



## Facing Your Fears

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by Taylor Hargrove



Most of you who know that God has given me a heart to embrace life passionately. However, there are some things—despite this wild heart—of which I am afraid. One of them is heights! I think it originated as a toddler when my family went camping in the mountains, and I felt scared as I looked out our car window and saw, beyond the road's edge, an incredible drop with an old crashed car at the bottom. I don't know how that translated in my little brain as a baby to have a fear of heights. Maybe I felt unsafe or that I, too could fall. Later on in high school, I attempted rope courses and watched as my body would not obey my brain. When I told my legs to jump my brain said, "No! Are you crazy?" I now try to enjoy every high place I'm at, but if it involves getting close to the edge, my knees lock up before I realize what's going on. Maybe *you* aren't afraid of heights, but I'm sure there is something that you fear...snakes, spiders, the dentist, public speaking, sounding foolish, making mistakes, your appearance, intimacy, your past, or your future?

The point is we all have fears to overcome.



Wahoooooooooooooooo!!!!



Me, Johnny, & Cookie - an adventure should be lived with others

Well, recently I got the chance to do one of the most amazing things ever: jump out of an airplane at 13,000 feet! Two of my college buddies live here in Ohio, and one of them, Johnny Picard, asked the other, Cookie (yes, that's his nickname) and I if we wanted to go skydiving with him and his friends. It may sound odd, but I was *pumped*. I have always wanted to go skydiving, and as hyper-spiritual as this may sound I wanted to "pray over the city as I fall over it". Also it was an item in my own 'bucket list' (you know the movie?); a thing to do at least once in my life.

Throughout the weeks of mental preparation and dealing with fears, doubts, and asking the Holy Spirit if this was a dumb thing to do, I ended up hearing so many amazing stories about how awesome the experience was that I was all the more thrilled to go. There was a shift in my perspective. The potential joy of the experience began to outweigh my fear of heights. I think the key is realizing another, stronger, healthy emotion to trump the fear. It is a choice. I chose experiencing the thrill of the jump instead of fearing heights and all the scary things associated with it.

Joshua 1:9 says, "I command you, be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." No matter what our fears, Jesus has called us to fear only Him and nothing else. And this is a different kind of fear. It is a proper reverence and humility before amazing love and power.

## Here are some things Jesus taught me through skydiving

### 1. The Power of Friendship

- Face your fears with friends and have them go through the process with you. They encourage you (add courage to you) and rejoice with you afterwards.
- The joy of an experience is not at its pinnacle unless you have someone to experience it with. If I didn't have friends to share this with it would not have been as cool. They understand and celebrate with me; hopefully you do too. A sunset, birth, new job, or great accomplishment in our lives all have more joy when we can share them with others.

### 2. Importance of Taking Risks

- *"You parents, if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! If you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask Him"* (Matthew 7:9-11). My tandem instructor (the guy I am attached to while jumping), Kip, was very experienced but had an element of "crazy" in him. So if Kip, who is a sinful man, wants me to experience an amazing jump and takes care of me how much more will my Heavenly Father be a trustworthy spiritual skydiving instructor? Jesus is our Tandem Faith Instructor. When we take leaps of faith He is jumping with us as we experience the thrill, and He will guide us safely to the ground. His motive is always good, and He owns the universe. Jesus Christ is absolutely trustworthy. When we take risks for Him and in His name He goes with us and helps us where we are lacking. Never does He take joy in our failures but teaches us through them and loves us when we take risks.
- Jesus has called us to live life to the fullest (John 10:10). So many people believe that being a Christian is a boring life. But let me tell you when you walk with the Spirit, it is an adventure. Last month I was in Africa, speaking to millions of viewers on national TV, praying with a Muslim who hated God, watching a lion from 40 feet away and a crocodile from 10 feet, and last week I jumped out of an airplane. Throughout it all remember that God wants us to enjoy His creation. *"Delight yourself in the Lord and He gives you the desires of your heart."* Psalm 37:4

What is hindering you from enjoying life to the fullest? What is holding you back from overcoming your fears and taking risks in your life with Jesus Christ? Holy Spirit come in power and fill us with an overwhelming trust and give us the gift of faith to overcome whatever fears are holding us back from fully being the people you have created us to be. Help us take faith jumps in the Spirit and the natural with you and to experience the amazing adventure of life that you have given us. In Jesus' name.

**FEAR is an acronym for False Evidence Appearing Real.**

### Prayer Requests

- for the launching of student/athlete-led movements on college campuses across the country
- for me to walk in the Spirit daily (Ephesians 5:18, Galatians 5:16-26)



*Tandem instructor, Kip, and me on our way down!!!*

### Contact Information

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