

# Faith Over Fear

October 5<sup>th</sup> – November 2<sup>nd</sup>

## Weekly Memory Verses

**October 5<sup>th</sup>:** Psalm 46:1 – “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.”

**October 12<sup>th</sup>:** Joshua 1:9 – “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for **the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.**”

**October 19<sup>th</sup>:** Psalm 27:1 – “**The LORD is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear?** The LORD is the stronghold of my life – of whom shall I be afraid?”

**October 26<sup>th</sup>:** Psalm 56:3 – “When I am afraid, I will trust in You.”

**November 2<sup>nd</sup>:** 1 Peter 5:7 – “Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.”

## Opening Question

What are some things that scare you? Make you nervous or anxious? Tell me about a time when you were really afraid.

## Memory Verse Work

Read this week’s memory verse and spend a couple of minutes working on it as a family. Try to say each week’s verse every day during that week. Once everyone knows it well, see if you can remember verses from previous weeks!

## Unpack the Theme

This month’s theme is “Faith over Fear”. Fear is a pretty powerful emotion. Everyone gets scared sometimes – even grown-ups. And not all fear is bad. If you are walking in the woods and see a bear, it is fear that causes you to quietly walk the other way. Fear of getting hit by a car will keep you from running into a busy street, and fear of consequences helps you obey your parents and teachers. Healthy fear can help protect us from making bad choices and keep us out of trouble.

But fear can get us into trouble too. Sin messes up everything good that God made, and fear is no exception. When we let fear take over, it can cause us to go along with the crowd instead of standing up for what is right. It can keep us from trying new things or doing something God has called us to do. It can steal our peace and joy, making us worried and anxious. There are plenty of things to be scared of, and it is easy to get caught up in fear.

But here is the good news – God is bigger, stronger, and more powerful than *anything* we are afraid of. There are many verses in the Bible that tell us not to be worried or afraid because God is with us. He strengthens us, helps us, and holds us up (Isaiah 41:10). This month, we will memorize a few Bible verses about trusting God when we are afraid. There are also some Bible stories you can read about people who had courageous faith in the face of some very scary situations. When we are afraid, we need to bring our fears to God, trusting in His strength and goodness. God is in perfect control of everything that happens in our lives, and even when things get scary, we can have faith that God is working everything for good (Romans 8:28).

So the next time you are scared or worried, talk to God about it! Thank Him for being with you and ask Him to help you trust Him. Keep your thoughts on how good God is and how much He loves you. Let your faith be stronger than your fear!

## Pray

Let's talk to God about our fears. Tell God something you are afraid of, and ask Him to help you trust Him. Thank Him for being with you always, especially when you are scared.

## Go Deeper

Choose one or more of the Bible stories below to read as a family. You could do one per week or pick just one or two to focus on. All of these stories feature people who courageously chose faith over fear.

- *Daniel and the Lions' Den*: Daniel 6:1-23
- *Shadrach, Meshach, & Abednego and the Firey Furnace*: Daniel 3:1-28
- *David and Goliath*: 1 Samuel 17:1-50
- *Esther Saves Her People*: Esther 4:1-5:3 (You may have to give your kids a little background on this story. You can find Esther's full story in the book of Esther. Older children in particular may enjoy reading the account in its entirety. Or you could read Esther's story from a children's Bible.)
- *Peter and the Apostles Arrested and Freed*: Acts 5:17-42

After reading, discuss the story with your family. Questions you could use include:

- Who was the main character in this story? What scary situation did he/she encounter?
- What did the character choose to do? How did he/she show that he/she trusted God?
- How did the story end? Does God always rescue us from scary situations?\*

\*This is an important question for older children in particular. While each of these stories had a good outcome, God did not rescue the characters *from* their scary situations – Daniel was thrown in the lions' den, David had to fight Goliath, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were tossed into the furnace, Esther had to approach the king, and Peter and the apostles were put in prison. But God was *with* all of these people

throughout their trials and was working in the midst of them. Each of these faithful people believed that God was able to rescue them, but they were also well aware that God might have a different plan (see Esther's "If I perish, I perish" and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego's "Even if He does not..."). And while the apostles were rescued from prison, they were not rescued from being beaten, and we know that almost all of them eventually died for their faith. Not all of the scary situations we encounter will end in rescue. But we can be absolutely sure that God is always with us and that He is always working for good (Romans 8:28). God is bigger and stronger than anything we fear, and all who have trusted in Jesus as Savior and Lord have already experienced the ultimate rescue – from sin, death, and hell. One day, believers will have the very happiest of endings: an eternal home in Heaven with Jesus.

### **Family Challenge Question**

It is not just individuals who have to face scary situations – families do too. Whether it is a financial crisis, illness, or tragedy, every family goes through times when it would be easy to live in fear rather than faith. How can we help each other trust God when we are afraid?

### **Activity Ideas**

1. Make a simple map of your neighborhood, including all of the places where your child goes regularly. As your family colors the map, talk about how God is with us in all the places we go. You could use heart or cross stickers to mark the places you visit frequently, reminding your family that God is always with us.
2. Write down the memory verses for this month on notecards or slips of paper. Give a set to each family member so they can carry the verses with them or put them in the different places where they spend a lot of time (desk at work or school, locker, in or on a backpack or briefcase, in the pocket of their jacket, etc.). Let these verses be an encouragement to your family that God is with us wherever we go.
3. Have a family movie night! If you have young children, try Veggie Tales' *Where's God When I'm Scared?* (which features the story of Daniel). Older children might enjoy *Facing the Giants*, and if you have teens, *Courageous* is a good option. All three of these movies have an explicitly Christian message and provide opportunities to discuss what it means to have courageous faith in the face of trials and challenges. You may have other movies in mind as well – choose whatever works best for your family.
4. Act it out! Choose one or more of this month's Bible stories, and act out the moment that the Bible character chose to respond in courageous faith in the midst of his/her fear. Now think of some times when you have been or might be afraid. How would it look for you to have faith in those times? To remember that God is with you and will help you? Act out one or more scenarios to practice responding with faith rather than fear.