Small Group Discussion
Guide: Week 1: Fear & Faith

**Introduction:** A few years ago we took our family to see the USS North Carolina Battleship in Wilmington. I was ready for an exciting day exploring the ship. My oldest son, Austin, was 6 years old at the time, and I thought he would love it. We decided to go below deck to check out the interior, and the rest of the ship. As we went down below deck, Austin became paralyzed by fear when we had to walk across metal grates that allowed you to see a floor below you. As a result he did not like being below deck on the battleship. It caused him to physically start to shake and cry because he is afraid of heights. He thought the ship was cool when we were on deck, but because of his fear, he didn’t enjoy the ship.

Fear is a very real, and powerful emotion that causes people to act in a way that does not look like they have self-control. Fear can keep us from taking action or thinking clearly. It can create doubt in our minds and cause us to respond in ways that make us look crazy.

We are in a new sermon series called Fearless. This is a battle most of us face daily; FEAR of failure, FEAR of regret, FEAR of rejection. FEAR is an enemy that knows and leverages your weakness to render you powerless. It wages war on your heart and mind. It is a formidable opponent.
Join us as we explore what fear is, what it does to our lives and how we can defeat it.

Reflecting on this verse, think about how God wants us to live our lives in response to the gospel. Through Christ, our lives can be full of power, full of love, and display self-control. Fear or timidity creates the exact opposite for us, which causes us to not move. The devil wants to use fear to steal from you the blessing of what God has given, which is a new spirit.

Read: Joshua 1:1-9 & Psalm 111:1-10

We will apply the H.E.A.R method of Bible study for this series.

- **Highlight:** Read and observe everything in the passage(s).
- **Explain:** Based on your reading, discover what the passage means in its context.
- **Apply:** Understand how the meaning of the passage affects your life.
- **Respond in Prayer:** Pray God's word back to him, asking to believe, share, and put the Bible into practice in your life and relationships.

**Discussion Questions**

(Leader Insight) In the book of Joshua the phrase Be strong and Courageous appears at least 6 times throughout the book. Most of these references appear in the first chapter. Joshua becomes the leader of God’s people when Moses dies. Joshua is charged to lead the Israelites into the promised land that God promised Moses. It has been a 40 year journey in the wilderness to get to this point because the children of Israel did not listen to God. God told Moses that he would not see the promise land, but that Joshua would lead them in. Now Joshua has assumed command and he hears these words from God, “Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them… Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” Here God is telling Joshua to not be afraid, but to trust him and obey his word. Today, we will look at the difference of Fear and fearing the Lord.

**Highlight**

**Question 1:** What is happening in Joshua 1 and Psalm 111? Describe the themes.

**Question 2:** What are some things you notice from these passages? What is the context in which this is taking place?

**Question 3:** What words do you notice that are repeated in both passages? (Joshua 1 & Psalm 111)
Question 4: Why do you the God tells Joshua to not be afraid? What care some things could cause Joshua to have fear?

Question 5: In Joshua 1:2, what promise did God tell Joshua that he would do?

Question 6: In verses 3-4, what is happening? What is God telling Joshua?

Question 7: In Joshua 1:5, what is the key promise of verse 5?

(Leader Insight) God tells Joshua that he has already given them the land and he let’s Joshua know that just as he was with Moses, that he (God) would be with Joshua. This is a great promise for us to rest and trust in. God is with us, he will fight for us, the victory has already been won. Moses had seen God do great things, but now he was dead, and many of us can relate to this new fear. The fundamental question for the new leader was, Could I trust God? Would he take care of me like he did Moses? Well the answer is seen in verse 5. God told Joshua that he would never leave or forsake him. “Just as he was with Moses, I will be with you.” This is great news for us today, that God is with us and will not leave us or forsake us.

Question 8: In Joshua 6-8, what is God telling Joshua to do? Why does God say this again?

Question 9: What is the key to being prosperous and successful? (vs 8)

Question 10: In verse 9, God tells Joshua again to not be afraid or be discouraged, what would cause Joshua to be discouraged? (God already told them that they would inherit the land, so why tell him this again?

Question 11: Read Psalm 111, in verses 1-3, what is the author telling us about God?

Question 12: Why is this important for us to understand?

Question 13: How do Psalm 111 and Joshua 1 compliment each other? What are some things you notice from both passages?

Question 14: In Psalm 111:6 we see the power of God on display. How does God show is power to us?

Question 15: Psalm 111:7-9, what are the works of his hands? How can we trust in this?

Question 16: What is the beginning of wisdom? What does this mean?
Question 15: How do these passages help shape the way you look at God?

Question 16: What did you learn from this week’s discussion?

Question 17: Describe some of the parallels that you notice from Joshua 1 and Psalm 111. What sticks out to you from these passages?

Question 18: Why are we told in Joshua 1 to “Not be afraid” and then told in Psalm 111 to “fear the Lord”? Do these 2 passages contradict each other? Why or why not?

Question 19: 2 Timothy 1:7 tells us, “For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.” How does fear keep us from doing what God wants us too? How does the devil use the tool of “fear” to distract us or cause us not to move?

Question 20: Describe a time when you knew God was calling you to do something, but fear seized the moment? What happened as a result?

Question 21: What did you learn from Joshua and from Psalm 111 that can help you overcome your fear? What is something God is speaking to you right now?

2 Timothy 1:5-9
5 I recall your sincere faith that first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and now, I am convinced, is in you also.  
6 Therefore, I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is in you through the laying on of my hands.  
7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but one of power, love, and sound judgment.  
8 So don’t be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, or of me his prisoner. Instead, share in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God.  
9 He has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.

Question 22: How can you “rekindle” the gift that God gave you? What does God do to get the spirit of fear out of us?

Question 23: What are some action steps you can take to get rid of the fear you have? What can you apply from Joshua 1 to your situation right now? What promise did God speak to you?
Respond in Prayer

Next Steps-

1. Share one small “next step” that you feel God is calling you to take in the next 7 days.
2. Ask God to help you get over your fear of what is holding you back.
3. Write down your prayer to God about your fear of what he is asking you to do. (maybe it’s starting a conversation with a co-worker, stepping into a new career, trusting God for a break-through), and then watch what God does over the next 30 days.
4. Pray every day for 5 minutes for God to give you wisdom about your situation. Read a Psalm, name your fear in prayer, and move with confidence.

Pray & Dismiss