



Faithology

12 ideas to *rock* your faith

J o h n B a r r e t t

Faithology

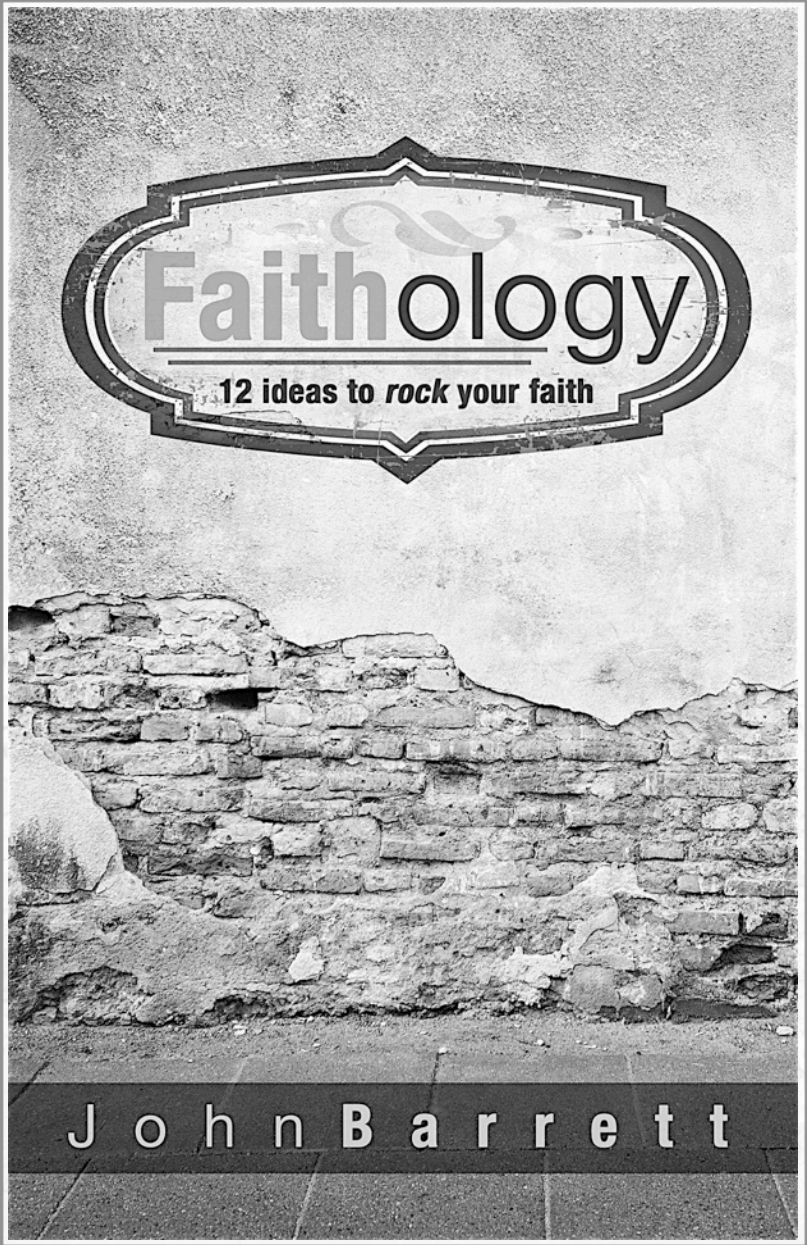
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Faith | Leadership | Innovation



**THE
WATER PARK
OF FEAR**

|| Idea #1 ||



The Water Park Of Fear

No one accomplishes anything of significance for God without the courage to step out and go. Fear can hold us back from experiencing all that God has designed for us. If we are going to live a life of significance, it requires us to live with courage. We must understand that courage is not the absence of fear, but rather it is the moving ahead in spite of fear. We can't allow it to paralyze our progress.

Not long ago, my family and I went to a local water park for a getaway. We decided to go on a weekday, so that we would have the best chance of having the water park all to ourselves. Our plan worked. We went down the lazy river, played in the faucets, and swam around in the pools without waiting in lines or having to make our way through the crowds. It was amazing. The whole

time we were enjoying the attractions, my youngest daughter was eyeing the “big slide.” She watched her sister and me go down the slide over and over and over. I kept asking if she wanted to try it, but she was just too scared. However, after some time, she built up enough courage to attempt this daring feat. I took her hand and began the long journey to the top of the slide. She looked down after each giant step we took up the stairs to see how high we were. Her anticipation was growing. When we got to the top, she took a deep breath, looked at me, and then plunged down the slide. After we both made it to the bottom, she looked me in the eye, her face alight with joy, and yelled, “What have I been missing! Can we go again Daddy?” On our way up the second time, I asked her if she had been really scared the first time we went down. With wide eyes, she answered me with an emphatic, “YES!” Then with the assumption she had overcome her fear, I said, “But now you aren’t scared anymore, are you?” Her reply caught me off guard. She said, “No, I am still scared, but I’m going down anyway!”

“Courage conquers fear and motivates an individual to do things they never thought possible.”

When courage resides in someone’s heart, they are bolder, stronger, and more effective in all that they do. Their bravery will push them to overcome any

obstacle that may stand in their way. Courage conquers fear and motivates an individual to do things they never thought possible. It pushes them to move beyond their comfort zones and accomplish great things. God has commanded each of us to be people of extreme courage. Courage is the fuel for a faith-filled life.

Joshua 1:9

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

Most people are unaware of the courageousness they already possess. This potential rests inside them, but they live in self-doubt, fear, and unbelief. Understand that courage is not the absence of fear; it is the absence of self. Self causes us to think we are alone, as if acting solo. It makes us question if we have what it takes to accomplish our God-given dreams. The truth is, on our own we are limited; but through Christ, we are limitless. And in order to live with a limitless faith, we must face our fears head on without compromise. There are 3 main fears that everyone must battle:

1. Fear Of The UNKNOWN

One of the scariest feelings that can overtake us is the fear of the unknown. Our mind tends to imagine the worst when we do not know what lies ahead in our future. When my daughter, Allie, thought about the big slide, she didn't know what to expect; therefore, she feared the worst. Fear is a pessimist. It has no hope. When fear of the unknown comes upon us, it turns our mind into a wonderland of uncertainty and insecurity. When uncertainty and insecurity grow within, it starts to control our decision-making. But we do not have to live under the control of this fear. We must learn to trust God and let faith direct our every move. He is Omnipotent— knowing all things. When God leads us, we can trust the outcome will be in His perfect will. Envision a life without fear of the unknown. Imagine being free to trust

that whatever God calls you to do, you know you'll have the ability to achieve it. This is the kind of faith it takes to live without limits. We do not have to fear the unknown because we serve a God that knows all things. He will never call us to attempt something we are unable to accomplish. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "He who is not everyday conquering some fear has not learned the secret of life." Never let your fear of the unknown keep you from having faith in the unseen.

2. Fear Of OTHERS

We cannot believe what others say about us over what God says about us. Too often we allow what people think about us to determine our level of courage. When we fear what others say about us, we become trapped in a prison of self-consciousness. In his work, *The Life of Andrew Jackson*, Marquis James tells of a Sunday morning in 1818 when Circuit Preacher Peter Cartwright delivered a sermon. The traveling preacher was warned that the up and coming President General Andrew Jackson would be in attendance and to keep his remarks inoffensive, as to not upset the General. After all, Andrew Jackson was well known for his fiery temper and deadly duels. However, during his message, Peter Cartwright came out and said, "I have been told that Andrew Jackson is here today and to hold back any offensive remarks. What I must say is that Andrew Jackson will go to hell if he does not repent of his sin." It is said that after the sermon the General approached Cartwright and said, "If I had a regiment of men like you, I could whip the world."

Never let the fear of others keep you from stepping out in courageous faith. Envision having no fear of rejection. Imagine not

being afraid of what others think or say about you. Picture all you could do for God if you were free from the worry of what might happen to your reputation. Remember this: what you fear about others will only limit the difference you can make in them. God is the one who validates and qualifies you; not others. He calls you, “Blessed.”

John 20:29

Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

3. Fear Of FAILURE

We cannot wait for circumstances to be perfect before we step out in faith. Too many people wait for their fear to disappear before they take a leap of faith. However, faith does not operate that way. Faith is about stepping out even when you are unsure of the outcome. Those who wait until they feel ready are usually just living with an excuse for their apprehension. God will always call you to greater endeavors in your life because He loves you and has endless plans for you. Though my daughter was scared she still went down the slide. You and I have to step out in faith despite our fears. If I were to ask you to walk across an eight-foot beam that was only two feet off the ground, would you do it? Probably so. You would not think twice about it. However, if I were to raise it five feet off the ground, would you still do it? Most likely. What if I raised it 25 feet off the ground? What about 50 feet? What about 500 feet? What about 5,000 feet? At what point did you drop out? Why did you drop out? Was it because you do not know how to walk across an eight-foot beam?

Of course not. It takes the exact same skill to walk across an eight-foot beam at 500 feet as it does at 2 feet off the ground. Nothing changed except your fear of failing. Fear keeps us from going higher and higher and believing God for greater opportunities. This is an example of why the Apostle Paul wrote this:

2 Corinthians 5:7

For we live by faith, not by sight.

Your sight may scare you; it can put fear in your mind. The reality is: if you knew the beam was no higher than two feet off the ground, you would have very little fear in crossing it. You're only afraid because of what you see. You're afraid of falling. Walking by faith is about trusting God to use you to do incredible things at every level He has called you to—no matter how high it may be. The fear of failure can cause you to stop pressing on in your faith. But always remember: failure is not forever, it is just a moment to learn. Henry Ford said, "Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently."

2 Timothy 1:7 (NKJV)

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Rest assured, God will always raise the beam higher and higher in your life because He has great plans for you. Do not be afraid when God raises the beam. He is doing so for a greater purpose. Feed your faith, and not your fear. Invest in your faith, and not your fear. Do not feed your worry by thinking about it, talking about it, and dwelling on it. There is no fruit in fear, only rotten

thoughts. Therefore, invest in your faith by speaking the Word of God, thinking on Godly things, and by declaring your assurance and trust in God. Tip the scale of faith and begin to see supernatural things happen in your life!

I encourage you to develop what I call, “Godfidence.” Godfidence is God-sized confidence. There is a big difference between confidence and Godfidence. Confidence is about what you can do, and is man-made. However, Godfidence is about what God can do, and is God-made. It is great to have confidence, and we do need it, but Godfidence is an even greater level of faith. Godfidence allows us to shift from leaning on our own understanding to leaning on God’s faithfulness. You can always rest assured that, when God points us in the direction of our destiny, He anoints us to complete the journey. He is faithful to deliver us. Never let fear ambush the future God has planned for you. Punch it in the face and declare that God is your strength.

In sum, don’t let fear keep you from experiencing the “big slides” in the water park of life!

Ideas To Think About...

A) Rate which fear you struggle with the most. Mark 1 for the most common and 3 being the least...

Fear of the unknown

Fear of others

Fear of failure

B) What would you do for God if you knew you would never fail?

C) When was the last time you stepped out in faith and experienced God's provision?

Faithology Challenge...

Begin to overcome your fears by taking practical steps to face them. Make a plan to push yourself further from whatever it is that may be holding you back from being courageous. If there is a conversation you are avoiding, make a plan to talk to that person. If there is a dream in your heart to accomplish a goal, make a plan to start working toward it. If you have a fear of failing at a certain task, start to step out and try it anyway. The more you face your fears the easier it becomes to be courageous.