



NOT AFRAID

How to Overcome Fear

We have many fears in life. Our fears might be external--we may fear people or illness. They could be internal, like being afraid of failure or loss. While it's natural to experience fear, God does not want us to live in fear. He wants us to live courageous lives. But that's easier said than done. In this Bible study, we'll explore how we should see fear and how God helps us to overcome it.

1 - What Are You Afraid Of?

Read

“When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.” - Psalm 56:3

Reflect/Discuss

- What are you afraid of right now? Why do you think you're afraid?
- Do you generally consider yourself a fearful person?

Consider

We all have fears, but we don't want to be afraid. Society usually looks down on the fearful and exalts the brave. We spend our lives avoiding our fears, hiding our fears, or trying to get rid of our fears. If we can't conquer our fears, we value the *appearance* that we're not afraid.

Notice that in this verse, it does not say “IF” I am afraid, but “WHEN” I am afraid. As humans, it's natural to feel fear. If you never experience any fear, then you may not be following God. Throughout the Bible, God tells people to not be afraid simply because He led them to places that were out of their comfort zones. God allows us to experience situations that may scare us, so that we discover Him as our source of never-ending strength and grow into the people He wants us to become.

Act

- Practice instinctively turning to God. When you are afraid, make it your first step to ask God, “I'm afraid, what should I do?”

Go Deeper

- [Afraid](#)

2 - What's Your Next Step?

Read

"I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears."

- Psalm 34:4

Reflect/Discuss

- How does fear affect your life? What habits or patterns does it cause?
- What's the first thing you usually do when you experience fear?

Consider

Like many emotions, fear can produce an unhealthy automatic response. Maybe it's to be angry and blame something or someone. Perhaps you feed the fear by taking in more negative information. Some people will try to do everything they can to control the situation. Or for many of us, fear can be paralyzing.

In this Psalm, our response to fear doesn't necessarily require an action, but a perspective shift. The Psalmist says, "I sought the Lord." When we're afraid, we simply need to turn toward God and put our focus on Him. God then does the work of answering us and delivering us from our fears. When we are consumed by our fears, we simply need to shift our eyes away from the thing that makes us afraid and be consumed by God. His strength and hope will melt away our fears.

Act

- Carry a reminder with you of one of the Bible verses in this study. It could be your phone lock screen, written on a piece of paper, or a tag on your keychain or jewelry. When you are afraid, look to that reminder and practice instantly turning your focus to God.

Go Deeper

- [3 Fears That Separate You From God](#)

3 - What God Says About Fear

Read

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.” - Joshua 1:9

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

- Isaiah 41:10

Reflect/Discuss

- Why do you think God asks us to not fear?
- Have you ever been afraid of where God is leading you?

Consider

When we try to overcome our fears, we often take the path of trying to rationalize them. We think of reasons why the thing we're afraid of isn't so scary. We try to reassure ourselves of how safe we are. We overemphasize the saying, “It's nothing to be afraid of.” In short, we focus on our fears.

These verses reveal only one of many instances in which God commands His people over and over again not to fear. But the reason He tells us not to fear isn't because He removes us from danger or diminishes the threat. When God tells His people not to fear, it's often in situations where He has led them up against overwhelming odds that should terrify them. But He tells them to not be afraid because *He will be with them*, in their midst. We overcome our fears by realizing that God is with us, in the danger.

Act

- Think of a situation you are afraid of, whether you are currently in it or have yet to be in it. Rather than avoiding it or diminishing the challenge, step into that situation knowing God is with you. How would that change how you act?

Go Deeper

- [The Fearless Life](#)

4 - The Answer to Fear

Read

*“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine”
- Isaiah 43:1*

“The LORD is my light and my salvation— whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life— of whom shall I be afraid?” - Psalm 27:1

Reflect/Discuss

- What reasons does God give to not be afraid?
- In what ways have you seen these promises in your life?

Consider

To be unafraid is not easy, especially when we're in the middle of a frightening situation. Yes, we *know* that God is all powerful and able to protect us, but it doesn't always help us when we *feel* afraid. There can be a disconnect between knowledge and emotion. What changes this is not just knowing *about* the God who is with us, but actually *knowing* the God who loves us.

God gives a simple and compelling reason to trust Him in our fears - we belong to Him. He says that He has redeemed us (purchased with a price) and called us. Because we are His, and are valued by Him, He will protect us and has our best interest in mind. As we know more of who God is and understand our connection with Him, the more we realize what it means to belong to Him. Then when we see the dangers around us, we can truly say, “whom shall I fear?”

Act

- Intentionally seek to know God more. Each morning, think of one characteristic of God that brings you comfort. Then throughout the day, look for the way you see God comforting you in that manner.

Go Deeper

- [Getting to Know God](#)

5 - From Fear to Generosity

Read

“For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.”

- 2 Timothy 1:7

“Good will come to those who are generous and lend freely... Surely the righteous will never be shaken... They will have no fear of bad news; their hearts are steadfast, trusting in the LORD. Their hearts are secure, they will have no fear...They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor, their righteousness endures forever.”

- Psalm 112:5-9

Reflect/Discuss

- Describe a time in your life that you were afraid, but you chose courage.
- In the passage above, how is courage connected to generosity?

Consider

We learn that fear is not from God, but rather He puts courage inside of us. We've learned that courage in the midst of fear comes from knowing God deeply and trusting in Him. So what does that have to do with generosity?

You'll notice in the Psalm that a lack of fear and the act of giving is interconnected. Those who know and trust God also believe that He is their source. They never have to worry about not having enough in difficult times. Because of this confidence, they don't have to be greedy or hoard - they can give freely. Generosity is the overflow of courage. It's not only material things either. We can give freely of our time, our services, and our lives. When we give, we are *encouraging* others who are fearful... or in other words, we are putting *courage in* people.

Act

- Find a way to encourage, or give courage, to someone by being generous.

Go Deeper

- [Why Should I Give?](#)

Fear is a part of life. Many of the heroes in the Bible were afraid. That's because God led them to places that required them to trust Him. We can't avoid our fears or overcome them with reasoning. We can only turn to God and trust that He is our strength. Our courage comes from our intimacy and relationship with God. When we choose to trust God and be courageous, we are free to be generous and to give courage to others.

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