

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS

The Sum of All Fears Episode 2

INTRODUCTION

If fear is part of our human condition and God knows that well enough to exhort us over 200 times in the Bible not to fear, then what does it look like to fight fear? In Episode 2 of this series, we look at ways the Bible teaches us to face fear and consider people who were known for their supernatural courage. It boils down to exercising faith, focusing on love, taking courage and praying for supernatural courage.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Faith may be defined as believing God is bigger than our fear. We must repent of our unbelief and repent that we have believed in the lie that God cannot resolve our fear. What situation in your life challenges your view of God?
2. Read 1 Jn 1:18-20. What does it mean when it says perfect love casts out fear? When have you seen this in action?
3. What are some practical ways you can focus on God's love for you in order to combat your fears?
4. Read Mark 6:49-52 and Joshua 1:5-9. The phrases "take heart" and "take courage" are interchangeable. Who gives us courage and how do we "take" it?
5. We see examples of supernatural courage throughout scripture: David first killing lions and bears to protect his flock, then killing Goliath; Jonathan and the Philistines, Queen Esther saving the Jews, and Peter's boldness

after Pentecost. Do you face any impossible situations that require supernatural courage? How can you follow these biblical examples of supernatural courage?

6. Read Psalm 23. Do an inductive bible study (observations, interpretation and application). You can use the following as a guide:
 - i. Posture your heart. Spend some time in prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to be your teacher. Open your heart to the Lord to speak to you.
 - ii. Read the passage aloud
 - iii. Ask some context questions of the passage:
 - What sort of writing is this? (a letter, a poem, a narrative etc?)
 - Are there any clues about the circumstances under which it was written?
 - What has happened so far in this particular book of the Bible?
 - iv. Some observation questions of the passage:
 - Are there any major sub-sections or breaks in the passage?
 - What is the main point or points?
 - What surprises are there?
 - What are the key words? What words or ideas are repeated?
 - v. Some leading questions of the text:
 - How does this passage relate to other parts of the book?
 - How does the passage relate to Jesus?
 - What does this teach us about God?
 - How could we sum up the meaning of this passage in our own words?
 - vi. Some application questions of the passage:
 - How does this passage challenge (or confirm) your understanding?
 - Is there some attitude you need to change?
 - How does this passage call on me to change the way you live?

Based on what you have learned in this passage, what do you learn about walking with God in your fearful circumstances?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

As we experience fear, we have the opportunity to exercise faith in a God bigger than our circumstances, to dwell on His love for us and allow that love to displace our fear. We are commanded to take action: to take hold of the courage offered by God.

We can even ask God for supernatural courage in the face of an impossible situation. The warning for us is against grieving the Holy Spirit by failing to trust Him and instead believing the lies of the enemy, which will only increase our fear.

CHANGE YOUR MINDSET

Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed (Mark 6:50b-51)