



## What am I afraid of?

A friend regularly asks people this question. I've started doing it... You know what? I'm in the process of learning that it's easier for me to ask questions than to be asked those same questions... What's good for the goose...

So, recently, I did ask myself that question: **What am I afraid of?**

AND, the answer was a bit disarming. It caught me off guard. To answer it, I had to go back to 1993. My wife and I were “exploring” – actually, I was trying to ward off the “opportunity” whether to move our family to the UK to work with a church. Concurrent with that exploration, I was “confronted” with 2 other job opportunities; one with a national financial services firm, the other my “dream job” – the NBA was about to open an office in Geneva, Switzerland. I had played basketball on club teams in Europe; three of those seasons were in Geneva. I loved living there... back to 1993 and our visit to the UK. Lyn, my wife, committed to “keep silent” (a real-life example of *voluntary self-restraint* ☺). This is not her usual MO. But, she did it this time. We had sort of said, *Let's proceed as if the lights are green on this one...* As for me (as I mix metaphors here) I was bound and determined to “build the door” if God didn't decide to close the door for us... A real “openness” to this opportunity, right? So, we “interviewed” and I told them no... After saying no, we had one more introductory dinner. Arriving back to where we were staying, we saw the pastor's car parked in front of our host's home. Immediately, in my mind, I went, *Oh no... we've told them no... no more conversations... not another one...* Well, sure enough, another conversation ensued. Our host and the pastor both say, *We don't get it. You are right for this...* I kept digging my heels in... until... the pastor breaks out Shakespeare... In his *Julius Caesar*, there is a line uttered by Brutus:

*There are tides in the affairs of man*

*Which if taken at the flood lead on*

*But if missed, forever shallows.*

It was “high tide” for me. We went to bed and I tossed and turned... About 2AM I turned to Lyn and said, *I believe we have the freedom to say no to this... BUT, I am going to choose to say yes...* I broke... I added, *I have to tell this to someone else. If I don't I may well wake up in the morning and not still be saying yes...* SO, at 2+AM I knock on the bedroom door of our host... and mumble through tears, *I-I want to say yes...* Our host replies, *You need to call the pastor.* Big gulp... I dial (remember, this is before cell phones...), halfway hoping that he wouldn't answer the phone. He did. Again, blubbing, I say, *I-I-I want to say yes.* His reply: *I need to think about this...* He did, and the next morning we made the commitment to move to England to work for a church for the un-churched. That was a very emotional decision. I don't know if it's too strong to say, “traumatic” decision-making process. It felt, in some ways, like a “death.” Yet, from that death came new life. We only stayed in the UK for 15 months. We returned and I pursued a career in financial services before switching to work as a “consultant” with family businesses. Lyn refers to our year in England as the best year of our life. I don't want, through what I'm recounting here, to detract in any way from her statement. It was an incredible year – in some ways borne out of a “death.”

So, how does this relate to the original question: *What are you afraid of?* I'm afraid of another night like that night in 1993. I don't like “to die.” I don't like “trauma.” Yet TRUST thrusts me into the depths of “death,” BELIEVING that there is “new life” on the other side of death. Where would my life be if I hadn't “died” on that night in 1993? Where might “shallows” lie if I don't die the deaths yet to come? Will trust win out? Or will fear? We'll see as the journey continues.