

What Are You Afraid Of? Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. Is there anything you were particularly afraid of when you were a child? Explain.
2. What is one encouraging thing that you have experienced in the last month?

Read the following passage: Luke 12:1-12.

Much of Jesus' teaching presupposed the primary components of the worldview he shared with the majority of his fellow first-century Palestinian Jews: God exists and he is the same God who revealed himself to Abraham, Moses, and the prophets; the purpose of human existence is to know and love God and to do his will; history is not random — God is in control of history; God will judge the lives of all human beings and the result of this judgment will determine a person's experience in the afterlife. This understanding of reality is in the background when Jesus talked to his disciples about living boldly in the face of persecution and not giving way to fear.

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. Do you have a strong sense of purpose in your life? To what extent is it shaped by the Scriptures and, more specifically, Jesus' teaching? Explain.
2. Do you ever think about what happens when we die? What do you believe about life after death? Do your views align with what Jesus alludes to in Luke 12:1-12?
3. It would have been natural for Jesus' followers to fear persecution. In each of the following passages, what does Jesus tell his disciples and how might his teaching have helped them address their fears?
 - Luke 12:4-5
 - Luke 12:6-7
 - Luke 12:11-12
4. Consider the following statement: "Fear is connected to a loss of perspective." How does Jesus' teaching in Luke 12 support this statement? What are some areas in which we might fall victim to fear due to a loss of perspective?
5. Read Luke 12:22-31. What fear or fears is Jesus addressing in this passage? Do you struggle with any similar fears? In what areas of your life do you regularly experience fear?
6. Read Philippians 1:18-26. How did Paul's view of the afterlife help him navigate painful and daunting experiences in the present?

7. Overall, how well are you dealing with fear in your life? Do you worry frequently?
What do you do to address fear when it arises?
8. What is one thing you can do this week to help deal with fear?

Pray