

DO IT FOR A DAY

DAY 13 – WALK THE WIRE

“Live a life worthy of the calling you have received.”

–Ephesians 4:1

On June 15, 2012, Nik Wallenda walked a tightrope suspended over Niagara Falls. At a height of fifteen hundred feet (457 m), it plunged thirty-five feet (10 m) in the middle, so Wallenda walked downhill and then uphill on sodden cable two inches thick. A fun fact? He carried his passport with him and presented it to the border guards on the Canadian side!

Nik Wallenda holds eleven world records, including the record for walking a tightrope over the Grand Canyon of Colorado. “Somehow, he pulled off what might be his most impressive tightrope walk performance. He measured the tightrope walk, praying and praising Jesus Christ with each step he took. If you've ever seen one of Nik Wallenda's feats, you'll know it's not an exaggeration. His voice is a little out of tune, but that doesn't stop him from giving a shout of joy to the Lord. Nothing like adoration to keep you from falling off the tightrope!

I am asked the question all the time: “How do you balance work and family?” The short answer is that I don't. Nobody does it. To be clear, I want to be famous in my house! And if I have to choose between the two, family comes first. When someone asks me the question about balance, I often stand on one foot while answering. Then I ask this question: “Am I maintaining balance?” It's kind of a trick question. In a sense, I keep my balance because I don't fall. But if we analyze it in detail, “actually I am counterbalancing. I eat? The knee muscles are constantly contracted.

Life is like that, isn't it? I don't think any of us will ever reach the perfect balance. We are always counterbalancing our work, our marriage, our children, our hobbies, and our habits. **It seems that we are walking a tightrope, isn't it?**

“There are problems to solve and tensions to manage,” said Andy Stanley. Discerning the difference is crucial. You don't handle problems; you solve them. And you don't solve the tensions; you handle them. If we start from that idea, bad habits are problems to solve. Good habits are stressful to manage. It's a team. It only happens with the help of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

If you want God to do the supernatural, you have to do the natural. You can't just pray as if it were up to God; you also have to work as if it depends on you. Do I believe in supernatural healing? How could I not after God healed my lungs? Go ahead and pray for healing, but you also have to participate in your own healing. When God healed my lungs, I didn't start smoking. It would have been counterproductive. I exercised my lungs by training for a marathon. I chose to walk the tightrope rather than sabotage the blessing.

What did Daniel do after he was taken as a prisoner of war to Babylon? He spent three years learning the language and literature. Why? Because that way it could influence the culture from the inside out. With the rise of highly controversial and publicized cultural conversations, it is not easy to maintain our emotional, relational, or political balance. How do we walk on that tightrope? There is a passage that works like a tightrope suspended over Niagara Falls. It's a great way to break the bias pattern while keeping an eye on the reward.

I urge you to live in a manner worthy of the calling you have received, always humble and kind, patient, tolerant of one another in love.⁶

Reverse engineer those verses, and you will see three cardinal virtues that will help us navigate situations, challenges and difficult decisions we face. They will also help us create and break habits. We walk the tightrope with humility, meekness, and patience.

The first virtue is humility.

Humility is not thinking less of yourself, as is the case with low self-esteem. It's thinking less of yourself. It is to overcome the concern of my self, of myself. Simply put, it's not about me. It is a prior decision to put others first. Humility does not ask: What's in it for me?

The second virtue is meekness.

Words are superfluous, more than ever, but also the tone. According to psychologist Albert Mehrabian, when it comes to credibility, we assign 55% weight to body language, 38% to tone, and 7% to words! In my experience no one wins a shouting match. The louder you talk, the less people will listen to you.

"A kind response calms anger." How? It is the law of reciprocity. If you want to defuse a situation or break a vicious cycle, try lowering your voice and softening your tone."

The third virtue is patience.

There are hundreds of people in our congregation whose jobs are at risk every two years. Can I give you an always-on reminder? Administrations come and go, but the

kingdom of God is forever! We are here for a time like this, no doubt. But we have to widen our hole. We think about the here and now. God is thinking of nations and generations. Do you remember the 8th? Remember the future!

Patience is playing a long game. It is a long obedience in the same direction. Do it for a day might seem like a temporary way of thinking, but it is putting things in an eternal perspective. It's living like it's the first and last day of your life, but it's doing the things that will outlive you. It's living as if you died tomorrow, but dreaming as if you lived forever.

HOW DO I MAKE IT A HABIT?

There you are!

My friend and spiritual father, Dick Forth, says that there are two kinds of people in the world. The first class enters a room internally announcing: Here I am. The ego barely walks through the door. It's all about me, about me. The second class of people walks into the room internally announcing: There you are! They leave their ego at the door, and it's all about each other! They treat other people as their superiors, and they are always looking for added value. **What kind of people are you? Am I here or are you there?** We live in a culture that runs on trending audio, buzzwords, and hashtags. We can flip the script and embrace the wave by operating through the opposite spirit.

What does it mean? It is the Golden Rule: do with others what you would like them to do with you. It is seeing people for who they are—the image of God—and treating them accordingly. Can I tell you a secret? The way you earn respect is by giving. The same is true of love and joy and thousands of other things.

When we walk a tightrope, we see each person as priceless and irreplaceable. This is how you love those who don't look like you or think like you or **it's not easy to create or break a habit. It's a lot like walking a tightrope! You need to have courage. You need to keep your balance all the time.** I eat? Change the atmosphere with humility, meekness and patience. I've said it before and let me say it again: we will not create or break habits simply for our own good. We do it for those we love! The representation of selflessness is to break bad habits that hurt others. It is creating habits that add value to others. Either way is a way of saying: There you are!

Walk the wire!"

Excerpt From
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