goes- nervousness before an interview, jitters before speaking up. For others, it's heavier. It sits in your chest, keeps you awake at night, and whispers that the world isn't safe.

The Bible doesn't shy away from fear; in fact, it's honest about how fear enters our lives-even in moments we least expect. If you've felt afraid, you're in good company. Scripture is full of people who struggled with worry, panic, and hopelessness. In the very beginning, Adam and Eve hid from God because of fear (**Genesis 3:10**). From there, the threads of fear run through every story: Moses, scared to speak; Elijah, fleeing for his life; Peter, sinking beneath the waves.

We like to believe that if we trust God enough, we won't feel afraid. But fear is part of being human. It springs up when we sense danger, real or imagined, and urges us to react-to run, to hide, to give up before we even begin. Why is it so powerful? Because at its core, fear is a question: "Am I safe? Can I trust what comes next?"

What Fear Does to Us

Fear rarely announces itself boldly. Often, it sneaks in quietly, shaping the way we see the world and ourselves. When we're afraid, we second-guess our thoughts and stop taking risks. We shrink back from opportunities, say no when we want to say yes, and build our lives around what might go wrong.

Sometimes, it's loud—a pounding heart or shaky hands. Sometimes, it's just a general sense of unease, a cloud that never quite lifts.

For many years, this was my everyday reality. I knew scripture—"God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (**2 Timothy 1:7**)—but I couldn't feel it. My mind was crowded with what-ifs. What if I leave the house and panic? What if something goes wrong and I can't handle it? Fear makes us question not only the world, but ourselves and even, sometimes, God's nearness.

Why Does Fear Have So Much Power?

In the Bible, fear often shows up right before God does something big. Why? Because fear is the enemy's favorite tool for keeping us

from moving forward. When Joshua was about to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land—still shaking from forty years of wandering—God said to him three times,

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" (**Joshua 1:9**). That didn't mean Joshua wasn't scared. It meant God wanted him to act, even if he was. The same voice speaks to us: "Yes, you're afraid. But you aren't alone. Take the next step."

Fear's greatest power is isolation. It tells us, "You're the only one. No one else feels like this. If you reach out or move forward, you'll fall." But the Bible reminds us that God draws especially close to people who are afraid. "When I am afraid, I will trust in You," the psalmist writes (**Psalm 56:3**). The blessing isn't the absence of fear -it's learning to trust God in the midst of it.



Faith Is Not the Absence of Fear

Maybe you've heard someone say, "If you really had faith, you wouldn't be afraid at all." Maybe you've thought that about yourself: "If I trusted God more, I wouldn't feel like this." But faith isn't a magic shield

that blocks out fear forever; it's a decision to listen to God's voice even when the fear is loud.

David is a perfect example. He faced lions, bears, and giants, and still wrote songs brimming with fear and longing: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me" (Psalm 23:4). Courage is not pretending the darkness isn't real. It's choosing to believe God is with us in it. For me, faith didn't erase my anxiety overnight. I still felt nerves when I stepped outside that first time, still battled uncertainty on tough days. But each small step of faith created space for hope to grow. I started to see that fear was not my master. God was present, guiding me, even if my heart was pounding.

Recognizing the Roots of Fear

So where does fear come from? Biblically and practically, it often takes root in three places:

A sense of danger or threat: Sometimes real-sometimes imagined. Our minds are wired to keep us safe, but sometimes that wiring overreacts.

A story about the future: Fear is fueled by what has not happened yet. It invents "what ifs" and tries to predict every possible outcome.

A memory of pain: Most of us carry scars-from loss, betrayal, or failure. Fear reminds us of those moments and warns: "Don't let it happen again."

Faith doesn't require us to ignore these roots. In fact, the Bible encourages us to bring every fear, every worry, directly to God. "Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). God welcomes honesty. He wants us to come, trembling and uncertain, and lay our fears at His feet.

A New Question: Who Walks With You?

If fear's question is, "Am I safe?"-faith's answer is, "Yes, because God is here." Fear says, "You're alone." Faith says, "God is with you, and He's not going anywhere."

What helps us most isn't pretending we're never afraid. It's learning to ask, "Who is with me right now?" Every time I took a shaky step out the door, I pictured Jesus right beside me. Each small victory-a walk around the block, a visit with a friend-reminded me that God keeps His promises, and I could trust Him for more.

Your Fears Are Not the End of the Story If you feel imprisoned by fear, I hope you'll hear this: You are not disqualified. You're not weak, broken, or less valuable. You are loved by a God who meets people in the dark and walks with them into the light. The journey from

fear to faith is not a leap—it's a series of ordinary steps, each one a little braver than the last.

Keep reading. You don't have to do this alone. The God who called Joshua and comforted David is calling you, too. And step by step, faith can grow stronger than fear.



Chapter 2: Faith Begins with Knowing Who God Is

Faith isn't just believing "things will work out." It starts with trusting the Person behind the promise. The more we know about God-His love, His character, His presence-the more weight our faith can bear.

Think of a child learning to swim. At first, they might cling desperately to the edge, too afraid to let go. But when a loving parent stands in the water and says, "Jump! I'll catch you," something in that child shifts. The water is still deep. They may still feel scared. But if they trust the person waiting for them, they might just leap.

That's faith: not denying the fear, but choosing to trust the One who says, "I am with you."

The Bible reveals over and over that God is trustworthy. He keeps His word. He cares for our needs. His love isn't conditional or based on our performance. When Moses was called to lead his people out of slavery, he was terrified. "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?" But God didn't boost Moses' confidence by telling him how strong he was. Instead, God said, "I will be with you" (**Exodus 3:12**).

Over time, faith is less about how much you can muster up and more about how well you know the One you trust. Learning to Walk by Faith, Not by Sight

If faith is "confidence in what we hope for," it's trust that doesn't require us to see the finish line first. The Apostle Paul famously wrote, "We walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7). That doesn't mean we walk blindly, but we move forward trusting God's heart, even when we can't see His plan.



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There's a moment in Matthew 14 when Peter sees Jesus walking on water. It's bold, it's wild—and Peter, ever impulsive, says, "Lord, if it's really You, tell me to come to You on the water." Jesus replies, "Come." So Peter steps out of the boat. For a few steps, all is well. But the wind picks up, and Peter starts to sink. He cries out, "Lord, save me!" and immediately Jesus reaches for him.

Was Peter's faith imperfect? Yes. Did Jesus still meet him right where he was? Absolutely.

God honors even shaky faith. If all you have is the courage for one trembling step, He doesn't wait for you

to get braver-He meets you right there, hand outstretched.

Faith Grows When We Use It

Like a muscle, faith grows stronger with use. At first, the tiniest acts might feel huge: getting out of bed, reaching out for help, praying one simple prayer. Over time, each act becomes evidence: "God brought me through before. He'll do it again." The early Christians didn't always feel confident. When a distraught father brought his son to Jesus for healing, he cried out honestly, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24). Jesus didn't scold him for wavering-He honored the grain of faith the man did have.

Your faith doesn't have to be perfect or even big. Jesus said faith the size of a mustard seed-a tiny, almost invisible dot-is enough to move mountains (**Matthew 17:20**). The important thing is to offer what you have, right where you are.

Trust That Grows in the Dark

Sometimes faith is easiest when the sun is shining, life is steady, and prayers are answered the way we hoped. The real test comes in the dark-when confusion,

disappointment, or heartache settles in. It's in these moments that the building blocks of faith go deep.

Consider Abraham, whom the Bible calls "the father of faith." God promised him descendants as numerous as the stars-yet for years, he and his wife Sarah experienced barrenness and heartbreak. Despite doubts and missteps, Abraham chose to trust. Paul later describes him like this: "Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed... being fully persuaded that God had power to do what He had promised" (**Romans 4:18-21**).

That's what faith often looks like. Not denial of difficulty, but a stubborn clinging to God's goodness, even when you can't see the outcome.



Building Trust, One Day at a Time

You don't need to have all the answers; you don't even have to feel steady every day. Faith is built in ordinary, everyday ways: choosing to pray when you want to give up, showing kindness when you feel empty, looking up one more verse or singing one more song when despair is heavy. Each day's small decision to trust God builds a foundation that lasts.

Here are some practical ways to nourish your faith:
Feed on God's Word: Even a few verses a day can shift

your perspective. The Psalms are an honest companion for anyone struggling to believe.

Look for Faithful Footprints: Keep a journal of the times God has helped you-in ways big and small. When doubt creeps in, revisit these reminders.

Walk With Others: Share your fears and victories with trusted friends. Sometimes, seeing God at work in another person's life gives us the courage to keep moving.

Practice Surrender: Each time you're tempted to take control, whisper a simple prayer: "God, I trust You. Be with me in this." **Faith Is for Everyone-Including You**

If you're reading and thinking, "I could never have faith like that," take heart. God's speciality is meeting ordinary people in the middle of their doubts. The path of faith isn't for the perfect; it's for the willing. Even on days when your grip on God feels weak, remember: what matters most is that He never lets go of you.

Faith isn't just for spiritual heroes. It's for you-for the discouraged, the anxious, the weary parent, the uncertain soul. Every step you take, even if your knees are knocking, builds a history with God.

So take one small step. Ask God to show you who He is. Offer your mustard seed of belief. And as you keep walking, one day at a time, you'll discover what Peter,

Abraham, and millions of others have found: God can be trusted, and faith is how you'll learn to live free.

Chapter 3: There Was Something in the Pool

There was something in the pool.

Maybe you've felt it—that invisible, lurking anxiety. Life is full of invitations to step out, but there's always that moment when you hesitate at the water's edge. Sometimes you can almost see it: the shadow beneath the surface, the "what if," the story fear tries to tell. That's how it starts: not as a fact, but as a whisper in your mind. Something might go wrong. Something might swallow you up. There's something in the pool.

It's odd how these childhood fears never quite leave us. Maybe you remember your first swimming lesson—clinging to the side, refusing to let go. Maybe someone told you, "Jump! It's fine!" but all you could picture was what might be hiding in the water beneath your toes. You weren't afraid of water. You were afraid of what you couldn't see.

That's how fear works in our lives, even as adults. We stand at the threshold of something new—a job, a relationship, a dream, a new chapter in faith—and suddenly our imagination starts painting monsters in the deep. Even when others assure us there's nothing

there, we're paralysed by what could be. Sometimes the pool is a literal one; more often, it's life itself.

The Pool and the Unknown

In the Bible, water was often a symbol of chaos, danger, and the unknown. In Genesis, the world began "formless and empty... and darkness was over the surface of the deep" (**Genesis 1:2**). The sea, for ancient people, was untamed-a place where things could go wrong fast. No wonder so many of the stories about God's people take place at the edge of water.

Consider Moses and the Israelites, trapped between Pharaoh's army and the Red Sea. Surely fear gripped them-there was something in that pool too, something that spelled the end. Yet God made a way, right through the deep.

Or think of Jonah, tossed into the waves and swallowed by a fish. God met him in the belly of fear-literally rescuing Jonah from the thing he dreaded most.

And then we have Peter, the disciple famous for both his faith and his fear.

Peter, the Pool, and the Invitation

Matthew's Gospel tells it best: "Shortly before dawn, Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the

disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. 'It's a ghost,' they said, and cried

"Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.'

'Lord, if it's you,' Peter replied, 'tell me to come to you on the water.'

'Come,' Jesus said.

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, 'Lord, save me!'

Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. 'You of little faith,' he said.

Chapter 4: Stories of Faith-Real Lives, Real Courage

Where's his bedroom? It's a strange question, maybe even a little childish-something you might ask when you visit a friend's house for the first time. But in a way, every person of faith has a "bedroom"-a private space, hidden from the world, where they struggle, pray, doubt, and dream. It's where fears feel the loudest and courage feels small. It's where faith is tested, often in the dark and silence, long before it's seen in public.

For years, my bedroom was both my refuge and my battleground. There, I lay awake wrestling with worry-the ceiling fan tracing shadows, my mind circling the same anxious questions. It was in that quiet, secret space that I learned faith is less about what others see, and more about what happens when it's just you, God, and your honest questions.

The Secret Life of Faith

The Bible is full of these private moments. Daniel prayed in his room with the windows open, defying a king's decree. David poured out his psalms when no one was watching-'On my bed I remember you; I think

of you through the watches of the night' (Psalm 63:6). Even Jesus, before facing the cross, slipped away to a garden to pray-his most honest fears and longings laid bare before his Father.

We tend to imagine faith as something that happens in crowds and cathedrals. But it's mostly forged in the quiet places-when no one is watching, when the bravado fades, and you're left with nothing but your questions and the hope that God is listening.

Abraham: Honest Doubts, Stubborn Faith

Consider Abraham, the father of faith. His story is all desert stretches and starry promises, but it's also the small, private places where he questioned God. When God promised him a child, Abraham was old-far past hope, by human standards. More than once, he poured out laughter, confusion, and tears in the privacy of his home. Yet Genesis says, "Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness" (**Genesis 15:6**).

True faith isn't blind denial. It's bringing your fear into the "bedroom"- the intimate space of your heart-where God can transform it

Faith in Our Bedrooms

For you, your battleground might look different.

Perhaps the struggle comes as you close your eyes at night, worried about your kids, your job, your health. Maybe you wake up in the small hours with a weight on your chest, longing for relief. The good news is: God's not absent in these private places. He meets us right there-no mask, no pretense.

For years, my own victories weren't the kind others would see. Some days, the bravest thing I did was swing my feet to the floor and whisper, "God, I'm still here. I want to trust you today." Maybe you know that feeling-the quiet decision, made in the privacy of your own breath, to believe and try again.

Faith Grows in the Dark

These bedroom moments shape us. They give us real courage-the kind that's steady, not flashy. Over time, every whispered prayer, every tearful surrender becomes a foundation. It's no accident that when the public storms come, it's often those who have wrestled in private who stand firm.

When Daniel was tossed into the lions' den, faith wasn't something he invented on the spot. It had been growing, night after night, window open, prayers rising, trust deepening. The real test of faith is not just the big, public moments, but the practices no one else sees.

Ordinary Courage

Faith doesn't always look like miracles or dramatic leaps. Sometimes it's the quiet courage to get up, try again, and love people in your life the way Jesus loves you. It's making the hard phone call, forgiving an old hurt, taking one step forward when it's easier to stay stuck. These small acts, done consistently, build a reservoir of trust between you and God. Stories that matter throughout history and even today, there are countless ordinary heroes -people who have met God in their own "bedrooms" and emerged stronger. Some battle chronic illness and choose gratitude. Some endure disappointment year after year and continue to pray. Some forgive impossible hurts and break cycles of bitterness.

You don't have to be on a stage to be courageous. You don't have to have it all together for God to use you. Your "bedroom" moments-your midnight confessions and private prayers-are sacred ground.

Let God In

So, where's your bedroom? What are the fears and longings that fill that space? Let God into those places. Like David, Daniel, Abraham, and Jesus Himself, the real work of faith happens when we bring our whole selves-failures, fears, hopes, and dreams-to the One who listens in the quiet.



Faith isn't about impressing anyone. It's about trusting, in the privacy of your own soul, that you're deeply loved—that even here, God is working, growing something in you that can't be shaken by storms.

Tonight, or whenever you find yourself in your own quiet room, let your next step of faith be as simple as a whispered prayer: "God, meet me in this place. Shape me here, where no one but You sees." That's the courage that matters most.

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Tonight, or whenever you find yourself in your own quiet room, let your next step of faith be as simple as a whispered prayer: "God, meet me in this place. Shape me here, where no one but You sees." Have you ever had a 'bedroom moment'-one of those honest, hidden times alone with God? What happened as a result? Take a moment to remember, or even write it down. Your private stories of faith are more powerful than you know.



Chapter 5: Faith Over Fear in Daily Life

It's one thing to trust God in a crisis or to believe "faith over fear" as a slogan on a social post. It's a whole different thing to live that out, day after day, when work piles up, worries loop in your head, and ordinary problems eat away at your confidence. For most of us, it isn't dramatic leaps of faith that define our lives-it's the consistent, sometimes unnoticed, choices to keep trusting, keep moving, and keep believing in the middle of regular life.

Faith is not just for the mountaintop or the church service, but for the Monday morning meeting, the overdue bill, the irritating phone call, or the quiet drive home. God knows this, and He's provided not only stories but also practical steps for facing fear with faith, no matter how "everyday" the struggle looks.

Trust in Small Things

Jesus told a story about mustard seeds (**Matthew 17:20**). He said faith as tiny as a mustard seed-a fraction of a fraction- can move mountains. Why a seed? Because seeds are small, sometimes overlooked, and take time to grow. But once planted, they become

something strong and alive. Faith in daily life looks a lot like this: making small, steady decisions to trust God in the little things. It's choosing honesty in a tough conversation, showing kindness to someone hard to love, forgiving an old hurt, or taking care of your body and mind, trusting that each step matters.

Facing Everyday Fears

Most of us have some kind of daily fear-fear of failure, fear of not being enough, fear of disappointing someone, fear of the future. Sometimes it's the fear of just not coping. Rather than pretending these don't exist, the Bible encourages us to bring them directly into dialogue with God.

"Give us this day our daily bread," Jesus teaches us to pray (**Matthew 6:11**). Not bread for a lifetime, but bread for today. By inviting God into our ordinary routines-work, family, meals, rest, and even frustrations-we start to see He's interested not just in our "big moments" but in the whole story.

Choosing Faith as a Habit

Faith grows as a habit, practiced again and again. Here are ways to choose faith over fear in everyday life:

Start your morning with God. Even a short prayer or a minute of gratitude can shift your outlook.

Pause in the panic. When fear rises, take a breath. Name it, and invite God into it. "God, I'm afraid about. Help me trust You with it."

Look for evidence of God's care. End each day by recalling one way God provided or showed up, no matter how small.

Lean on others. Faith isn't a solo journey. Reach out to a friend, ask for prayer, or offer encouragement to someone else who struggles.

Faith for the Next Right Step

Maybe you're facing a problem right now, and the solutions seem out of reach. You don't have to solve everything at once. Faith means asking, "God, what's the next right step?" and being willing to take it, no matter how small. For me, overcoming agoraphobia didn't mean suddenly walking the whole city in a single afternoon. It meant opening the door, taking one step, and trusting God for the next.

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (**Psalm 119:105**). Lamps in ancient times gave just enough light for the next few steps. You couldn't see the whole road, but you could see enough to keep going. Everyday Miracles

When you live this way, you start to notice the subtle miracles God works in daily life. The peace that comes when it shouldn't. The surprising strength to get through a hard day. The way small kindnesses multiply. The burden that somehow lifts when you pray—or the way God uses you to encourage someone else, even when you feel empty.

The truth is, faith over fear isn't just for the case studies and the Sunday sermons. It's for you, today, in the kitchen, the car, the office, the bedroom. It's the thread that runs through all of life, turning each ordinary step into an act of courage.

As you finish this chapter, pause and ask:

What is one area of "everyday life" where fear holds you back? What's the smallest step of faith you could take today? Write it down, say it to God, and let Him walk it with you.

Small acts of faith, repeated over time, create a life rooted in courage and trust. You don't have to be fearless. You just need to be willing to keep stepping out, with God by your side.

Sometimes, faith doesn't come easily. Fear can roll in like a tide, stronger than your willpower, bigger than your best pep talk, and heavier than your heart knows how to carry. There are days when it seems impossible to think a positive thought, let alone step out in confidence—days when fear isn't just a background hum,

but a full-blown storm that shakes everything you've built.

If that's where you are, you're not alone. The Bible doesn't look away from these dark valleys. In fact, some of God's closest friends spent time right at the edge of despair- singing, crying, and sometimes even breaking, while fear surrounded them.

David's Dark Night

King David, the poet-warrior after God's own heart, knew what it was to be overwhelmed. There were moments when he wasn't the fearless giant-killer, but a man hiding out in caves, running from Saul, his heart pounding with anxiety. In the Psalms, David put it plainly: "My soul is in deep anguish. How long, Lord, how long?" (**Psalm 6:3**). He even wrote, "When I am afraid, I put my trust in you" (Psalm 56:3)-not if I am afraid, but when Faith doesn't deny the storm. It means bringing everything you feel-shaking, messy, half-formed-straight to God, who already knows what's in your heart.

Jesus in the Garden

Even Jesus Himself, on the night before the cross, found fear overwhelming. In Gethsemane He prayed, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death.

Stay here and keep watch with me" (Matthew 26:38). Jesus knows what it's like to feel pressed in, desperate, longing for escape. His answer wasn't to fake confidence or ignore His pain. He fell on His face before His Father, pouring out honest cries-and in that honesty, drew near to God.

If the Son of God wept and shook and longed for someone to sit with Him, then we're not failures if we feel the same way. Being overwhelmed is not a sign you lack faith; it's a sign you are human.

When You're Drowning, Not Swimming

Maybe you've tried prayer, deep breathing, reading your Bible, and nothing seems to pull you out. Fear sits on your chest or fills your mind with panic. You feel guilty for even feeling this way; shouldn't you be stronger by now? Remember Peter, called out onto the water. He began with bravery, but as soon as he saw the wind and waves, he panicked and started to sink. His prayer was simple-just three words: "Lord, save me!" (**Matthew 14:30**). There are times for eloquent prayers, and times to simply gasp for help. Both are heard by God.

Jesus "immediately" reached out and caught Peter. There was no lecture, no shaming, just presence and rescue. Over and over, the Bible shows us: God doesn't wait for us at the finish line. He meets us right in the

middle-when we're flailing and afraid, messy and sobbing, choking out the only words we have.

Small Anchors in the Storm

If fear feels overwhelming right now, try to hold onto even the smallest anchors:

Breathe and Be Honest: Sometimes the holiest thing you can do is sigh and admit, "God, I can't handle this. Please meet me here."

Read the Psalms Out Loud: These ancient prayers put your cries into words. Try **Psalm 34**, **Psalm 46**, or **Psalm 91**. Let Someone In: Ask a friend to pray with you or just sit in silence. Faith was never meant to be a solo sport. Choose Body Over Brain: Sometimes all you can do is take a walk, drink water, rest, or sit with your feet in the grass. God made your body as well as your soul

The word "FAITH" is written in a bold, stylized, blocky font. The letters are white with a black outline, set against a solid black background. The font has a three-dimensional, slightly rounded appearance. The letters are evenly spaced and of equal height.

Chapter 6: Faith Isn't Feeling-It's Choosing

In the swirl of anxiety, it's easy to think you're failing if you don't feel faith or peace. But feelings are not the measure of your trust. Faith is sometimes just showing up, admitting you're afraid, and taking the next breath. Some of the greatest acts of trust happen when you don't feel anything at all, except the weight of clinging to God because there's nowhere else to turn.

It's also okay to ask for help. If fear is spiralling and you can't pull out, tell your doctor, trusted pastor, or counsellor. God works through wise people and good medicine, too.

Stories From the Edge

You're in the company of giants. The writer of Lamentations poured out his heart in darkness but ended with hope: "Yet this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning.

I've found that faith doesn't always show up when you're glowing with confidence. Sometimes, it returns quietly, right in the middle of a season when you aren't feeling the way you "should." You may not be 100%, you may feel weak or messy, but faith has a way of keeping you grounded—even when your emotions are all over the place. Faith will see you through the darkest valleys. It's the hand that holds you steady until the storm passes, and the gentle whisper that reminds you God is still with you, no matter what your heart is feeling.

If that's where you are right now—hanging on, unsure if you believe enough or feel enough—know that you're already surrounded by grace. Sometimes faith is just the grit to show up another day, trusting that sunlight is on the way.



Chapter 7: Growing Your Faith Muscle

Faith isn't a one-time accomplishment or a badge you earn for good behavior. Like any muscle in your body, it needs exercising, resting, and sometimes even repair. The gift of God is that faith can grow-sometimes imperceptibly, sometimes in spurts, but always with the steady company of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual Muscles Need Exercise Think about how muscles develop: through challenge and resistance. No one grows stronger by simply wishing for it. In the same way, faith gets stronger every time you use it-every time you choose trust over anxiety, courage over avoidance, prayer over despair.

James wrote, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish.

Conclusion: Faith is Still the Way Forward

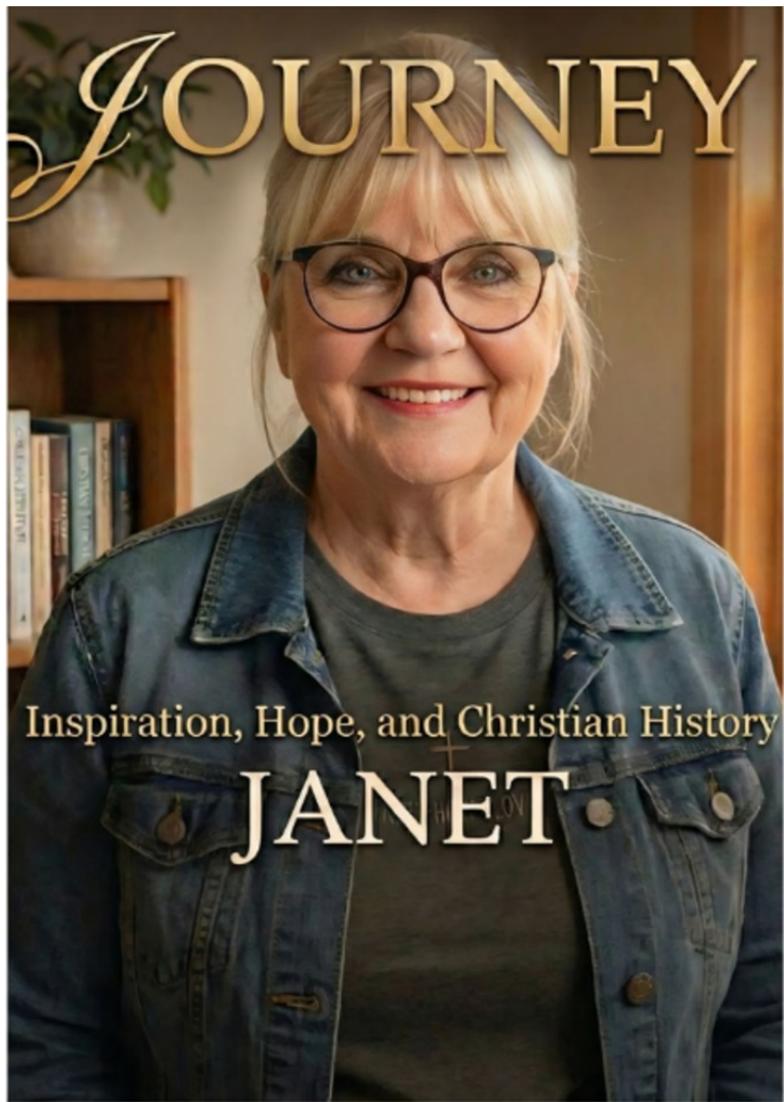
So here we are-standing together at another threshold. If you've made it this far in these pages, that in itself is an act of courage. You've read about my journey, reflected on your own, and maybe discovered some new corners of faith you hadn't noticed before. You've faced the pool. You've sat in your "bedroom moments." Maybe you've felt, for the first time in a long while, that you're not as alone as fear would have you believe.

If life has taught me anything, it's that fear never really disappears for good. It comes in waves-sometimes soft, sometimes strong- and faith is the quiet resolve that keeps us moving anyway. Not because you're immune to worry or sadness or setbacks, but because, deep down, you know who walks beside you. You've been introduced to that truth in every story the Bible unfolds: Moses and the Red Sea, Peter and the waves, David in the cave, Jesus in the garden. Every one of them faced their fears-not just once, but over and over. And every single time, God was there, steady and true.

Faith is not about never trembling-it's about learning to walk when you do. It's about saying, "I'll take this step with You, God. I'll trust You for the next one, too."

Sometimes those steps look tiny: just breathing, sitting still, hanging on. Sometimes they look bold: apologizing, forgiving, loving, moving forward after loss. There is no step so small or uncertain that God won't walk it with you.

That's the beauty of faith over fear. It's not a sprint or a one-time leap. It's a slow walk, sometimes a crawl, often taken with shaky hands but open hearts. You don't have to be perfect or unshakable. All you need is the willingness to let God meet you- right at the edge, right in the unknown, right in the place where your fears once ruled.



A Final Blessing

So as you close this book, take a breath. Give thanks for how far you've come. Think of all the moments-large or small -when you've trusted God, even when it was hard. And remember, each new day is another chance to choose faith over fear.

May the Lord bless you with courage for the ordinary moments and the giants alike. May He remind you, again and again, that you are loved beyond measure. When fear whispers its old stories, may faith rise up with a newer song: "I am not alone. God is with me, and I will keep walking."

This is not the end of your story, but a new beginning. Step forward, one foot, one prayer, one act of trust at a time. Faith will walk you home.

Amen.

JOURNEY

Inspiration, Hope, and Christian History

JANET