



small groups Discussion Guide



Courage vs. Fear

Psalm 3

Ice Breaker (10 minutes)

Andy relayed a story from John Ortberg about a bar fight. Have you ever tried to break up a fight? Tell the story.

Lesson Review (30 minutes)

Discuss

This week's video monologue was a mother wrestling with fear over her daughter's bad choices. After watching the video, Andy asked, "If we sat you down in front of a camera and asked you what you fear, what would you have said?"

- Answer that question in your group.

Andy's text was Psalm 3 which David wrote while fleeing from his son Absalom. Absalom had murdered his half brother, and been banished. Then, when David had pity on him and welcomed him back from banishment, Absalom took the opportunity to stage a coup against his father. David had every right to the throne of Israel in Jerusalem. He was God's anointed, he was Absalom's father, he had not gained power by evil or manipulative means. In these ways, he was the antithesis of his son. And yet David is the one who winds up hiding in caves.

Read 2 Sam. 15:1-16 , 23

Discuss

- Imagine yourself in David's place. What do you think he feared?

In that place of fear, frustration and injustice, David wrote Psalm 3.

Read Psalm 3

David does two things in Psalm 3 that Andy called the “two habits of highly intrepid people.”

1. He focused on God’s presence.

Andy said,

When we fail to focus on God’s presence with us, we pray without faith, worship without awe, serve without joy, and suffer without hope. The result is a life of stagnation and fear, a loss of vision, an inability to persevere.

But the Bible makes the point again and again — God is with us.

Read Deut. 31:6, Psalm 23:4, and Psalm 46:1

2. He trusted in God’s help.

Andy said,

Trepidity is toxic. Trust is peaceful. Trusting God doesn’t mean you never get scared in the moment. It does mean you never fear as a way of life. Fear is the dread of an unknown future. Peace is trusting One who holds the future in His hands. The intrepid do not fret, they trust. The intrepid do not worry, they anticipate. The intrepid do not dread, they pray. The intrepid do not freak out, they come closer. The intrepid are not bulletproof, but they walk in peace. And so if only we trust God more, we will fear less.

Read Is. 26:3-4, Is. 41:13, Psalm 56:3, and John 14:27

The most often-repeated command in the Bible is “do not fear”. The scriptures give us that instruction more than 200 times. The Bible also identifies cowardice as a sin (Rev. 21:8).

Discuss

Define the words below in simple terms. Think about children in your life / family. What do you want them to understand about these things? (Better still: if any families in your small group have kids, invite the kids in for this part of the discussion.)

- Fear
 - Fearlessness
 - Courage
 - Cowardice
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Application

Discuss *(20 minutes)*

Andy shared about his fear during his battle with cancer. He said he and Alice had to decide if their faith could answer three basic questions: Is God real? Is God good? Is God here? Fear is like that; it makes us doubt our deepest convictions and most obvious truths.

- Has fear fostered doubt in your heart recently? How?

Read 1 Cor. 16:13-14

Discuss

- What's something courageous you'd like to do this week? Name it. Pray for it together. Then encourage one another to go do it!