

## **Faith: The Entrepreneur's Secret Weapon**

Faith is undeniably one of the most prominent principles in the Holy Scriptures. The faith principle occurs 247 times between the books of Genesis and Revelation. Its frequent mention is a hint to us of how important a principle it is. Jesus' complete life on this earth was a superb case study of the cultivation, nurture, and application of the wisdom of faith applied to the fragile plight of mankind.

When a businessperson has faith that ultimately he or she cannot fail, all barriers to success disappear. As a child, my friend Carl Jr. and I had a dangerous little game that we played in our backyard. In the projects where we lived in South Baltimore the yards were divided by steel chain link fences. These fences varied from four to seven feet high. They were used to keep mischievous boys like Carl Jr. out of other people's yards.

Nevertheless, we were never really intimidated by the chain link fences. We made a game out of using them as tightropes. We would very delicately walk on the fences to see who could walk the longest and the farthest without losing balance and falling to the ground.

Failure to successfully negotiate the length of the fence could be painful, (if you slipped and jammed your private area into the bar) and dangerous (if someone had a ferocious dog in their yard). Ms. Hicks, our next door neighbor, had a mean, old, German Shepherd dog whose name was Rex. Rex was one of the meanest dogs in the neighborhood. Ms. Hick's son, Phillip, taught the dog to be vicious by forcing him to fight (destroy) other dogs. Falling into Ms. Hick's yard was not a pleasant outcome to think about.

Regardless of the danger, we marveled at the challenge that lay before us. As Carl Jr. and I took turns challenging our balancing skills on the fence, more times than not Carl Jr. was far more successful at negotiating the entire length of fence than I was. This puzzled me because I was much more athletic and had greater command of my physical self. I prided myself on being an accomplished little athlete and often bragged that I could beat Carl Jr. in any sport. But he always out did me in our "walk of death" on top of the fence.

One day while we were out in the alley using our slingshots for target practice on the rats that made their home in our backyard, I asked Carl Jr. how was he able to consistently navigate the most challenging fences without ever being bitten by Ms. Hicks' dog Rex. Carl Jr. replied; "It's easy. There are three things that I always do. First of all, I never think about Rex. I'm not worried about his bite anyway. Secondly, I don't worry about how high the fence is. It doesn't matter if the fence is two feet or twenty-two feet off of the ground I just don't think about it. Last and most importantly is I **know** that I can make it to the end of the fence without falling. You know Robert, I've done it enough times successfully that I know that I'll succeed. "

I now look back on that conversation between two young boys and realize the wisdom of Carl Jr's word. In his childlike innocence Carl Jr. summarized key aspects of faith. These are:

1. No fear of the consequences of failure.
2. Healthy perspective on the degree of difficulty of a situation or condition.
3. Success breeds success which leads to ultimate power over the "**barriers of the immediate.**"

I've never forgotten Carl, Jr.'s lesson on faith. All these years later, I still use it, every day, in running my business and my life.