



ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEXT STEPS:

- Christmas Prom (December 22, 7:00PM Grace Hall)
- Christmas Eve December 24, 10:30AM Vic Juba Theatre
- New Year's Eve December 31, 19:30AM Vic Juba Theatre

PRAY TOGETHER FOR

- The Spirit to infuse bravery into your heart.
- For Mosaic Downtown plans and strategies

GOAL FOR THIS STUDY:

It is the presence of Jesus, the promises from God's Word and being in the middle of what God is doing makes us brave!

MATTHEW 1:20, "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit."

We're all anxious about something. And whether our fear or anxiety is real or irrational, if we let ourselves get caught up in a sea of our fears and anxiety, we run the risk of drowning in it. **WHAT MAKES US ANXIOUS?** It's not always what we go through; it's how we go through it. There are ways we create waves of anxiety in our hearts:

- 1. The Words we use-** Words are powerful. Often we create our world of fear and anxiety by the words we use. The words we speak and think can create anxiety.
- 2. The Approach we take-** Sometimes it's not what we're going through but the way we handle what we are going through. We don't always become shaken because of everything we have to do, but from how we handle everything we have to do.
- 3. The Voices we listen to-** The voices we allow to speak into our souls create fears and anxiety. If we eat a steady diet of what the media and social offers, we shouldn't be surprised if we get anxious. Even little things that you allow to enter into your life could frame the world you live in.
- 4. The Expectations we have-** We get anxious when we expect life to be easy, rather than preparing for opposition and attacks of the enemy. Jesus said, "*In this world you shall have trials, but take heart, I have overcome the world.*" We need to prepare for challenging days because they are inevitable, by receiving courage from His presence and His Word, and by putting on the armor of God.
- 5. The Shame we avoid-** When we walk in shame, we walk in dread that our past will catch up with us and in paranoia that everyone is judging us. (Jesus has set you free from that).

GOD WANTS TO SET YOU FREE FROM YOUR FEARS. The bi-product of courage or bravery is peace. You are brave to face a challenge, because peace is a by-product of bravery! Jesus is not called the prince of bravery, He is called the prince of peace. And he brings peace in our lives is by infusing courage within. He wants to give us the gift of courage so we may experience His peace. Jesus is God's gift that will set you free from your fears! Here are five steps to unwrap the gift of bravery!

- 1. Breathe-** When we stop to acknowledge Him, we can breathe in God's presence and breathe out His grace. When you see anxiety coming or fear assailing, stop and breathe in God's presence and experience His grace! When anxiety comes, call on the Spirit of God!
- 2. Remember-** We're here today because God brought us through the storms of our past. When anxiety and fear come, stop, breathe and remember God's faithfulness to you. When you remember His faithfulness, your past will inspire you to believe that He will fight for you today and every day.
- 3. Ask/Pray-** Sometimes, God is just waiting for us to ask Him for courage and help. If we ask, He will answer faithfully. Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything.
- 4. Visualize-** Psalm 23:4, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me." Even when we can't see Jesus in the middle of our anxieties and fears, we can visualize Him with the eyes of our hearts. Finally,
- 5. Elevate-** Atmospheric pressure decreases when elevation increases. Our anxiety is disarmed and our fears decrease when we elevate our perspective by praising God. That's why we always say, Choose Praise!

Connection and Action

Questions to promote conversation and connection

Question:

Would you consider yourself a person who gets easily scared?

What is the single most scary event or situation you have ever been in?

Bible and Belief

Questions to help believers develop a biblical point of view.

Luke 1:26-27 Gabriel came to Mary with news of a birth that was not just unusual but also unique. How do you think Mary might have felt? How would you have felt?

Read Gabriel's message in Luke 1:30-33. Consider the following facts about the coming Messiah: He would have unqualified greatness; He would be God's Son; He would be given King David's throne, the fulfillment of a promise to David; He would rule over Israel; His kingdom would last forever. Do you think Jesus fulfilled this all?

Do you find Mary's initial question curious? Mary did not question the greatness of the coming One. However, she did wonder how she could have a child, since she was a virgin. How did Gabriel respond?

Mary and Joseph were betrothed, the first stage of a Jewish marriage. The only way the agreement could be broken was through divorce. How might Joseph have felt when he found out that Mary was pregnant?

The Bible tells us Joseph chose to divorce her quietly. According to Matthew 1:20, how did the angel come to Joseph? What was the message?

The angel explained to Joseph that the baby whom Mary carried had been conceived by the Holy Spirit. Joseph was also told to name the baby Jesus. What was another name given in Matthew 1:23? Showing great faith, Joseph immediately did what God told him to do.

Ultimately, what disarmed the fear and anxiety that Joseph and Mary initially felt?

Growing in Leadership

Questions to help people grow as leaders.

Jesus is the only Son of God, and He was sent to be the Savior. He is our source of strength, salvation and courage. How can you experience Christ's more this Christmas season?

Think about the ways your family or DGroup gets ready to celebrate Christmas. Talk with your family or your DGroup about adding a new meaningful tradition to your celebration that would make Jesus known more through you.

Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins. Matthew 1:21 (KJV) . We see here the meaning of His name. It is a powerful name. How can you use His name's power to help you overcome your fears and worries?

Pastor gave us steps to facing fears: 1. Breathe in God's presence, 2. Remember God's faithfulness, 3. Ask and Pray, 4. Visualize God's hand over you; 5. Ascend in praise. How can you use these steps practically to help you break free from the chains of your own fears?

NOTICE:

We will not issue study guides for the weeks of December 24th and 31st. We suggest a 2-week study break during the holidays.

We will resume our DGroups on the week of January 7th 2018.