

More Lessons in Discipleship



Teacher's Guide

Materials

whiteboard or flipchart; markers; Bibles

Surveying the Source

Matt. 14:22–33; Mark 4:36–41; 6:51, 52; Luke 8:25; 24:37; John 6:19.

Plotting the Course

The students will:

- ▶ Learn that fear—on some level—is a normal, human emotion.
- ▶ Understand that faith doesn't eliminate fear, it only helps manage it.

- ▶ Develop spiritual resources to tap into God's strength as an antidote to our fears.

Preparing to Lead

There's kind of a false spirituality in some circles that says fear in all its forms is a denial of faith; that those who are afraid somehow don't have enough faith. In fact, this world is often a scary place. Everyday we face countless situations over which we have no control: the threat of terrorism, natural disasters, terminal

illnesses, drunk drivers, contaminated food, etc.

But this week's lesson says that in spite of our fears—especially legitimate ones—our faith in God and His promises can keep us from being overwhelmed by them; that even in the midst of heartache and tragedy, God is nearby.

Getting Started

A. Match the Phobia: Pass out the reproducible activity on the top of page 41. Have class members complete it. End by pointing out that whether they seem trivial or serious, fears are as individual and as varied as we are. (Key to Match the Phobia: 1-F; 2-G; 3-E; 4-H; 5-D; 6-I; 7-C; 8-J; 9-B; 10-K; 11-L; 12-A.)

B. Rate Your Fear: Pass out the reproducible activity on the bottom of page 41. Have class members complete it. Then tell them that if they were to type "Top 10 Fears" into most Internet search engines, the following fears would appear in this reverse order: 10. Fear of death;

9. Fear of thunder and lightening; 8. Fear of cancer; 7. Fear of heights; 6. Fear of vomiting; 5. Fear of confined spaces; 4. Fear of open spaces; 3. Fear of flying; 2. Fear of people or social situations; 1. Fear of spiders. How did class members' lists compare to this one?

Say: Fears can be rational or irrational, but most people function normally in spite of their fears. Jesus said: "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28, NIV). Even then He promised to deliver us from evil.

Delving Into the Word

A. They Faced Fear. On a flipchart or whiteboard, make three columns. Label

the first column "Bible Character"; the second column "Fear"; and the third col-

umn “God’s Solution.” Under the first column, list the following names and texts: Abraham (Gen. 15:1–3); Jacob (Gen. 32:22–26); David (2 Sam. 12:1–10); Ruth (Ruth 1:11–18); Esther (Esther 4:1–14); Daniel (Dan. 6:3–21). Have class members read the texts after each name, then list some of the fears each character faced in each situation in the second column, and discuss/list in the third column how God was involved in providing a solution. (*Note to teacher:* Each situation represents not only an immediate, obvious fear, but also an underlying, spiritual, or emotional fear. Don’t settle for simple, obvious answers.)

B. Facing Down Fear. Before class, list the following fears on a flipchart or whiteboard: going to a new school/ getting a new job; learning that your parents are getting a divorce; you, or someone you know, getting a terminal illness; having someone close to you die; being emotionally or spiritually abused; breaking up with a boyfriend or girlfriend; being fired; facing an uncertain future;

Discussing the Ideas

1. In general, are the Christians you know more or less likely to be fearful? Why is that?
2. Which is more important: to be protected from physical, material dangers, or from spiritual, emotional threats? Why?
3. “Perfect love drives out fear” (1 John 4:18, NIV). Why is love such a powerful force in fighting fear?
4. Just as God was with Daniel in the lions’ den, so He will be with us in our

Closing the Activity

Say: One thing we never have to fear is that God doesn’t love us, or that He takes more pleasure in our destruction than our salvation. The Bible is a record of the unbelievable lengths to which God will go to rescue sinners, while at the same time banishing sin.

Invite your students to recall a time

someone lying about you.

Also list the following promises: Ps. 31:24; Mark 5:34; John 14:27; Acts 27:23–25; 2 Cor. 4:8, 9; 2 Tim. 1:7; Ps. 56:11; Luke 12:11, 12; John 20:19; Rom. 8:15–17; Phil. 2:12, 13; 1 Pet. 3:15, 16; Matt. 14:27; John 14:1; Acts 4:19, 20; Rom. 8:38, 39; Phil. 4:6, 7; 1 John 4:18.

Say: The fears we face don’t usually involve surviving an earthquake, a volcanic eruption, or a terrorist attack. It’s more likely we’ll face situations in which we feel threatened financially, emotionally, or spiritually, and feel that we have nowhere to turn. Listed on the flipchart (whiteboard) are some typically modern fears, along with some Bible promises. Which Bible promises might we claim for any particular one of these fears?

Have class members take turns reading the promises. Then have the class discuss which fear each text might fit with best and why. Also discuss what attribute of God is described in each text and how that attribute can alleviate our fears.

times of trial. What methods for feeling God’s presence mean the most to you?

5. If you were asked to create a marketing campaign to promote a relationship with Christ as an antidote to fear, what basic elements would you include?

6. On what do you base your faith so you can face the future unafraid?

7. What methods for feeling God’s presence mean the most to you?

when they felt threatened physically, emotionally, or spiritually. After they relate it briefly, ask them to share (1) how they now see God’s hand in the solution, or (2) what Bible promise they claimed in the process. Be prepared with at least one experience of your own to share. Close with prayer.

Stephen Chavez, Silver Spring, Maryland, U.S.A.

Match the Phobia

Match the scientific term for the fear on the left with the lay definition on the right. *A heads-up:* Unless you're proficient in Greek, your best bet is to just guess. (Source: Phobialist.com)

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| 1. Triskadekaphobia | A. Speaking in public |
| 2. Phalacrophobia | B. Kissing |
| 3. Taphophobia | C. Hurricanes |
| 4. Alektorophobia | D. The number 666 |
| 5. Hexakosioihexekontahexaphobia | E. Being buried alive |
| 6. Alliumphobia | F. The number 13 |
| 7. Lilapsophobia | G. Becoming Bald |
| 8. Trypanophobia | H. Chickens |
| 9. Philemaphobia | I. Garlic |
| 10. Geliophobia | J. Injections |
| 11. Eisoptrophobia | K. Laughter |
| 12. Glossophobia | L. Mirrors |

Lesson 11

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Rate Your Fear

On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being the scariest) rate the following 10 fears according to your own experience:

- _____ Fear of vomiting (emetophobia)
- _____ Fear of being in confined spaces (claustrophobia)
- _____ Fear of heights (acrophobia)
- _____ Fear of spiders (arachnophobia)
- _____ Fear of cancer (cancerphobia)
- _____ Fear of social situations (sociophobia)
- _____ Fear of thunder and lightning (brontophobia)
- _____ Fear of flying (aerophobia)
- _____ Fear of death (necrophobia)
- _____ Fear of open spaces (agoraphobia)

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