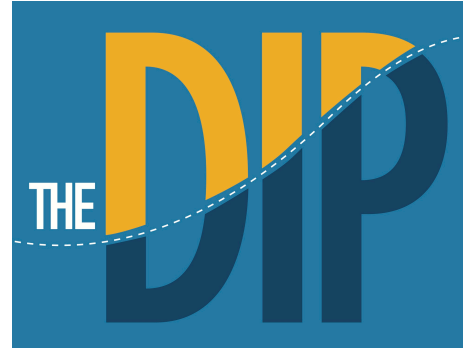


# onechurch

bigIdea small group discussion

Fear is a normal part of life—it keeps us safe from harm. But, fear can also control our lives and keep us from taking risks or trying new things. A life controlled by fear, rather than faith, becomes a self-destructive power. Fear is not just an unpleasant feeling. Fear is a hindrance to everything God has called you to be and to do. Fear can single-handedly keep us from experiencing the fulfillment of promises that God has already made us.

**BIG IDEA:** Fear is the emotional outburst of unbelief. Faith is a choice to take God at his word.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever been afraid of heights but found yourself high up? (Rock climbing, roller coaster, etc.?) Describe the experience.
2. What are some areas that cause fear in your life? (Job stability, Depleted Savings, Relationships, Major expense)? How do you normally respond to these issues? Is it a productive response that addresses the circumstance, or a paralyzing response?
3. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read 2 Timothy 1:7.* If God doesn't give fear, who do you think does?
4. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Habakkuk 3:19 from the Amplified Bible.*

The Lord God is my Strength, my personal bravery, and my invincible army; He makes my feet like hinds' feet and will make me to walk [not to stand still in terror, but to walk] and make [spiritual] progress upon my high places [of trouble, suffering, or responsibility]!

Habakkuk 3:19 (Amplified Bible)

“Fear has touched every one of us in some way—whether it has entangled us or completely enchained us. But how we respond to fear, and whom we turn to for a way out, is what matters more than anything. Will your fear leave you embittered or awestruck?”

—Max Lucado, *Fearless: Imagine Your Life Without Fear*

5. Where does Habakkuk say our strength, bravery and courage should come from? Where does Habakkuk get his sure-footed confidence?
6. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Matthew 14:22-33.* What kinds of things do you trust in, especially when life gets stormy, that help you feel comfortable and secure rather than fearful? Be honest!
7. When Jesus shows up, He uses the words ‘take courage’. Where is courage supposed to come from?

“Fear never wrote a symphony or poem, negotiated a peace treaty, or cured a disease. Fear never pulled a family out of poverty or a country out of bigotry. Fear never saved a marriage or a business. Courage did that. Faith did that. People who refused to consult with or cower to their timidities did that.”

—Max Lucado, *Fearless: Imagine Your Life Without Fear*

8. When has courage overcome fear to accomplish something good in your experience?

**LEADERS' NOTE:** This conversation can flow naturally from the last question—people may have stories of setting aside their fears to accomplish something. If no one has a personal story, look to current events or history to share stories of people who have stared fear in the face and chosen courage instead. For example, Google the stories of Paul Rusesabagina, Rosa Parks, Aron Ralston, or Susan B. Anthony.

9. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Matthew 8:23-27.* Have you ever felt that Jesus was sleeping through the storms in your life? How did you respond—in anger, in frustration, in hurt, or with understanding?
10. Does it bring you comfort to know that this reaction is intentional on his part, not accidental or ignorant? If not, how does it make you feel?

## MOVING FORWARD

A certain amount of fear is healthy—it is the canary in the coal mine, warning of potential danger. Fear is the appropriate reaction to a burning building or growling dog. Fear itself is not a sin. But it can lead to sin. When does that happen, and what does it look like in a real person's experience? In what ways have your encounters with fear increased your awe of God?

## WHAT WILL YOU DO?

What if you were no longer afraid? What if your life was no longer controlled by fear? What if we are more willing to be obedient than we are afraid? What would your family look like? What would your community look like? What would this world look like?

## CHANGING YOUR MIND

*The Lord God is my Strength, my personal bravery, and my invincible army; He makes my feet like hinds' feet and will make me to walk [not to stand still in terror, but to walk] and make [spiritual] progress upon my high places [of trouble, suffering, or responsibility]! Habakkuk 3:19*

