



Fear Not

Discussion Guide

When we think of Christmastime, we often think of the hustle and bustle, presents and shopping. When we think of the reason for this holiday, we remember the birth of Jesus and feel wonder and awe for an innocent baby born to carry our sins. But the original Christmas story had lots of instances of fear and concern. God's comfort to those in stressful, impossible situations is still available to us today.

Jump Start

1. What is one of your fears that others might find amusing?
2. **Read Psalm 23:1, Philippians 4:19, and Matthew 6:31-33.** What can we depend on God to always provide?
3. **Read Psalm 23:2-3 and John 10:14, 27.** The good shepherd does a lot for his sheep. He is everything to them. List what King David says the Lord will do for us in verses two and three. Then share with your group how you personally know the Lord's voice and how you have learned to follow Him.
4. **Read Psalm 23:4 and Matthew 28:20.** Throughout the Old and New Testament, God has said the same thing, "He will never leave us." How difficult is this for you to remember? Share one time you knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that Jesus was right there with you in the middle of a dark moment.
5. Final Thought: **Read Psalm 23:5-6 and Psalm 56:3.** Note that God makes promises to us in Psalm 23. But in Psalm 56, David is speaking out to God. What is David choosing to do? How do you personally set your mind to trust God? Share your "next step" with your group.

Deeper

Read these passages then explore the questions that follow.

Matthew 10:26-33 (ESV)

26 So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. 27 What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. 28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. 30 But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. 32 So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, 33 but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

- In verse 28, what impact does knowing people cannot kill your soul have on your fears?
- Verse 28 does make note of a fear we should have. What is it? Why?
- God cares about every living creature, including seemingly insignificant birds. How does this encourage us when we are afraid?

Joshua 1:7-9 (ESV)

7 Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. 9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.

- According to verses 7 and 8, what difference does following God's instruction make in life?
- What correlation do you see between obeying God and fighting fear?
- Why is what is said in verse 9 such an important thing to remember whenever you start to feel afraid?