**Topic: Fear**

**Bible Passage: Joshua 1:9**

**Activity: Share Your Fears**

Give each student a 3x5 index card at the beginning of the activity. Explain to them that we all have fears, some big and some small. Ask them to think of something that they fear and write it on the index card. You might give them some ideas such as spiders, snakes, the dark, getting lost, failing a test, having to move to another state, etc. Collect the index cards after a few minutes. Begin reading some of the fears that were written on the cards and ask the group to raise their hands if they share that fear. There will probably be several fears that are shared by multiple people in the group.

**After the activity, ask the following questions:**

How do you deal with the fear you listed on your card?

Do you avoid it or do you try and confront it?

Why is it so hard to face our fears?

What are some ways that you stand up against your fears?

How does God and His Word help you to face those fears?

Can you think of verses in the Bible that give us courage to stand against our fears?

Fear can be pretty harsh on us. There are times in each of our lives when we feel paralyzed by fear. It is in those moments that we have to make a decision to run and hide from the things that we’re afraid of or have the courage to stand up to it.

We all have fears that can paralyze us if we choose to let them. But God wants something more. God wants us to trust in Him and be courageous. A great example of this is found in the Old Testament.

The Book of Joshua begins with the Israelites looking across the Jordan River at the land of Canaan, the Promised Land. God had promised this land to the Isrealites nearly 800 years earlier. They had waited nearly 15 generations for the moment when they could walk into that land. But that moment had come and they were paralyzed with fear.

Moses had led the Israelites well, but he has passed away and that left Joshua in charge. When Joshua took over leadership of the Israelites, there was a lot of fear. He had to be worried about the big job that he was assigned to do. Would the people listen to him? Would he know what to say to them? Would they be able to defeat the enemies that lie ahead of them? In his moment of fear, God spoke to Joshua. Joshua 1 lays out several promises of God, including how much their land will be, how victorious they will be in war, and how the people will follow Joshua. Then God wraps up his talk with Joshua with a very encouraging statement. In Joshua 1:9 God says…

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”

For Joshua and the Israelites, they had some great obstacles to conquer. They had to cross the Jordan River and had to face fortified cities with armies in the land of Canaan. But the greatest obstacle was fear. They were paralyzed by fear. They did not feel up for the challenge of entering the land that God has promised them. God reminded them of this in Joshua 1:9. He told them that He would be with them wherever they went. They took courage in this promise from God. In Joshua 11:16-23, you can read about how God was faithful in each of His promises to Joshua. Everything he promised, he did. Nothing is a better tool for conquering fear than trusting in the promises of God. When we are faced with fear, we need to remember the promises that God has made and take courage in His faithfulness.

[Share a personal story of a time when you were fearful. Share how you felt when the fear took over, and how you conquered the fear. Share how God’s promises in His Word helped you be courageous.]

**Break into Small Groups, read the following passages, and answer the discussion questions:**

**Acts 1:8**

What does God promise to give us here? (power through the Holy Spirit)

How can this power help us to face the fears we wrote down earlier?

What does the second part of this verse tell us about the reason God has given us this power? (to be a witness)

How does it feel to know that you have been promised God’s power?

**Matthew 28:19-20**

* What does God promise at the end of verse 20?
* How can God’s presence help us to face the fears that we wrote down earlier?
* Do you typically feel like God is always with you? If not, what are some reasons that we might not always feel his presence?
* What are some ways that we can stay close to God in order to continuously feel his presence?
* How much more confidence do you feel in facing your fears knowing that God is with you?

**Matthew 6:25-26**

What does God promise us in these verses?

Why does God place such a high value on us?

How can knowing that God has promised to provide for us help us to conquer our fears?

**Psalm 50:15**

What must we do to receive assistance from God with our fears?

Why do you think he asks us to “call upon Him”?

How do you think God would feel if he helped up with our fears, but we never acknowledge him or gave him the credit?