

Fear Not

The Unbearable Weight of Fear

TALK IT OVER

Key Scriptures

For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. 2 Timothy 1:7 NLT

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!" Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God!" You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!" Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin." Luke 1:26-34 NLT

And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ... For nothing will be impossible with God." Luke 1:35, 37 ESV

Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." ... Luke 1:38 NLT

Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- When was the last time something unexpected happened to you?

Start thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- Which part of this message was most impactful for you and why?
- Pastor Craig said, "What we call God's disturbing interruptions are often God's divine invitations." What do you think that means?
- Read **Luke 1:26-35, 37-38**. How do you think Mary felt after hearing Gabriel's words? What kinds of thoughts do you think were going through her head?

Start sharing. Choose a question to create openness.

- If you feel comfortable, share about a time when you experienced an interruption to your life plan. Did you feel *confused and disturbed* like Mary? What other emotions did you feel?
- Have you seen something good come from a surprise interruption?
- What are some ways we can find comfort, peace, and direction when life feels out of our control?

Start praying. Be bold and pray with power.

Dear God, I know You are in control, even when my life feels out of control. Help me to find peace in Your perfect plan when my plans fall apart. I trust You, and I know You're always with me. Please give me the confidence to follow You wherever You lead. In Jesus' name, amen.

Start doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- **When you feel afraid, remember God is with you. Ask Him for comfort and greater trust.**
- Start the *Overcomer: Finding Strength in Hard Seasons* Bible Plan using Plans with Friends: www.go2.lc/fearnot
- Consider how you could love others by serving on the weekend or with a Local Mission Partner.