

Living the Impossible Life

Dale Crawshaw



Dale Crawshaw and grandsons

During my teenage years in the Florida Keys, I logged as much time behind the wheel of my boat as my car. In the four years I relied on that durable little eighteen-footer to get me around the islands, it never once let me down.

That tough little boat was faithful no matter the circumstances, more than once weathering a fast moving squall that caught me coming in from a deep-sea fishing trip. Whether skimming over deep water, shallow water, calm water, or rough water, it never failed.

How vividly I remember the day I was about to navigate that boat into the fringes of an oncoming hurricane. My crawfish traps, resting in fifteen feet of water a mile off shore, were in danger of being destroyed by the massive storm. There was no way forty mile-per-hour winds and the heavy seas preceding the hurricane could stop my sturdy boat from taking me to rescue my precious traps.

Just as I was about to leave, my dad all but dragged me out of my boat and physically blocked me from launching off. It's doubtful I'd be writing this if he hadn't.

I had absolute, abandoned confidence that my trustworthy boat would have brought me safely home. Why? Because it always had. The engine never failed to crank. The hull never sprang a leak. I was never once stranded or disappointed by its performance. My confidence in its faithfulness was rock solid.

Here's the deal: God knows how dependable He is. His desire is for us to discover the same!

What if I had kept my boat securely tied up in our oceanfront basin, only occasionally taking it out for short rides in perfect weather? Would I have ever gained confidence in its reliability?

Would I have ever experienced the exhilaration of skimming water for twenty miles to camp on an island in the backcountry? Or the adventure of riding alongside a giant freighter in the Gulf Stream? Or laughing at the dolphins playfully swimming and jumping in its wake?

I would have missed all of those things. I would have deprived myself of countless memories of good stuff - adventure, excitement, learning, enjoyment, real living. *I'm still in awe that I didn't miss out on that!*

I don't want to forfeit the abundant life God has for me either. *I want to live the impossible life.* I want to enjoy every page of my spiritual journey. Every adventure. Every opportunity to "walk on the water of some crazy impossibility."

What about you? Isn't it time for you to start walking on the water of your impossibilities? To start living and yes, even tasting, the impossible life?

Your enemies are the logic of this world, the pleasing of yourself, and the pseudo-contentment offered to you by the great deceiver. These enemies will be relentless in tugging at your heart. That's where faith comes in. It gives you the strength to obey God instead of allowing yourself to succumb to the persuasions of these enemies.

Feelings of fear, anxiety, doubt, concern, and timidity are not likely to vanish overnight. Indeed, the more you commit to living by the *facts of God* instead of "logical" *human feelings*, the more that spirit of unbelief WILL FIGHT TO NEUTRALIZE your faith.

Don't give up! Just as Paul did, refuse to back down—fight the good fight of faith! "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." II Timothy 4:7.

DEAR LIFE: "PLEASE, NO MORE CURVEBALLS"

Not too long after my college years, I remember saying to myself, *I should have retired right out of high school and spent the rest of my life diving, fishing, and cruising the waters in my boat. I should have found a way to enjoy a smooth and easy journey instead of riding the roller coaster of life. Surely, there is a smoother journey than this?*

Neither grad school, nor the degree that went with it, had come close to preparing me for what was ahead in life; as in cold, hard reality! I had graduated with the "Most Likely to Succeed" award draped around my neck.

Hyperactive, creative, and gutsy, and no doubt a little annoying, I was ready to tackle the ministry profession with unbridled zeal.

I had a reasonably strong faith in God and a little too much faith in my own resourcefulness. Big things were going to happen to build His Kingdom, and I was going to be right in the middle of it! For a couple of years, my plans seemed ahead of schedule. Did the bubble burst? More like slowly deflated. "Most Likely to Succeed" dwindled to "Most Likely to Disintegrate!"

It's tough to concentrate on Bible reading, it's challenging to pray, and it's difficult to care when your little world and all of its dreams are yanked out from under you. And the harder I tried the worse things got! Which only made me both try and fall flat on my face HARDER!

I was a spoiled child—being proud, stubborn, fearful, full of self-pity. My Heavenly Dad was, as always, doing His part as a loving Father by remaining faithful and ready to dispense "grace heaped upon grace."

It took me several long years to see the light at the end of the tunnel of despair. That light revealed this: "Dale, you cannot successfully live the Christian life without the strength and

enablement of God's Holy Spirit. God does have some special plans for you—if you will simply get out of the way and allow Him to live His life through you.”

Simple, simple, simple. I can't believe you didn't think of that sooner, I chided myself. Surely, while you were in seminary you heard all about the Christ-life, the abundant life, the Spirit-filled life. Why didn't it sink in?

Was it sinking in now? You betcha.

I learned the hard way that when all else fails, get desperate for God! When you do not succeed in your own energy, start depending on His. When confidence in your ingenuity falters, rely on His creative, sustaining power. And better yet, look to Him *before* your world falls apart.

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