

Living by Faith and Not in Fear — July 15 & 16, 2017
Follow-up Bible Studies

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Day One: Psalm 23

- To David, who is the Lord (1)? How does this compare to what he calls the Lord in Psalm 27:1? Ponder each attribute: God as shepherd, light, salvation and stronghold; what do they mean to you personally? How do they help you to live in faith, not fear?
- Why does David “lack nothing” (2-3)? Do you think “for his name’s sake” is the *only* reason the Lord takes care of us in these ways? What are some other reasons he may do so?
- What fearful situation does David describe (4)? But why does he “fear no evil” (4)? What is your “darkest valley”? As you walk through it, recount your successes and struggles to experience God’s presence, deliverance and protection. Ask the Lord to strengthen your faith to not live in fear.
- Surprisingly, where else does David commune with the Lord (5)? In what ways (5)? What does this make him certain of (6)? Can you say the same? If not, ask God “to help you in your unbelief.”

Day Two: Matthew 6:25-34

- What things does Jesus tell us not to worry about (25)? What common concerns of today’s age would you add? In order to understand what it looks like to “not worry” and trust the Lord, what does Jesus tell us to look to (26, 28-29)?
- What rhetorical questions does Jesus ask (26-27, 30)? What sort of speech flows from a state of anxiety (31)? Who “runs after” things in this way (32)? When are you apt to wonder, worry and act frantic like this? Invite the Lord into these vulnerabilities, asking him to bring his peace, light and salvation.
- What must we seek first (33)? How does doing so alleviate fear (33)? How does Jesus conclude his remarks on this matter (34)? Spend a few minutes in silence, imagining Jesus speaking these words directly to you. Take a moment to respond to him.

Day Three: Matthew 8:23-27

- Set the scene of this text (23). What “suddenly” happened (24)? Meanwhile, what was Jesus doing (24)? What did the disciples do (25)? Consider what they must’ve been thinking and feeling.
- What are some examples of the sudden storms in your life? How do you typically respond to them? What does this indicate about your faith? Tell the Lord what you want to be different about your response to unforeseen trials and ask him to make it so.
- What did Jesus say about the disciples’ fearful behavior (26)? What tone of voice and body language do you think he used when he said these words to them? What did he do about the storm (26)? How did it respond to his rebuke (26)?
- Describe the disciples’ reaction to what Jesus did (27). Here it seems like they are beginning to get clued in on why we never have to fear: Jesus has authority over absolutely everything. Ask the Holy Spirit to further testify to your heart about this truth.

Day Four: Luke 10:38-42

- What is the setting (38)? Who sat at Jesus’ feet, listening to him (39)? Meanwhile, what was Martha up to (40)? What question did she ask Jesus, and what did she demand he do (40)? With whom do you most identify: Mary or Martha? Why? Lift this assessment up to the Lord and ask him to respond. What do you hear?

- When Jesus replied to Martha, how did he address her (41)? What did he say about her (41)? What liberating truth did he then share (42)? What does this mean about Mary's behavior (42)? Imagine Jesus' demeanor in this exchange. How do you think Martha responded to Jesus' words?
- Focus on the phrase "worried and upset," spoken by Jesus in verse 41. What worries and upsets you to the point of distracting you from what God is doing to and through you? Repent and ask for strength to overcome. Picture this victory as sitting at Jesus' feet, your heart and mind void of anxiety. How does this feel?

Day Five: Philippians 4:4-9

- What must we always do (4)? Why does Paul repeat himself here? What should we make evident (5)? Instead of being anxious about something, what should we do (6)? When we pray like this, what will happen (7)? If we let anxiety and fear fester instead of praying, what do you think will happen? How can you consistently make prayer your first response to every trying situation?
- Paul then shifts to the importance of our thoughts. What does he tell us to think about (8)? Which of your thoughts fit the bill? Which ones miss the mark? How might thinking according to Paul's guidelines combat fear? Pick just one of the adjectives from his list, and set aside a few minutes each day this week simply to think about things that match the description.
- How does Paul conclude these exhortations (9)? In addition to the above exercise, what is one other thing you sense the Holy Spirit asking you to put into practice in order to live in faith, not fear? Pray for grace to do so in the coming months.