

UNAFRAID



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Lesson 1



Lesson 1: Simon



Bible Verses: Luke 5:1-11



Bottom Line: Trusting Jesus allows us to move from fear to purpose, as He calls us to to something greater.

SUPPLIES & NOTES

- Printed Fear Face Off eyes sheet and mouth sheet (1 per team or player)
- Printed Fear Face Off 36 faces sheet (1 per leader/judge)
- Option 1: Dry erase board and bold dry erase marker (1 per team or player)
- Option 2: Sheets of paper, craft paper, or easel pad and poster markers (1 per team or player)

OPENING GAME

FEAR FACE OFF

Game prep:

Print out the Fear Face Off eyes, mouth, and face sheets – see quantity in supply list.

Whichever option you choose, gather all the supplies you need and set them out, one set per player or team.

How to play the game:

Set up your players or teams (as few as two or as many as you want).

Set a timer for 10 or 15 minutes, our recommended game time. (Longer if you want and have time.)

Make sure they each have their drawing supplies and Fear Face Off sheets.

Explain that you will call out a letter and a number.

- The letter is for the eyes.
- The number is for the mouth.
- (These will correspond to the letters and numbers under each face.)

The first person to draw a “face” with the correct eyes and mouth wins 100 points.

Have one leader watching or judging each team/player. Make sure each leader has a copy of the faces sheet so they know what should be drawn.

As you call out the letter and number, watch to see which student gets finished first and with the correct drawing.

If you draw the wrong eyes or mouth, you are disqualified.

If you draw the correct eyes and mouth the fastest, you win 100 points.

If you get to the end of the game and have a tie, then play one more round with just the teams who tied, playing to break the tie.

OPENING GAME

FEAR FACE OFF

(You can play up to 36 rounds. We recommend playing for 10-15 minutes, switching out who draws every round or every two rounds.)

The team or player with the most points wins!

*Note: If you don't do all 36 faces and if this game goes well with your students, you can always bring it back out in week three or four of this series and play again.

Some of those drawings were scarier than others.

Some of you have amazing artistic talent we didn't realize!

And some of you experienced fear trying to make sure you drew the correct eyes and mouth and drew them the fastest.

Great job everyone!

Isn't it amazing how much emotion can be expressed just with the eyes and mouth?!

Think about emojis, cartoon characters, and even CGI characters.

All of these have to be drawn or designed by someone, often with the help of computer software.

But all include details to help communicate what we recognize so quickly and easily on a human face: the emotion of fear.

During this series we are going to be talking about facing and overcoming fears.

When we say "facing," we're not talking about the literal faces you were drawing today.

We're talking about the verb "face," which means to confront and deal with something.

For our purposes, we're going to talk about facing – or confronting and dealing with – fear.

I'm not sure if you have noticed, but there's a lot of fear in the Bible in the Old Testament.

The Old Testament tells the story of God and his people before Jesus.

In that collection of writings, the authors used the word "afraid" 157 times; "fear" 223 times; and the phrase "do not be afraid" 35 times; along with "be strong and courageous" or a form of that 20 times.

Several of those situations involve people being told to “fear God” or people being told “do not be afraid” when they were in God’s presence or the presence of one of His messengers or angels.

Wait a minute – the Old Testament says to “fear God” and also “do not be afraid” in God’s presence?

Those things might seem like they contradict ... but they actually don’t contradict when you understand what those phrases actually mean.

To “fear God” means to have respect for God’s holiness and to acknowledge in your heart and mind and actions that He is all-knowing, all-powerful, and perfect.

If a person really believes those things about God to their core, they will have really deep respect for God.

That’s what it means when the Bible instructs us to “fear God.”

But at the same time, God’s Word tells us “do not be afraid” of God.

God tells His people not to be afraid of Him, and when He says that, He isn’t talking about having respect for Him.

He’s telling them to literally not be afraid of Him because He loves them and wants what is best for them.

Even though God is all-powerful, God’s people don’t have anything to fear from Him. He doesn’t want them to be afraid of Him!

But sometimes when people encounter God and come face to face with just how powerful and big and awesome God is, they experience fear.

You may find yourself in that spot today – where you feel some amount of fear when it comes to God.

That’s what today’s lesson is all about.

We’re going to look at a time when Jesus transformed someone’s fear of His power into friendship with Him.

It happened in the life of a man named Simon.

Let’s read a short passage that a man named Luke wrote to see what happened and how these emotions were brought out and changed in Simon.

Let's read Luke 5:1-11.

1 One day as Jesus was preaching on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, great crowds pressed in on him to listen to the word of God.

2 He noticed two empty boats at the water's edge, for the fishermen had left them and were washing their nets.

3 Stepping into one of the boats, Jesus asked Simon, its owner, to push it out into the water. So he sat in the boat and taught the crowds from there.

4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Now go out where it is deeper, and let down your nets to catch some fish."

5 "Master," Simon replied, "we worked hard all last night and didn't catch a thing. But if you say so, I'll let the nets down again."

6 And this time their nets were so full of fish they began to tear!

7 A shout for help brought their partners in the other boat, and soon both boats were filled with fish and on the verge of sinking.

8 When Simon Peter realized what had happened, he fell to his knees before Jesus and said, "Oh, Lord, please leave me—I'm such a sinful man."

9 For he was awestruck by the number of fish they had caught, as were the others with him.

10 His partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were also amazed. Jesus replied to Simon, "Don't be afraid! From now on you'll be fishing for people!"

11 And as soon as they landed, they left everything and followed Jesus.

Simon and the other fishermen would have worked at night because that's when they could catch the most fish.

These aren't a few guys with rods and reels.

These are professional fishermen with big nets and the strength to help haul them in when they caught fish.

This was how they made a living and how they provided for their families.

In the mornings, they would come to shore and clean and repair their nets before going to market to sell the fish and then home to rest before heading out that night for the next shift of work again.

You can imagine that if a crew of professional fishermen had fished all night without catching anything, they would be tired, frustrated, and probably a little worried since they needed to catch fish to earn money to pay the bills.

When Jesus shows up and asks to use Simon's boat as a floating stage to teach so that the crowds on shore could hear him better, even though he's tired and frustrated, he willingly does what Jesus asks.

And when Jesus asks him to push the boat out and drop the nets – the ones he had probably just about finished fixing and cleaning – he voices his concern that it seems like a waste of time, but he also says “if you say so” and then does what Jesus asks.

Well, something crazy happens!

They catch so many fish that their professional fishing nets are about ready to tear from the weight of all the fish!

Partners in other boats race from shore to help haul in this miraculous catch of fish, and then all the boats are almost sinking because of the weight of all the fish in the nets!

In the midst of all this loud and crazy action, Simon has a realization – he has come face to face with just how powerful and big and awesome Jesus is, and he begins to experience fear.

Simon's response to this miracle is to fall on his knees before Jesus and ask Jesus to leave because of his own sinfulness.

Because Jesus knows everything, He knows that Simon is experiencing fear.

So He says, “Don't be afraid! From now on you'll be fishing for people!”

Simon had a healthy respect for God's power, which was on display big-time in the miracle Jesus had just performed.

But that respect turned into a kind of fear that made him ask Jesus to leave.

Jesus turns this around and says that instead of being separated, Jesus actually wants to draw closer to Simon.

It may sound strange to hear Jesus tell Simon that from now on he'll be fishing for people.

That's because we catch and kill fish to eat.

You need to think of this, in modern terms, like Jesus telling Simon: "I'm going to take you from catching fish to rescuing people in the Coast Guard."

The understood language here is that Jesus has a new mission for Simon and he'll be just as amazed, if not more, by what God does through Simon as what God has just done for Simon.

Verse 11 ends this section very simply with Simon accepting this offer and following Jesus.

Later his name will be officially changed to Peter, but he has more learning to do and more mentoring to receive before he becomes a bold follower of Jesus.

He's just taking his next steps here, from fear of God to friendship with God.

He learns that trusting Jesus allows him to move from fear to purpose as Jesus calls him to something greater.

That is a lesson we can all learn, so I'll say it again before we head to our small groups – trusting Jesus allows us to move from fear to purpose, as He calls us to something greater.

Pray to close.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. For those who played the game, what was the most difficult part for you?

2. When you think of God, what's your primary emotion? (Could be respect, fear, admiration, friendship, etc.) Why do you think that is?

3. When was a time you thought you would be brave but ended up being scared? This could be a roller-coaster, zip-line, plane flight, tall building, or something else.

4. What do you think a person's life looks like if that person has a healthy respect for God but also an understanding that they are loved deeply and personally by Him?

5. If someone were to write your life story right now, what have you learned and experienced with Jesus in the time you've been following Him?

6. Simon sacrificed leaving behind all that he knew – the fishing business and his family and friends – to follow Jesus. To follow Jesus, what have you had to give up or what might you have to give up?

7. If you go on to read the rest of the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) and the book of Acts, you would see Simon be transformed into a bold follower of Jesus who preached and helped rescue many people through his ministry.