



Defeating Fear - Week 1 DISCUSSION GUIDE

OVERVIEW

Chronic fear can affect both your physical and mental state and can cause actual memory loss. Chronic fear is also associated with emotional issues—including fatigue, depression, and even PTSD. Fear, worry and stress can impact our brain, our thinking, our decision-making, and ultimately our relationships. That's why we must learn how to overcome fear.

DISCUSSION

Fear is a powerful force that can influence both our minds and spirits, leading to physical and emotional consequences. Scripture consistently commands us to "fear not" because fear can keep us from trusting God and reaching our full potential. The difference between living in faith or fear often comes down to our perspective. Fear, like pressure and uncertainty, is universal, but God has given us a spirit of power, love, and a sound mind to combat it. The Bible shows that how we perceive challenges determines whether we live in faith or succumb to fear.

2 Timothy 1:7: *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*

- How has fear influenced your decisions or actions in the past?
- Why do you think God repeatedly instructs us not to fear?

The High Cost of a Mindset of Fear:

1. Living with a mindset of fear impacts your self-image.

Fear limits your ability to believe and grasp your own value. The command to "fear not" is essential because fear can severely limit our ability to follow God's call and live up to our full potential. Living with a mindset of fear negatively impacts self-image, as it prevents us from taking courageous actions that build inner strength and value. Confronting fear head-on, even in difficult situations, leads to personal growth and a stronger sense of self-worth, whereas avoidance results in long-term regret and diminished confidence.

- Why do you think taking action, even when afraid, leads to personal growth and a healthier self-image? How can we grow in this?

2. Living with a mindset of fear stagnates your growth.

Living with a mindset of fear can stagnate your growth and prevent you from becoming all that God has called you to be. Fear keeps you stuck in unfulfilling situations, like a dead-end job or an emotionally stagnant place, because it makes you afraid to step out and try something new. Trusting in God's strength allows you to overcome fear and take bold steps of faith toward growth and fulfillment. **Psalm 27:1: *The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?***

- Can you identify a situation in your life where fear has kept you from pursuing something greater? What held you back?

3. Living with a mindset of fear steals your joy and multiplies your regrets.

Living with a mindset of fear robs you of joy and fills your life with regret, as it leads to chronic worry and anxiety. Fear often distorts reality, making you focus on negative possibilities that are unlikely or beyond your control. Jesus teaches that we should not worry about tomorrow but instead trust that God will provide, allowing us to live with peace and joy:

Matthew 6:31-34: *“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”*

- 92% of what people fear either never comes to pass, or they have no control over, and the power of the “What if?” becomes paralyzing. What are some “What if?” thoughts that frequently run through your mind, and how can you challenge them with faith?

4. Living with a mindset of fear will infect others.

Living with a mindset of fear is contagious, affecting those around you, including your children, and can lead to a legacy of fear instead of faith. The story of the Israelites in Numbers 13 illustrates how the fear of a few can infect an entire nation, preventing them from entering the Promised Land. God calls us to stand in faith, using His Word as our foundation and weapon against fear, reminding us that we are more than conquerors in Christ. By embracing faith over fear, we leave a legacy of strength and trust in God for future generations.

- How have you seen fear influence others around you, and how can you prevent this in your own relationships?
- How can you cultivate a legacy of faith rather than fear for those who look up to you? What practical steps can you take daily?

LIFE CHALLENGE

This week, identify one area in your life where fear has been holding you back. Reflect on how this fear has affected your decisions, mindset, and relationship with God. Then, commit to taking one bold step of faith in that area.