

Falling in Love with Possibility

By Bobby Schuller

Well we're in a series called *Your Best is Yet to Come*, and if you're doing life with Jesus, friend let me tell you, that is true for you. That's true for you. It doesn't matter how sick you are, how old you are, how poor or broke you are, if you're doing life with the Lord, your best is yet to come.

And we want to spend about four weeks believing this and instilling this, these promises that come from scripture, that we are in this thing called eternal living in the kingdom of God, that no matter how dark and hard your life is getting, God will never leave you, never forsake you, never abandon you, and that the best is yet to come.

And today, one of the things I want to talk about is the importance of the struggle, and sometimes the importance of suffering. I'm a Schuller, and so I have to start by telling you anything is possible in your life. We Schuller's are possibility thinkers, and I need you to know that that really is true. That number one, there are two things that I want you to see today. Number one: that really anything is possible in your life. That when Jesus said anything is possible for those who believe in me, it's true. It's actually true. That anything is actually possible in your life.

But number two, and this is something we don't always like to hear in America, or in places that are affluent, that the journey there is

arduous. The bigger the dream is, the greater the suffering and the greater the struggle. And these two things go hand in hand. That anything is possible in your life, but very often those impossible things, people think are impossible, achieving them requires a long arduous difficult journey, sacrifice, and I want to talk about that today.

First, let me just convince you that that struggle is worth it. It is worth it. Just like to be healthy means you maybe have to exercise a little bit every day the rest of your life, to be the kind of person that embraces possibilities and amazing things in your life means you're going to struggle very often, but you'll look back and say I'm glad I struggled. I'm glad that those struggles made me the person I am today.

I once heard a colonel say that in a fight, out of a hundred soldiers, there are twenty that shouldn't even be there. They're not trained, they shouldn't be in the fight. There are 70 who are probably never even going to pull the trigger and they're basically just targets for the enemy. There are nine who are true soldiers, and then there is one who is a warrior. It's that one out of a hundred that I want you to be. It's that warrior for the Lord. That warrior that's willing to go the extra mile, that's willing to endure the suffering, that's willing to really go for it. That's who I want you to be. I want you to not only embrace the reality and the truth of scripture, that anything is possible in your life if you're doing things with Jesus Christ, but also be willing to embrace the struggle, the suffering

and the difficult road that is ahead if you want to attain those goals, and to understand that that journey is worth it.

First, we do have to believe anything is actually possible. That is really true. If you have your Bible's you can open with me to John chapter 14. John 14, Jesus says.. this is a part of the departure sermon. And this is something Jesus needs His disciples to understand. It's kind of like the last thing He's telling them before the crucifixion. And He's talking to Philip. And He says, "Don't you know me, Philip? Even after I have been among you for such a long time. Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say show us the Father. Don't you believe that I am in the Father and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you, I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father living in me who is doing His work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves."

What works is He talking about there? He's talking about signs and wonders. He's talking about His miracles. This is important. That He begins, He's talking about walking on water, He's talking about raising the dead, He's talking about healing people.

And then He says, "Very truly I tell you whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing." Anyone who believes in Jesus can do those signs and wonders, and more. "And they will do even greater things." Everyone say greater things. Look if I pulled you over on the side

of the road and said, can you do greater things than Jesus Christ? What would your answer be? No. Right? But what would Jesus' answer be?

Yes.

This is so important. How often is Jesus looking at His disciples and saying you little faiths. It was His like nickname for His disciples. He was just constantly trying to build their faith, build their faith, build their faith. That they're not living in the kingdom of the earth anymore. They're living in the kingdom of God where anything is possible in their life. Anything.

Pastors who teach that miracles don't happen anymore are pastors who have not seen what I have seen. I have prayed for a man in Thailand who couldn't walk for ten years, and he stood up and ran. We prayed for a woman who had a tumor on her neck and the tumor vanished. We went to a town where it hadn't rained for three months and we prayed for rain and it started raining as we prayed. I watched a girl who had white pants on, on a missionary trip, was leading a bunch of teenagers. She was hit by a car going about sixty miles an hour, flung through the road, tumbled on the ground in Bangkok, got up, was totally fine and her pants weren't dirty.

So want to tell you something. Look miracles happen. They just, for whatever reason, don't happen as much in the U.S. You can speculate why, but I'm telling you, I'm telling you that anything is possible in your life. You can be healed of anything, anything can happen in your life,

anything can change in your life. You can beat your addiction, you can save your marriage, you can recoup your kids, you can bring your family back together, you can start your own business, you can do anything, anything if you do it in Jesus' name.

And the thing is that this is one of the main things that Jesus was trying to get across to His disciples. Believe it, first of all. Believe and fall in love with possibility. Fall in love with the what if motif. Now God doesn't always heal us, right? He's sovereign. We don't always get what we want, but it's always possible. And if we can wake up every morning and ask ourselves that question: what if. What if this could happen in my life? What if this was possible? And begin to live from that place, I believe that incredible things will begin to happen in your life.

The danger, of course though, is that when we do become possibility thinkers, we do embrace faith, we do embrace the kingdom of God, we do believe in miracles that God can change even physics and bend the rules if He wants to, that the danger is the danger of denial. And I've seen this sometimes in many charismatic circles which I've been very much a part of. It's the pendulum on the other side and it can be a danger.

I remember once a friend of mine was talking about, he grew up in a poor family, and we were very good friends, and he was saying how he lived with his mom and they were a Christian family, and they very often didn't have much. Sometimes they'd go to bed hungry, or you knew

things were bad because they would have potato soup every night for four nights in a row, or pancakes or something.

And he was talking about how one day his mom was watching TV and it was a lottery commercial. And on a lottery commercial, at the very end, there was like a cartoon hundred dollar bill and it said “anyone can win” and then Benjamin Franklin in the dollar bill looks through and goes “even you, Karen.” And she believed that was the Holy Spirit. She said I’m telling you, the Holy Spirit like came through the TV and spoke to me that I would win the lottery.

So they really believed that they were going to win the lottery. And so she went out and bought five tickets. And I know what you’re thinking – if you’re guaranteed that you’re going to win, why would you buy five? Just get one. Just because you’re a millionaire, doesn’t mean you throw away four dollars, all right? I don’t know if she hedging her bets. And they lost.

And later on he was saying how he found out that that was like a thing that the lottery was doing. They took like the top twenty names of lottery players and would tag their name on the end in the hopes that they would do something like that. The good news is later on, she did very well in real estate and created a business, but it was only after she paid the price. It was after she did the hard work. She got the dream in her mind and it took her years and difficult work and getting licensed and all this stuff, but she got there, but it didn’t fall in her lap. It came

through the struggle and the struggle itself helped her experience God in an even more real and profound way.

Look, I want you to know anything is possible in your life. Jesus said it. Jesus said anything, anything, anything is possible to them who believe. Those who believe in me will not only do the works I have been doing, but greater works. Anything they ask in my name, it will be given to them. But He also said take up your cross and follow me.

Look, anything is possible but there is a price. There is a price and you have to be willing to pay that price to see those possibilities become real in your life. And very often, that price is a lifelong struggle for that thing, but I believe that that struggle is worth it, worth it, worth it, worth it. Be the one warrior. Be the one warrior that's willing to pay the price to be that one guy or that one woman who makes all, all the difference. You can be that person.

Funny story – in Germany back in the seventh century, they believed that Germany was unconquerable for the gospel. And so there was this guy, there are versions of the story and I've never gotten to the bottom of it, but most of Europe had been Christian at this time by the seven hundreds, so seventh and eighth century, and there was a guy named Boniface. And one story says that he was excited because the Pope wanted to launch missionaries into Germany and really go for it, but another version of the story says the opposite. That Boniface actually

who was English, and was a priest and a missionary, went to Rome to study under the Pope hoping that he'd become a professor.

Now just picture yourself: you're English and you grew up in England and go to Rome, and you're eating pasta, and you're having wine, you know, priests can drink wine, good wine. And you're hanging out with the Pope and you're teaching. And the Pope says to Boniface, Germany needs the gospel. You're going to go. And Boniface, for whatever reason, this is my favorite version of the story, is so angry, he's like I'm just going to go and die. I'm just going to go and die a martyr.

So he walks into the center of Germany to the Druid warriors, and he goes to like the heart of their country and culture to this place called the great oak of Thor. This is like a giant world tree, picture a thousand/ two thousand year old tree, and just as he's walking in, he hasn't quite figured out how he's going to martyr himself yet, but as he's walking in, he sees these Druids do a child sacrifice on the tree of Thor. And the guy so appalled, grabs an ax and starts walking down unannounced, nobody knows who this guy is. He's dressed like a priest with an ax over his shoulder, walks into the middle of town and just starts chopping down the tree of Thor. Chops it down to the ground, turns it into a pulpit, gets on top and starts preaching the gospel to these people thinking he'd be martyred. Little did he know, the greatest virtue in their culture was courage. And so they see this guy do this amazing thing and actually they all came to faith and were baptized that day.

See another cool part about that story is as he starts chopping, you know, Thor is the god of thunder and wind and all this stuff, and he starts chopping, the wind starts to blow and a storm starts to.. this is how the legend goes. And they all think, oh Thor is coming down, is going to mess this guy up, right? And instead the wind like finishes the job and knocks the tree down. And then, of course, Boniface takes the tree and uses the lumber to turn it into a church.

And the reason I like that story is everybody thought it was impossible to get the gospel into Germany. It took a man who was willing to die to give everything to see what everybody said was impossible to be possible. Some things are actually worth dying for, friends. Some things really are. Some things are really worth suffering for. Some things really are worth the sacrifice. And we believe that this eternal life that we've been given, when we pay that price, we will look back and know it was worth it every time. You want to do amazing things for the Lord? You can do anything. You can do anything, anything is possible in your life, but just know it comes with a price tag and that price tag is worth paying every time.

This is what Jesus means when He's talking about the narrow road. Let me ask you a question, it's a language question. How much is a few? Well let me ask you, how much is a couple? Two? All right. How much is a few? Three, four, five. Is nine a few? Probably not. Maybe if

there's thousands of it. There's no right answer, by the way. I Google'd it. A few is a few. It's what it is.

All right, just remember, look for that word, okay? A few. Just look for it when we read. Jesus says, "Enter through the narrow gate for wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction." And everybody say many. "Many enter through it." Many, many, many. "But small is the gate and narrow is the road that leads to life and only a few find it."

Now I just want to clarify, I don't think the life He's talking about here is going to heaven. It's easy to see that. He might be. He might be talking about eternal life. But the life he's talking about Zoe – its life, full life. Its life in the kingdom of God. It's the kind of life that Jesus is living every single day, and is trying to get His disciples to embrace. Its life in the kingdom of God. A miracle kind of life. A life that's overflowing with purpose and joy and passion and I already said purpose. Well anyway, you know. Life! Being alive, feeling alive.

And He says here that the way to that life is a narrow road that only a few find. If you want a really rich, awesome, fulfilling life, embrace the struggle, even seek the struggle. Don't run away from it because whatever stands between you and all of the possibilities in your life is a struggle that's going to make you an even better version of yourself. When we go through the struggles, Christ within us is glorified. The

power of Christ materializes and we see, He really hasn't abandoned us. He really can do anything in our lives, amen?

I recently heard an interview, amazing interview that is not suitable for work. Lots of the "F" word. Don't worry, I've already listened to it for you. I've shielded your virgin ears from the "F" word. I'm being facetious. You guys hear the "F" word all the time. They act like I don't know. Oh okay, you don't watch movies? All right. I'm digging a hole I can't get out of.

So this amazing interview with Joe Rogan, who's a comedian on Podcast, with a guy named David Goggins. You don't know the name, probably. David Goggins is an African American man who grew up in an all black community. His dad was abusive. His dad was a criminal, stole, I think he dealt drugs. Really abusive to his mom. Would beat her up all the time, and then David would try and fight his dad. He tells the story of one time his dad beat up his mom and then dragged her down the stairs by her hair. His dad always saw the worst in him. Always treated him like garbage.

And one day his mom finally got the courage to leave the dad, and they moved to a very small town of ten thousand white people in Indiana. And the reason I say white people is because he was the only black family in this very small community. On the second, I think it was the second week they were there, they had a parade and it was like the American Legion, and then it was like Mothers Against Drinking, and

then it was the Ku Klux Klan. The Ku Klux Klan marched in the town's parade.

So this poor kid is a teenager, was called the "N" word almost every day, and was bullied and ostracized. He had health problems that he faced, and fast forward to 24 years old, here's David Goggins who is living in a poor part of town, in a one bedroom apartment, he's making a thousand bucks a month and his rent is \$850 a month, and he's an exterminator and he weighs 300 pounds. And he's just doing life and he's depressed and doesn't know what he wants to do with his life.

And one day, he sees on the Discovery Channel a show about Navy Seals. And he asks that question: that what if question. He looks at it and thought what if a guy like me, who by the way, he was terrified of water and swimming. Terrified! Like if he had to get in water, he'd like be up all night thinking about it. He's like what if a guy like me, who weighs 300 pounds and makes no money, and who hates water and out of shape, can become a Navy Seal.

So he goes down and he starts calling recruiters, and they say you don't meet the physical limitations to be in this branch of the military. And finally one guy says well maybe you can make the reserves. So he goes to the reservist and the reservist says we'll let you in, but you have to weigh 190 pounds, and you've only got three months till the qualifiers come. And he just said forget that, I can't lose over a hundred pounds in three months and make these qualifiers.

So he says the next day, he was an exterminator and he was at a.. I can't say the name of the restaurant, but it is a seafood restaurant that serves red lobsters. So he's there, and he said he's at like some part of the restaurant, and he said he didn't like cockroaches much. He hit the mother lode. He said the mother lode of cockroaches, and then there were rats, as well, and he was standing there as himself, and he said something.. he's like, he just looked at all of this and he said this is my life. This is my life. Nobody's coming to help me. Nobody's coming to save me. This is my life.

And he said something snapped. He left his exterminator thing, and his van, and everything, and he said he just started training like crazy. When he would run, he would get on his bike. One of the things that he had to train was his mind, because he was so afraid of water. When he was too exhausted to exercise, he would just go like sit in the pool to try and get over the fear of water. And he just did this. And he said what happened to me was like anything that was horrible, anything that sounded awful, he was like if I saw something and imagined that would be absolutely horrible to do, he was like I'd just do it. I'd just do it. I'd just realize if I was going to get a better life for myself, I had to love what was horrible. He's like so if I was looking outside and it was like three in the morning and it's snowing, and I would think oh it would be horrible to run in that, he was like I would just get out of bed and go running.

And it was this type of thing. Guess what: he became a Navy Seal. He's the only guy to go through three hell weeks in one year. One of the guys in hell weeks died. I mean it's that horrible. Hell week is that horrible.

And he just continues to this day to live this philosophy. When he was a seal in 2005, a bunch of his mates died in a helicopter accident in Iraq. He did several tours in Iraq and Afghanistan as a Seal, and he felt so bad for these families that he wanted to run the Moab 240. Now the Moab 240 is a run, I believe it goes through Death Valley. Its 240 miles of running. He'd never done a marathon in his life. And the guy who allows people to run, said I'll let you do this, but you have to qualify, and the qualifier is in five days, and it's a hundred miler. He's like, I'll do it.

Now again, he said he'd never run more than ten miles in one thing ever in his life. And so he and his wife, they go to Wal-Mart and they buy a lawn chair, and some Myoplex and Ritz crackers, and he gets out there and he thinks I can do a hundred miles. By mile 70, which is still a lot. I mean what is that three.. almost three marathons. I couldn't remember the word marathon. Its morning, guys. What is that three marathons? Right?

So at mile 70, he's completely out of energy. He falls into the lawn chair and he can't reach the bathroom. He sees like three of his girlfriend. He, I don't know if I can even say this, he soils his pants in the lawn chair, urinates blood. And she's like we got to get you to a hospital

right now. And he just looks at her and he's like no! So he gets out of the lawn chair; I'm not recommending you do this, by the way. He gets out of the lawn chair, and begins to just hobble around. She's like trying to help him. And she's like you're not going to make this. And he said something happened at mile 81. He said something in my spirit and my mind and my body just snapped, and all of a sudden I finished from mile 81 to mile 100 at a ten minute pace. And he qualified. Then he qualified for the Boston Marathon a week later. And now he runs about 400 miles a week. He set the record for pull ups – 4,030 pull ups.

Look all of this to say when I listened to this interview, I recognized. I said a prayer for this man, and I said Lord, I pray that David Goggins would know you because if this man knows the gospel of Jesus Christ, and applies this kind of passion and this kind of understanding of the value of the struggle to his faith, think about what he could do for the gospel. Imagine he applied that to his family. Imagine he applied that kind of passion and sacrifice to his kids, to his church, to people suffering in his city. Imagine he applied that kind of passion and willingness to suffer. This man would be a history maker and a miracle worker.

Now friends, I want you to know anyone can be that way! Anyone can be that way. Anyone can not only believe that anything is possible, but anyone can also take up the cross and follow the Lord to victory. I want you to know that God wants to do great things in your life, but I

will not bait and switch you and promise that you're going to win the lottery. I will promise you that if you're willing to pay the price, you're going to do amazing things in your life. And that no matter how old you are, no matter how unhealthy or sick you are, no matter how broken your family is, or broken your relationships are, or broken your ministry or business is, God's not done with you. Your best is yet to come, but don't run away from the narrow path that leads to life and victory. Amen.

Lord, we love you and we thank you. Let's pray: Lord, we thank you. We thank you that you love us and that you're not going to let us lose our passion or our dreams for the visions of the things that you've given for us. You want us to fulfill incredible things with our lives. And so we would just pray, Father that you'd give us a drive and a desire to walk the narrow path so that we could do great things for the kingdom of God. Lord, we love you, it's in Jesus' name we pray, amen.