



Today's Lesson

**Living in Process:
Facing Fear – Finding Courage**

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When Jesus made the statement to the people around him that he was in this world but not of it, what do you think went through their minds?



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New Thought students understand that they are both physical and spiritual beings occupying the same space at the same time. In essence being in two places at once: the physical and spiritual realms of being. We are in this world, but are we of this world when it comes to our authentic self? Jesus's statement may have seemed strange to the people, as it still is for many people today.

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I would like to introduce you to a professor I met several years ago. His name is Dr. Ken Hanson, aka: Jerusalem Jones.



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Dr. Ken Hanson. A professor of Jewish history the University of Central has lectured widely on the Dead Sea Scrolls and has written there books on the subject: *Dead Sea Scrolls: The Untold Story*.

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To understand Jesus and his ministry we need to understand the Jewish mind-set about the God. Dr. Hanson points out that:

The ancient Hebrews concept of God and the kingdom of God has been unchanged since its conception in thought.

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What the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has proved is that Judaism is virtually unchanged from its ancient beginning and what we have today. The monotheism (one God) remains the same.

Christianity, which has its roots in Judaism, in an effort to distance itself from the Jews created a dual concept of God with the doctrine of original sin, the doctrine of salvation, the doctrine of hell devil; a theology that has this being we call Satan in combat with God over the souls of humankind.

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Not so, reveal the Hebrew texts. In fact the kingdom of God is a metaphor and not a physical place. They believed that God was in everything and everywhere present. That when you honored the presence of God you experienced the kingdom of God right here and right now.

When I heard that statement from Dr. Ken the words of Jesus came flooding to my mind, "The kingdom is in the mist of you!"

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So what does all of this have to do with facing fear and finding courage?

Simple: God is in the midst of all things! Therefore, like Jesus we are in the world but not of it. He faced fear and he found courage because he understood the power of God's presence –the kingdom of heaven– was within him wherever he went.

Facing fear and finding courage is like being in two places at the same time.

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Sarah Quigley shared her experience of being in two places at one time with Unity Magazine. She writes:

While I was having blood drawn, my arm started shaking. It wasn't the procedure itself that frightened me. With newly diagnosed neurological problems, I was frantic about what the test results might reveal.

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"Are you scared?" the lab technician asked. "Yes," I stammered, terribly embarrassed when I couldn't stop shaking. "It's okay," she said softly. "It's okay."

I felt light years away from "okay." Being afraid while waiting to find out if I had a serious disease was perfectly natural, but I didn't know that.

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Driving home, I remember thinking I should have a bumper sticker that read: "The biggest coward in the universe is behind the wheel of this car."

Now I wish I could find that dear lab tech and thank her for her kindness. She could have lectured me, "Shame on you—you're a grown woman," or, "Get a grip on yourself," but she didn't.

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Apparently, she already knew something I had to find out for myself: It's okay to be afraid.

It's instinctive to feel fear when the earth beneath you is rumbling, literally or figuratively. Fear tags along when you're anticipating new adventures or gathering up the courage to make changes in your life. There simply is no real reason to be ashamed of your fears,...

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... to apologize for having them, or to cover them up with bravado—"Who me? I'm not afraid!" In fact, acknowledge fear—facing it, feeling it, is the crucial first step toward transforming it into an activity of being in two places at the same time, so that you may experience what Jesus called the kingdom of God in the mist of you. Where you can face your fears and find courage all at the same time.

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So how can we be in these two places at one time, to face our fears and find courage? How can we aspire to do the things Jesus did and even more so you can be authentic? Here are eight reminders that can help:

1. You will feel fear. You may hate it and wish you could escape from it, but you will experience it in varying degrees at different times throughout your life.

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2. Courage grows the moment you face your fear. Resist thinking about fear—experience it. The first step, which is the hardest one, is to acknowledge fear, to see it, and look it directly in the eye.

3. Courage is already inside you. Trust yourself and let courage lead you where you must go or show you what you have to do. When necessary, sit and wait for a while until its truth can be deciphered.

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4. Your fear can teach you lessons as you face it. You may think its lessons are cruel, unnecessary, or dumb, but they all will serve as teachers so long as you remain open to learning. You will understand more about these messages as time goes by.

5. Listen to fear's message, then feel free to disagree. Fear may be telling you to stop, proceed with caution, or run as fast as you can. There are times to comply and times to push past fear, telling it to get lost.

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6. Clarity increases with ongoing practice. Each time you face a fear and feel it, the more you will understand it and all your other fears. When you know fear's nature better, you see you have a choice—you can manage fear rather than let it manage you. It does not have to dictate your actions or dominate your life.

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7. Fears that are ignored, denied, criticized, condemned, repressed, or minimized will grow. Just notice all your fears. Accept them. Admit they exist without putting yourself down, sweeping them under the rug, or saying they really don't bother you. Sometimes you'll be too tired, or you'll be caught off guard, or you'll forget you know. When this happens, you'll be overcome by fear, and you'll wonder if you can ever again find your lost courage.

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8. When you regress, remember: There is still a seed of courage within you, and you can choose to cultivate it. Courageous people are persistent, not perfect. With great compassion for yourself, try again. Resolve to make friends with your fears by facing them and feeling them one more time. You can transform your fears simply by being aware of them again and again.

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If you take one thought with you today, know that no matter what you have faced or will face you are not alone. No matter what fears materialize you can count on God to help you with the transformation, you can be in two places at the same time and experience the kingdom of Heaven right here, right now while facing your fear and find courage.