



Hope for Everyone, Pt. 3: Overcoming Your Fears

Everyone experiences fear, and while some of the fears we face may be somewhat comical, what about the fears we have that aren't so funny? What about the fears we face that can feel debilitating? How can we overcome those fears?

Bottom Line: God came near to be with us; you don't have to live in fear.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are you afraid of that might be a surprise to people who know you?
2. **Read Matthew 1:18-19.** How do you think Joseph wrestled with his dual obligations to the religious Hebrew law and to his desired to do what was best for Mary?
3. Do you know someone who faced a major life decision regarding marriage and children? How did they handle their fear and arrive at a decision?
4. **Read Matthew 1:20-21.** Joseph must have been comforted to have an angel of the Lord confirm the act of the Holy Spirit within Mary. Still, this is not an explanation he could share with others nor would they believe him if he did. Have you ever had to keep a secret that involved the fear of uncertain consequences for you or someone you loved? How did that feel?
5. **Read Matthew 1:22-25.** After hearing from the angel, Joseph knew that divorce was not the right decision, but that did not make the path forward easier or less fearful for him. Throughout history those faithful to God have suffered for their beliefs despite knowing them to be correct. How might Joseph and Mary have suffered as a result of their faithfulness?
6. Think about a fear you have that, if overcome, would make a positive difference in your life. What are some specific things that you can do with God's help to overcome you fears?
7. It is up to us to decide to not live in fear anymore, but instead live a life of courage and faith and know that we don't have to be afraid because the Lord our God is with us. What can we do to always be mindful of God's presence in our lives? He is there for us when we need him. How can we not lose sight of God's promise to be with us?
8. What has been the most helpful thought/idea from the message this week? How has that thought/idea helped you? How can the group encourage you this week?