

Comfortable Being Uncomfortable

By: Lori Schaffer

Has God ever told you to do something you just didn't want to do? Did you listen to him or did you stomp your feet and do what you wanted to do instead? If so, how did that work out for you? I'm sure I can guess the answer. We all do this at times. When we ignore God's prompting in our lives, things usually end poorly for us. We would be much better off if we just followed God's lead. God will use these instances to help stretch us, mold us, and move us.

A few months ago, on a Sunday morning, while I was getting ready for church, the soft, gentle whisper of God told me he was going to make me comfortable with being uncomfortable, and that I serve an audience of one. I knew I had to get up that Sunday morning and speak at church. I stomped my feet the day before and threw a fit. I did not want to do it. I felt like I had nothing of value to say. I really dislike being up in front of a large audience. I had all the excuses; but God had other plans for me. I knew I had to get up and speak even if I didn't want to. I prayed about it and God gave me the words to say when I was certain I had none. Here is where true obedience comes in. I am at a point in my faith, that if God is calling me to do something, then I just need to get out of His way and allow Him to work. I need to step out of the boat. I may still throw a hissy fit, momentarily. That's the flesh, our human nature at work; but ultimately, I need to follow the Spirit's lead. Where He leads, I will follow.

Is there something in your life that God is calling you to do, but you are hesitant? Sometimes we say, "No God, I am perfectly fine right here where I am." Things are comfortable and familiar, and we are fearful of the unknown. What you may not realize is that by saying no to God, you are saying no to the blessings He may have for you. It's time to get uncomfortable. God requires us to grow and mature in our faith. Both of which are not always easy. Sometimes we go through situations in our life that we don't like. If you keep your eyes on the Lord, he will use those instances to grow you. Growth most always brings with it some discomfort. Spiritual growth requires obedience.

There are a few areas God has laid on my heart that you may be struggling with. This is a big one for new believers: Have you been baptized? Baptism is a giant step in obedience. It is an outward display, your personal proclamation, that you are a follower of Jesus Christ. Yup, your hair will get wet and everyone at church will be watching. Guess what? You serve an audience of one, God. No one else. It doesn't matter what anyone else may think; your only concern should be being obedient to what God is calling YOU to do. *(If you were baptized as an infant, I encourage you to open your Bible and discover the biblical meaning of baptism for yourself.)* Perhaps God is calling you to become a member of the church. Oh, but it's much more comfortable just coming to church each Sunday and being a spectator. Becoming a member of the body requires serving. You were created to serve God. This is your purpose. God has given each of us different strengths, talents, and abilities, but when used together in the body

of Christ, His purpose is glorified. Think about what you enjoy doing. What are you really good at? Can you use those talents to serve in the church? I bet you can! Ephesians 2:10 says, "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, to do good works." Maybe God has prompted you to volunteer in children's ministry, but you are fearful that you don't know enough about the bible. This is where God will grow you in your biblical knowledge and use you to help the littlest ones come to know Him. Don't be fearful. Perhaps God wants you to lead a small group bible study. Do it! Take that step of faith. Step out of your comfort zone. Whatever it may be that God is prompting you to do, I encourage you not to let your fear of being uncomfortable win. If God is calling you to do something, then do it. You may feel you are not qualified or equipped. Let me tell you something. If God is calling you to do it, then he will equip you. God qualifies the unqualified. I just love how God does that!

In January of 2022, I made a career change. A position opened up in another building within the school district that I work for. I interviewed for it and was offered the job, which I accepted. This was not an easy decision for me. I loved my coworkers in the building I was at. I enjoyed working with the little kids, and I wasn't too sure about junior high aged kids. I was comfortable where I was, but God was nudging me. Starting over was hard. Not knowing anyone or having my closest friends with me was scary. God knew this new position was what I was going to need in the year to come. Just a few months after I started my new position, my mother was diagnosed with terminal cancer. Had I stayed in my previous job, I wouldn't have been able to handle the stress of that job and the stress of my mom's illness. It would have been too much. God knew that. I'm fairly certain I would have ended up needing to take a lengthy leave of absence or just quitting. He knew exactly what I needed and provided for me during this time. I am so thankful that I took the leap of faith. In addition, I now feel like I can have the greatest impact working with this age group of students. While I may just be the building secretary, my God given job is to be a light to these students. There are so many kids who are hurting. I am drawn toward those kiddos who are having a rough home life, who just need someone who understands, or a listening ear. If you read my article titled, "Fill Your Cup," you will understand how my own childhood trauma would draw my heart to those children. God has me right where he wants me, but I had to allow myself to be uncomfortable for a little while.

Think about the word uncomfortable. It means discomfort. Sometimes when we experience discomfort, we experience physical pain. Maybe you are in a situation right now where you are experiencing physical pain. 1 Peter 1:6-7 says, "In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which perishes though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ." No one wants to go through trials. No one wants to experience pain and suffering, but we all will. It's a part of life that we will never escape from. Nothing may grab your attention more than pain. God may be allowing you to experience suffering so you will be able to help others. Oftentimes, it's those people who have experienced the greatest suffering who are able to bring the greatest comfort to others. James 1:2-3 says, "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter

various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance, and let endurance have its perfect result so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.” This verse is a tough one for me. It’s hard to be joyful when you are in pain or going through a trial. The refining process hurts. Fire burns. Proverbs 17:3 says, “The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, but the Lord tests hearts.” This is where faith comes in. No matter what comes our way, what trials we face, our faith must remain strong. Keep your eyes on God, no matter what. Philippians 3:14 says, “I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.” I encourage you to press on.

If you are angry with God right now about something in your life that isn’t going according to your plan, you have fallen into Satan’s snare. He has you right where he wants you, in his corner. No matter what situation you are going through, God is your healer, your provider, your strength, and your refuge. Run to Him, not away from Him. His arms are always open. It doesn’t matter how many times you have turned away from the Lord, he is always waiting for you with open arms. Let Him be your comfort.

Comfortable being uncomfortable, what is God calling you to do? If you already know, answer His calling. Take that step of obedience and trust Him. If you aren’t sure, ask Him, and then listen. If I hadn’t been obedient to getting up in front of church that Sunday morning, I would have missed out on what God was calling me to do. Am I qualified to write these words? God qualifies the unqualified. If He has called me, then He will equip me and give me the words He wants on the page. He will do the same for you in whatever area He is calling you. Seek Him for guidance. Pray and ask Him to help you. Then, be bold in your faith and see where He leads you. You may discover a new level of comfort with the Lord that you never experienced before.

REFLECTION

Is there something God is calling you to do that you have been avoiding? Are you serving in the body of Christ? Think about what it is that you really enjoy doing. Pray and ask God how you can use your talents. Maybe you are a great baker, or you love to sing, or you are a gifted artist, or you have a green thumb and love gardening; whatever it is, God can use your talents for His glory.

APPLICATION

It’s time to get comfortable with being uncomfortable. Don’t be fearful of trying something new. If God is calling you, he will equip you.

SCRIPTURE VERSES TO REMEMBER

Philippians 4:13 ~ *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

Ephesians 2:10 ~ *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*

Peter 4:10 ~ *As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the multifaceted grace of God.*