



UNCERTAINTY: Bible Lessons for Families

Lesson: Fear & Worry

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Series Overview

Uncertainty: A 6-pack of Bible lessons helping families wrestle with the COVID-19 pandemic and other uncertain times.

FEAR & WORRY

BIBLE: Isaiah 41:9-10; Matthew 6:25-34; Matthew 6:25-34

MAIN IDEAS: When you experience fear, know that God is with you and strengthens you.

- When you worry, remember that God takes care of all your needs.
- Instead of worrying, chase after God.

SUPPLIES

For Family Activity:

- 2-4 pillows

For Object Lesson:

- Wooden blocks
- Sticker labels
- Pen

FAMILY ACTIVITY

Have 2-4 pillows on hand to use for this activity. Gather in a space in your house that has at least one seat for each person.

We're going to do a fun, quick activity together – you're really going to like it!

I want everyone to stand up and walk around until I tell you to stop.

I'm going to block a seat with a pillow while you're walking around.

At some point, I'm going to say, "sit down!"

Everyone will rush to find a seat, but there won't be enough for everyone to sit down because I blocked one seat with a pillow.

If you don't get a seat, you're out of the game.

Everyone will stand up and start walking around again.

I will put a couple of pillows down and then yell "sit down" again.

The game is over when there is only one person left in the game.

After the game, say... If you think about it, it's kind of silly that we allowed a pillow to keep us sitting down. But because I told you that it was blocking the seat, you believed me.

It kind of reminds me of how fear speaks into our lives.

It hardly ever makes sense. Think of some of the things people are afraid of – heights, bugs, clowns, the dark... we can make ourselves imagine the worst kinds of things, even though they hardly ever happen.

Fear is real, but so is God, and He can give us the strength to overcome any fear in our lives.

TEACH

Fear and worry are closely related.

First, let's talk about fear.

FEAR

Right now, we are living in uncertain times.

How will the COVID-19 pandemic affect you, your family, and your friends?

Are you afraid of the unknown future over the next few weeks and months?

Fear, on some level, is something that we all are struggling with.

Share with your family how you have experienced fear lately.

So, think really hard about what you fear right now. What is it?

Allow time for a few people to share their fears.

Were you surprised to hear that other people in our family have the same fear as you do?

You are not alone in your fears.

Now, think about how your body feels when you are terrified.

Sweaty palms. Your stomach gets all queasy. Every single inch of your body is on alert. And each of us responds to fear in different ways. Some of us freeze. Others run. And some of us fight, but regardless, we all know what it is like to be afraid.

Fear can truly be paralyzing, and it can be challenging to think clearly when you are terrified.

It is no surprise, then, that the Bible talks a lot about fear and being afraid.

Read Isaiah 41:9-10 (NCV).

"I took you from places far away on the earth and called you from a faraway country.

I said, 'You are my servants. 'I have chosen you and have not turned against you.

So don't worry, because I am with you. Don't be afraid, because I am your God.

I will make you strong and will help you; I will support you with my right hand that saves you."

When you experience fear, know that God is with you and strengthens you.

This Bible passage tells us not to be afraid. But how can you choose not to be afraid when there is so much uncertainty right now?

It seems to be a matter of focus. If you focus on what could happen or what might happen... fear shows its ugly head.

But if you focus on the fact that God is with you... fear seems to fade away a bit. God loves you and cares for you.

He's with you in your fear and uncertainty. He won't leave you.

And not only that, He will strengthen us. As if his presence with us isn't enough, he also gives us strength.

God knows that we will be afraid. Over and over in scripture, we read these reminders:

Do not be afraid. Do not fear.

So think about the situations that cause you to be afraid.

Now, picture yourself facing those situations WITH GOD.

Because that is the reality, you do not face those things alone.

God is greater than all of your fears.

And He can and WILL give you the strength to face those fears.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What fear are you experiencing right now?
- What about your life right now is uncertain?
- When you hear that God is with you or that He strengthens you...what about that statement is difficult to accept? What is easy to accept?

OBJECT LESSON

Have the blocks, sticker labels, and pen on hand for this object lesson.

Place a label on each block.

There's a big problem with fear... if we don't give our fears to God and ask Him to help us, they will cause destruction in our lives.

I want us to name things that people are often afraid of, and I'm going to write them on these blocks.

As you write down each fear, stack the blocks on top of each other.

The goal is to have so many blocks/fears that the stack eventually falls over.

This gives us a good image of what happens when we allow fear to build in our lives.

But with God's help, we can overcome any fear!

WORRY

Now, let's talk about worry.

Read Matthew 6:25-34 (NIV).

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?"

Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"

"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today

and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

God takes care of our needs.

Have you stopped and looked at any flowers? When you think of how all that color, beauty, shape, and smell just grew right out of the dirt—that's amazing.

The God who created those flowers—loves us so much more than those flowers. So why would we even waste a second of our lives worrying?

He'll take care of all our needs!

God already knows what we need. It's like a little love letter from Heaven, reminding us that everyone has needs, and we don't have to worry about them. He's got our backs and will take care of us.

Instead of worrying, chase after God.

Instead of worrying, place your focus somewhere else. And that somewhere else is seeking God's kingdom and His righteousness. After that, everything will fall into place exactly how it should.

Tomorrow is going to happen whether you worry about it or not, so just let tomorrow worry about itself. There's too much to think about and to do today to have the time or energy to worry about tomorrow.

It's an incredible gift to be able to lay your head on your pillow at night and know that the God who created everything sees that you trust Him. You may have no idea what tomorrow will bring, but you know that He'll be there and because He cares for you, He will take care of you.

Read Philippians 4:6.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

Next time you start to worry about something, I want you to remember this verse.

This verse tells us how to deal with worry:

1. No matter what the situation is, do not be anxious.

2. With a thankful heart, pray and tell God what you need.

That's it!

Seem too easy? Well, when you have a God who's got your best interests in mind, who you can talk to at any time, it really is.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why do you think it's so easy to worry so much?
- What do you think about God taking care of all your needs? Is that a hard concept to believe? Why or why not?
- What are some ways you can chase after God?
- Why do you think God tells us not to worry?
- Does talking to God about the things you're anxious about help you worry less?
- What can you do this week that will help remind you not to worry?

Pray together and then end the lesson.

Take a few minutes to discuss the following questions.

FAMILY CHALLENGE

Take time to study one more person in the Bible who encountered fear and overcame it with God's help. Some examples would be:

Elijah: 1 Kings 18-19

Esther: Esther 2-5; 7; 9:20-22

Daniel: Daniel 1:1-4; 6

Then, talk about how you can apply the lesson they learned to your own lives.