

Tough Minded Faith for Tender Hearted People
Robert H. Schuller, Bantam Books, 1985

“My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness” 2 Cor 12:9

**One of the greatest basketball coaches of all times was John Wooden of UCLA,
a fantastic, positive-thinking Christian.**

One of his great motivating statements to his players was:

“Nobody is a real loser —until he starts blaming somebody else!”

Faith believes there is a solution to every problem.

Even when the problem defies solutions, faith believes that we can be positive anyway!

Affirm with me:

***Today I shall exercise my faith to seek solutions immediately, instinctively, impulsively,
and intelligently.**

***I’ll look upon this not as a problem, but as an opportunity to grow up and be more
effective as a manager of my own life.**

***I will categorically reject all arbitrary, negative judgments, and I believe that with the help
of God there will be a solution to the problem.**

I’ll go to work right now and fix my problem, just as soon as I fix my attitude!

When I was a young teenager, just beginning to date...

**my Dad used to tell me that I could use him as an excuse
for not doing something I really didn’t want to do.**

For instance: if I didn’t want to go somewhere,

I could tell the guy that my Dad wanted me to be home early that night...

or whatever I needed to say...

and in those days, as a younger teenager,

‘blaming my Dad’ was a helpful strategy for me to get myself out of sticky situations that I did not yet have the maturity or the experience to handle myself.

**Now...eventually, I still needed to learn how to handle those situations but in the beginning of my dating days...it was pretty helpful for me!
Thanks, Dad...**

**but Robert Schuller and John Wooden are talking about a different kind of blaming...
What they are talking about is blaming someone else for your mistakes, your failures...**

**They are talking about the kind of blaming that a person does when they blame other people for their drinking problem or their shopping problem or their anger issues...
well...I wouldn’t have drank so much or screamed at them,
or I wouldn’t have ran up my credit card
if they didn’t do x,y or z and make me soooo crazy...**

**They are talking about the kind of blaming that keeps someone in a ‘poor me’,
victim frame of mind, when they are not achieving the success they want or
they are not as happy as they want to be....**

**I’d be happy if they, fill in the blank,
(husband, wife, boy or girl friend) would do (or not do) x,y, or z.**

**Think about how many world conflicts are the passed on from generation to generation
because people are blaming each other for their unhappiness and misfortune....**

It has to stop. It must stop.

**Blaming other people for your troubles and your unhappiness
only keeps the cycle of discontent circling round and round and round.**

We continue to be caught up in “them”, and actually far worse,

we actually hand over to “them”

whoever they are, our power and we allow ‘them’ to determine if we are happy or not.

Robert Schuller invites us to make three affirmations, based on his reading of Scripture, that he believes will help put these cycles of blame and violence to an end.

The Scripture quote he used was from 2 Cor:

“My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness”

Schuller believes that we don’t have to blame other people for what is right in our lives , because the Holy One that we have faith in, gives us all we need to find the happiness and peace that we seek...

Let’s look at these affirmations briefly, one by one.

#1: Today I shall exercise my faith to seek solutions immediately, instinctively, impulsively and intelligently.

Wow! that’s daring. I’m not an impulsive person. I rarely act immediately.

I feel I have a lot to learn about trusting my intuition.

But, when I put this affirmation along side the scripture quote that Schuller uses:

“My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness”

it helps me to trust my intuition.

If I, if we learn to stay connected to the Presence of the Holy who is always and everywhere with us, if we learn to allow our thoughts and actions to flow out of and from that well of deep Grace that is often called our Soul and/or our True Self...

then we can trust that our actions and our choices are guided by a Holy Wisdom beyond our small point of view.

Now, since I’m not this kind of person, it takes me some time to listen deeply to that inner source of Divine Guidance that would help me to act instinctively and intelligently.

That’s why I meditate so that I can better hear that still small voice that is inside me.

**#2. I'll look upon this not as a problem, but as an opportunity to grow up
and be more effective as a manager of my own life.**

**When you quite blaming people for what is not right in your life,
you begin to grow up and take responsibility for your life.**

**Now for some of us who don't have an overflow of self confidence,
becoming responsible for our own lives can be rather scary.**

On one level it truly is easier to blame someone else for what is wrong.

But living life that way is never satisfying, never fulfilling

**and most of the time very frustrating no one else can ever do for us what we are unwilling
to do for ourselves.**

When we always blame others for our problems,

how can we ever feel good about ourselves for the good in our lives?

When we don't take responsibility for ourselves, when end up losing ourselves.

**When we are willing to listen deeply and tap into the Divine Strength, Power and Wisdom
that EVERY human person is born with,**

we discover humanity to be more magnificent, more beautiful, more wondrous than ever.

And...and we realize that this is true for all people

no matter who they are or what they do...

and...we realize it is true for us as well...

and this realization is the Hope of the world.

This realization leads to the Peace that the world can not give...

this realization leads us to be willing to bear the work and the sorrows of Love...

**The Holy Wisdom that created the galaxies and the beauty of Cosmos
is the same wisdom in us that gives us our strength and power.**

This Holy Presence empowers us to do more than we think possible...

This Holy Grace does not give us an excuse to get out,

but gives us a way to get through the difficulties of life and in such a way that our sense of true self worth and authentic self confidence is enhanced.

#3. I will categorically reject all arbitrary, negative judgments,

and I believe that with the help of God there will be a solution to the problem.

Now this one is often tricky because most of the time we see the situation only from our point of view, what's best for us our loved ones so if we can't see how a solution that benefits me or mine...then the whole thing is horrible.

But if we reject the hopelessness of the situation and trust that somewhere in all the muck there is a shoot of new life and new possibility and we are willing to keep our eyes and our hearts open to the Grace which is all ready at work...we will not be disappointed.

That, my friends... is the true meaning of Faith.

Faith, as we have often said, is not intellectual assent to doctrines that makes absolutely no sense...

Authentic Faith is the willingness to Trust in the Goodness of Life, and in the Goodness of God.

Authentic Faith is the willingness to suspend judgment and to trust the process of our becoming the beautiful person, the whole and the holy person we were ALL created to be.

Authentic faith means growing up and becoming mature enough to stop blaming your Dad and to be responsible for our own decisions and choices even as we choose to Trust the Wisdom, Power and Strength of God.

I'd like to close with a short prayer that Robert Schuller closed his reflection with:

Dear Lord, I'm aware that the biggest part of any problem is my attitude toward it.

I thank you, that You and I together can fix that today.

Your strength is my strength, so I'm trusting You.

**Help me, O God to bloom with such faith that I will be surprised,
and so will everybody else who watches me go through this trying time.**

Thank you, Lord. Amen