

If the Tooth Be Known

QUESTIONS FOR CUBS

NOTE TO PARENTS/TEACHERS:

The goal of this questions-and-answers section is to initiate interaction between you and your kids. Please do not just read the questions and answers to your kids. These answers are given for you at an adult level to think about and to process. Once that is accomplished, you can then translate them into appropriate answers for your kids.

LESSON

God frees us from our fears

KEY VERSE

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” (Phil. 4:6)

EAR CHECK (STORY COMPREHENSION)

- Q: As the story opened, what was The Club doing?
A: *Rehearsing a play*
- Q: What was wrong with C.J.?
A: *He had a bad toothache*
- Q: What was Madame Kildare's cure for stage fright?
A: *Controlled breathing techniques*
- Q: What did Staci bring to help cure C.J.'s toothache?
A: *Herbs—23 different ones, to be exact*
- Q: What was really wrong with C.J.'s tooth?
A: *He had a piece of a popcorn kernel wedged between his teeth*

HEART CHECK (SPIRITUAL APPLICATION)

Q: What is the opposite of fear?

- A: *Not surprisingly, the opposite of fear is fearlessness. But a total lack of fear is not the goal for God's children. Scripture often tells people to “be courageous” or “fear not” (see Gen. 26:24; Deut. 31:6; Josh. 1:6; Lk. 12:7). You see, courage and bravery do not happen in the absence of fear; they occur in spite of fear. If we only do things that we aren't afraid of, we will do very few things, and few will be of any importance. In fact, in order to have normal lives, we will need to face many*

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things that cause us fear. If we want more than normal lives—if we want to lead extraordinary lives—we will need to overcome even more of our fears. *so that people will love and admire me, these are also bad motives (Jer. 9:23-24). It is not that these things are necessarily bad, but the cold, hard truth is these things cannot bring you real security, real love, or real affirmation. They are illusions. Real love, security, and affirmation are simply not available except from the hand of God. If you are trying to get them from any other source, you are trying to replace God in your life, and you are headed into failure and frustration.*

QUESTIONS FOR CUBS

Q: How does God help us overcome our fears?

A: God is the all-powerful Creator and King of the universe. He knows all things; He is in control of all things. And He loves us deeply. We can trust in His unfailing love and His plan for our lives (Jer. 29:11). He is constantly at work, bringing about the best for us (Rom. 8:28). That's why Jesus tells us, "Do not worry about your life" (Lk. 12:22). He holds our lives in His hands, and nothing, absolutely nothing on earth or in heaven, can separate us from Him and His love (Rom. 8:38-39). So the primary way to overcome our fears is by trusting God—trusting in His might, trusting in His protection, trusting in His plan for our lives, and trusting in His love.

The story of the prophet Elisha and his servant illustrates the magnitude of God's power and His behind-the-scenes protection for us.

Now when the attendant of the man of God had risen early and gone out, behold, an army with horses and chariots was circling the city. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." Then Elisha prayed and said, "O LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." And the LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. (2 Kgs. 6:15-17)

When we realize that God is in control, we can breathe a sigh of relief. In Elisha's story, the opposing army did not disappear, but in relation to the power of God, the enemy was a small thing—one that no longer inspired fear. Many of our fears would shrink or disappear entirely if we would only focus on God instead of on what is causing the fear.

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“I” CHECK (PERSONAL APPLICATION)

1. When was the last time you were afraid? What did you do about it? If you asked God to help you, what happened after you prayed? We know it's important to ask God for forgiveness for our sins and to bring God our prayer requests. Do you think it is also important to pray about our fears? Why, or why not?
2. Some people are afraid to speak in front of large groups of people. Others are afraid of heights. Do you have a fear that keeps you from doing something? Do you think God can help someone who has very strong fear, or a phobia? What would you say to someone who had a fear of something?
3. Faith challenge: Ask a few people you know (adults and kids) to name some things of which they are afraid. Make two different lists of the responses: one for the adults and one for the kids. What is different about the things the adults are afraid of compared to what kids are afraid of? Do they seem like bigger fears? Now write out the words of Philippians 4:6-7 above each list. Cross out the fears on each list that you think God can help each person overcome. Are any fears on either list not crossed out? Talk to your parent or Sunday school teacher about why you think those fears are ones God can't help someone with. chapter of Proverbs to discover the amazing benefits of acquiring wisdom from God's Word.

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

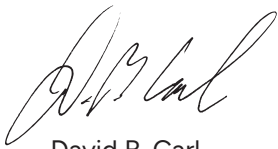
Fear, in and of itself, is not a bad thing. Healthy fears enable us to get along in the world. But sometimes fear can get out of control and begin to interfere with how we function physically and, more importantly, spiritually. The spiritual realm is, by its very nature, foreign and mysterious. The act of following Christ means being willing to travel into this realm with Him, trusting that nothing about it is mysterious to Him and that He will guide us through it.

Let's be clear on this point: Following Christ will require us to face many of our fears. Thinking that we can grow as Christians without facing fear is like wanting to swim without getting wet. Jesus Christ certainly can eliminate our fears (1 Jn. 4:18), but He most often chooses to guide us through them, showing us, which fears are unreasonable and which can be overcome. And by overcoming them with Him at our side, our faith and trust in Him grows and grows.

Bravery, on the other hand, is generally a good thing, but it can also be misunderstood. Bravery does not occur in the absence of fear. A brave act is brave precisely because it was done in the presence of fear. Now, I admit that in the grand scheme of things overcoming a fear of dental work is not of great importance. But we need to get into the habit of dealing with our fears—getting through them and getting to the other side of them. We need to hone this skill on our journey toward Christlikeness.

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Sometimes we pause on that path. And if we have stopped in our tracks because of fear, our growth stops with us. The irony is that we are most often stopped by small things—not wars or calamity, but by little fears that distract us. Fear of doing a small thing differently than we are used to. Fear that questions will be asked of us or that small discomforts will be required of us. Embarrassingly, these little things are often what knock us off our journey toward becoming like Christ. Overcoming your fear of letting the dentist fix your teeth may be a small thing, but such small steps are good practice for defeating your fear of casually talking about Christ or of giving up a little sleep to worship Him or of letting Scripture soak into your heart and mind. I'll bet even thinking about doing those things caused a little pang of fear in you, didn't it? Me too. Let's cast our fears before the throne of God together, and He will help us get past them and back on our journey!



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