

Fear on the Swinging Bridge

In the book *Sticking Up for Who I Am*, writer Gwendolyn Mitchell Diaz tells about a trip she took with her family one summer. They loaded up their van and headed north to visit friends and relatives.

On the way home, they stopped in Boone, North Carolina, and spent a few days sightseeing. Diaz says she will never forget the afternoon they spent at Grandfather Mountain, the highest peak in the Blue Ridge Mountains.



They were told that if they dared cross a long suspension bridge called Mile-High Swinging Bridge, they could stand on a rocky ledge that offered a tremendous view of the valley thousands of feet below.

It was late afternoon when they arrived at the bridge, and a storm was blowing in. The wind was beginning to gust significantly.

Diaz took one look down the 80-foot-deep ravine spanned by the bridge, clutched her baby Jonathan and refused to set foot on it. Her older sons, Zach and Matt, took off running onto the bridge. They were about halfway across the swaying boards when the wind became so strong it made them stagger. But they loved the challenge and the thrill and fought their way to the other side.

Ben, age 3, started running after them. He stopped suddenly, however, and clung to the nearest post. He wasn't so sure he wanted to continue the dangerous trek.

Dad, seeing what fun Zach and Matt were having as they fought against the wind, reached for Ben's hand and said, "Let's go. I'll take care of you."

Gwendolyn Diaz said, "It was obvious that all kinds of what-ifs started tumbling around inside Ben's mind as he stood glued to the post contemplating Dad's offer. But suddenly he reached up, grabbed Dad's big hand and started skipping across the bridge into the gusting wind. Ben had obviously transferred all of his what-ifs to Dad and decided to let Dad worry about them.

"The swaying bridge, the extreme height, the blustery wind, the impending storm – these weren't his problems anymore. Whether or not he could handle the situation did not matter. It was completely Dad's responsibility."

(more)

Gwendolyn Diaz's story is insightful.

Maybe that's what Jesus meant when He said, "Unless you change and become like a little child, you shall never enter the kingdom of God. To have that kind of trust, to turn it all over to Daddy (Abba) – if we could live like that, most of the things that keep us awake at night would simply disappear. Fear is the biggest problem in our lives. The best way to conquer fear is with faith.

But not just faith in anybody or anything. The only kind of faith that really matters is faith in Jesus Christ.

Our Lord Himself said it:

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16 NKJV).

No matter the winds that blow or storms that come our way, that's the faith that really matters and enables us to live a life of confidence and peace.

– Beecher Hunter