



Jean François Gravelet is not a name many would recognize, but he was quite famous in the mid-1800s. Gravelet took the stage name "Charles Blondin" and became known as "The Amazing Blondin."

A natural acrobat from childhood, Jean grew up beneath the circus tents of Europe. When he was 35 years old, he traveled to the United States. In 1859, he found fame for being the first person to cross Niagara Falls on a tightrope. At first, most people believed his claim to be a hoax when he announced his plan to attempt it. They were shocked to find out his claim was true.

Blondin made several crossings. Each time, he introduced new variations:

He crossed on stilts.

He crossed in a gorilla suit.

He crossed with his manager on his back.

He cooked breakfast for himself halfway through his crossing.

He pushed a wheelbarrow across.

One time, he asked the crowds if they thought he could push a wheelbarrow across *blindfolded*. They cheered with delight as he traversed the chasm with ease despite his inability to see. He called back to the crowd, asking if they believed he could repeat the trek with the wheelbarrow piled high with potatoes. They roared with accolades as he ventured across without losing a single potato.

Finally, he asked the crowd if they believed he could carry a person across the falls in the wheelbarrow. They screamed their affirmation. Then he asked for a volunteer to get in the wheelbarrow. The crowd laughed and then grew uncomfortably silent when they realized Blondin was serious.

Out of the hushed crowd emerged an older woman. She agreed to go with him across the falls. Blondin helped her into the wheelbarrow and proceeded to carry her across the falls and back again. The crowd was spellbound, in awe of the old woman's willingness to put her life into Blondin's hands.

What they didn't know was she was Blondin's mother.

It can be very scary when Jesus invites us to step beyond our comfort zone. Often, we feel every ounce of our flesh resisting His call. Yet, something deeper in our hearts affirms this is the right thing to do.

The call of God puts our belief to the test when we are called to take action beyond what is familiar and safe. *Trust is the challenge that connects belief to action.*

Charles Blondin's mother not only believed in her son, she trusted him without reservation. We know this because her actions confirmed her belief. God invites us to do the same thing. We can talk and talk and talk about belief in God but we must be willing to put such belief into action. Whether we trust Him with or without reservation and are still willing to respond with action, the adventure we are created for becomes reality.

Whenever I think about The Amazing Blondin and his mother, I see a picture of the kind of faith God longs for us to experience.

Imagine for a moment that Jesus is The Amazing Blondin and you are the one in the wheelbarrow. A lot is happening in such a trek, but there are four simple things to help you make it across.

First, imagine yourself on the tightrope with Him. A myriad of questions would scream for your attention. *"Is it tight enough? Will it hold my weight? Will the blowing wind affect it?"* You just don't know. You have to accept the tension of the rope is what it should be.

**In the same way, you have to get comfortable with mystery.**

God doesn't always give you the answers you think you need. He often says, *"You just have to trust Me in this."* We may not like it, but we must accept He has the details under control and move forward. That is what makes it faith.

Second, imagine yourself in the wheelbarrow again. I can pretty much assume you won't be moving around much. The wind is blowing. The rope is moving up and down. You will likely still yourself in the wheelbarrow as He carries you across.

**In the same way, you need to rest in the Word of God.**

His Word provides you with something solid to hold onto when you follow God into the unfamiliar. Everything around may seem to change its perspective, but you can rest assured the Bible will always give you what you need.

Third, imagine what it must have been like for Blondin's mother as she journeyed across the falls. Do you think her son spoke to her as they spanned the roaring chasm? I'm certain he did. There's no record of their conversation, but I'm sure he assured her every step of the way.

"I have you, Mom."

"It won't be long now, Mom."

"You can relax, Mom."

"I've got everything under control."

**In the same way, you need to be listening for the voice of Jesus as He carries you through the challenges of your adventure.**

There will be temptations throughout the journey. You may be tempted to panic. Jesus promises to be the voice behind you, showing you the way to go (Isaiah 30:21). He will encourage and remind you He is always with you.

Don't worry, I have you.

It won't be long now.

You can relax.

I've got everything under control.

You can trust me.

As you respond to God's invitation and embrace the DARE, Jesus will be with you every step of the way. There is no reason for worry to plague your journey. It has no power over Jesus and, if you focus on His voice, worry has no power over you.

Lastly, remember as you face your challenge, to focus on the other side. I've learned one of the secrets of tightrope walkers is to not look down. They keep their eyes focused ahead. At times, when the rope sways or their balance is put to the test, the best way to recover is to fix their sight on the other side.

**In the same way, you must look to the promises of God.**

It is easy to become paralyzed when you feel like situations around you are out of control. You can quickly lose your “spiritual” balance.

Doubt will question the integrity of the rope.

Fear will demand you look down.

Regret will tell you to look backward.

Don't listen to them.

God promises He will never abandon you. He will get you to where He is taking you if you trust Him and act on His leading. Focus on the other side. Set your eyes on the promises of God.

How do you trust Jesus and face the challenges of the unknown and unexpected?

**Get comfortable with mystery.**

**Rest in the Word of God.**

**Listen for the voice of Jesus.**

**Look to the promises of God.**

These four principles may seem deceptively simple, but you and I know each one of them takes a lifetime to learn. The discipline of assimilating them into our lives is part of the adventure. Every day you live inside the adventure, you grow, learn, and become the person God designed you to be. You are free to do more and more of what God has created you to do.

Embracing the DARE is hard. There's no way around it. There's no shortcut. To live the life beyond imagination that God has uniquely designed you for, you must be willing to take on the challenge of staying the course.

In the world of storytelling, when the hero decides to move forward and face the challenge, we call this scene “the moment of truth.” Those words could not be more accurate when it comes to following Jesus on your adventure.

When you accept His call to go beyond what is comfortable, it will be your moment of truth. It's the scene that changes you in the deepest places and strengthens your trust into an even closer relationship with the One who created you.

All the while, Heaven applauds and cheers with delight.

*This is an excerpt from A Guide to a Life Beyond Imagination by Steven L. Barr, available on Amazon. (c) 2019*

*This week we will be talking about trusting Jesus when everything in us tells us to panic. We will be posting talking points every day on FB and IG. You will also find a follow-up blog and video as well. We will post content around your own “wheelbarrow adventure” for you to use in your CMC: 3•2•1, your CMC: God Conversations, or your particular Kingdom Expression. This content will also be available in French and Spanish.*

*You can find this story, resources, and more at [CastMemberChurch.com](http://CastMemberChurch.com).*

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