

Faith Over Fear

Devotional eBook

Reminders of God's Faithfulness



THE
Courageous & Kind
PROJECT™

Introduction

Hey, friend!

In the midst of an unsettling world, we're reminded that God is faithful. He is the same God today as He was yesterday and will be tomorrow (Hebrews 13:8). He has proven this over and over again throughout Scripture.

When the Israelites left Egypt, the LORD went ahead of them. He guided them during the day with a pillar of cloud and He provided light at night with a pillar of fire (Exodus 18:21-22). God does the same for us today. He gives us the gift of His Presence through the Holy Spirit as He continues to guide us by day and night. God has also given us His Word (2 Timothy 3:16-17) as truth to trust in Jesus Christ and to equip us for His work. Since we have the privilege of living in a time when the Bible is so easily accessible, we want to use God's Word to guide us, to teach and comfort us, and to give us hope.

When the Israelites left Egypt, the LORD sent them on a roundabout way to the Promised Land. He did NOT send them on the fast, most direct route. Why? Because the LORD had purpose in His plan. The Israelites needed more time with Him. They needed time to learn they could trust Him.

"When Pharaoh finally let the people go, God did not lead them along the main road that runs through Philistine territory, even though that was the shortest route to the Promised Land. God said, 'If the people are faced with a battle, they might change their minds and return to Egypt [in slavery].' So God led them in a roundabout way through the wilderness toward the Red Sea [the future site for a miracle]. The Lord went ahead of them. He guided them during the day with a pillar of cloud, and he provided light at night with a pillar of fire. This allowed them to travel by day or by night. And the Lord did not remove the pillar of cloud or pillar of fire from its place in front of the people." Exodus 13: 17-18a, 21-22 [emphasis mine]

We need more time with God too. We need to be reminded that we can trust Him. He's our faithful God! (Hebrews 10:23)

God will not leave us nor forsake us. He truly wants our best. Our prayer is that you'll spend these next few days being reminded that the Creator of the Universe, the Alpha and Omega, the Great I AM, has a plan and purpose for you. He's beckoning you to choose faith in Him over fear in the world. We can't always make sense of everything, but we can find comfort in drawing near to the Most High God who does.

xoxo Jess

Jessica deLinde Dyckman
C&K Founding Editor

01 LETTING THE SPIRIT LEAD



“Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.” Romans 8:5-6

What crazy times we are living in! As a person plagued by an unfortunate amount of anxiety (in general), our current culture has spawned in me an unprecedented trial of faith.

Many moons ago, it became apparent that I deal with generalized anxiety disorder, specifically focused around germs. Not ALL germs, just specific ones. Trying to best that fear has rocked my spiritual life to its core. The Bible tells me not to be afraid. Religious leaders tell me it's a sin to live in fear. Books chastise my lack of faith and judge me for not fully trusting the LORD, and for not “giving it all to Him.”

Yet I spend day after day, prayer after prayer “giving it all to the LORD,” begging for relief. Asking God to take away this thing inside of me that eats me alive and clearly is not from Him.

I have memorized every Scripture that deals with fear and anxiety. “Cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7). “Perfect love drives out fear” (1 John 4:18). “Do not be anxious about anything...” (Phil. 4:6) There are so many.

LETTING THE SPIRIT LEAD

I did every possible thing I could only to end up feeling guilty, chastised, misunderstood, judged, ridiculed, and still full of anxiety. I had become a sinful, unworthy Christian who was carrying the unwanted burden of anxiety in my body. I desperately needed someone to say, "You are doing everything you can! I see you trusting God. What you are facing is biological. It's inside your body; not your heart." But no one could say that.

Except God.

God used Scripture to speak to my heart and along came Romans 8:5-6,

"Those who live ACCORDING TO THE FLESH have their minds set on what the FLESH [biology] desires; but those who live IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SPIRIT have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the FLESH is DEATH, but the mind governed by the SPIRIT is LIFE and PEACE." [emphasis mine]

There it is.

I am living in this body. The one that feels anxious while a pandemic takes over the world. YOU are living in a body. Your body may be feeling this same angst. If we let our bodies take over our spirits, death is all that awaits us: physical, spiritual, or emotional. If, in the midst of biological heart-thumping, mind-racing moments, we can acknowledge what we are feeling and say, "I choose to live by the Spirit," bodily peace may not immediately follow, but spiritual peace will.

In these times, it can be very difficult to put aside the fear and questioning welling up inside of us. I want you to hear, dear friend, that feeling your feelings does not make you a sinner. What you DO with those feelings shows your faith.

God is ready to take all your feels. The psalmist, David, sure doled them out to his Papa! You can, too!

Let's stop chastising ourselves for our fleshly emotions and instead offer them to God and accept His spiritual governance in it all. I know for me, my logical and emotional sides are at war. Join me in choosing to let the Spirit guide them both. Our bodies and minds present, but governed by the Spirit.

Father, we thank you for giving us the gift of your Holy Spirit to guide us. Help us to throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, by fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. Lead us all into life and peace through your Truth. Amen.

Reflective question: What areas of your life are currently being governed by the flesh? How can you turn them over to the Spirit? Write out an honest prayer to the Lord filled with the fears, worries, wonders, and praises of your heart. God can handle your hurts and your honesty. Ask Him to strengthen your faith and give you His steadfast Spirit in this battle.

xoxo Jessica

Jessica Wuerffel

The Throne of Heaven

"Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne." Revelation 4:2

I wonder if it was exasperating for John, the author of the book Revelation, to attempt to describe with human words the breathtaking scene before him? In Revelation 4, John has just walked through an open door and glimpsed heaven. "And One sat on the throne." The very first image John is allowed to see is God is on His throne. It is the centerpiece of John's vision and it immediately establishes God's authority and power. But what calms my heart, because honestly, reading Revelation can be a little scary and intimidating for me, is the PERMANENCE of His presence. The throne is occupied.

I once heard a teacher say that every time Scripture references the throne in heaven, it is occupied. Unlike worldly kings who sometimes wander off and stroll around rooftops getting distracted, God is always firmly in control. King David (of rooftop wandering fame) talks about it in Psalms. "But the Lord sits enthroned forever; he has established his throne for justice" (Psalm 9:7) and "God reigns over the nations; God sits on his holy throne" (Psalm 47:8). And that's just to name a few.

The encouragement throughout Revelation is the absolute certainty that no matter what is going on in our lives and in the world, God is on His throne. He is holy and just. He is merciful, loving, and all-powerful. He sits on the seat of authority that the entire world must answer to someday. And yet, He loves us individually and desires a relationship with us.

The Book of Revelation continues with hair-raising accounts of the four horsemen, the beast, the antichrist, and imagery our human minds can't conceive. It would be scary if we didn't already know the end. The battle isn't even close. The throne is occupied. Jesus wins!


Reflective question: This passage points to the absolute reign and sovereignty of God over everything. What areas of your life are you vulnerable to not believing in His control or His care?



*Father, remind us that when our
ground feels shaky,
You are in control and You desire us
to build our lives on the solid rock
that IS Jesus and His Word.
Amen.*

xoxo Julie

Julie Jagers Brierley

A hand holding a pen is positioned over an open Bible on a wooden surface. The Bible is open to a page with text, and the hand is holding a pen as if about to write. The background is a wooden surface, and the overall scene is lit with soft, natural light. The text is written in a cursive font over the image.

*"Immediately I was in the Spirit;
and behold, a throne set in heaven,
and One sat on the throne."*

Revelation 4:2

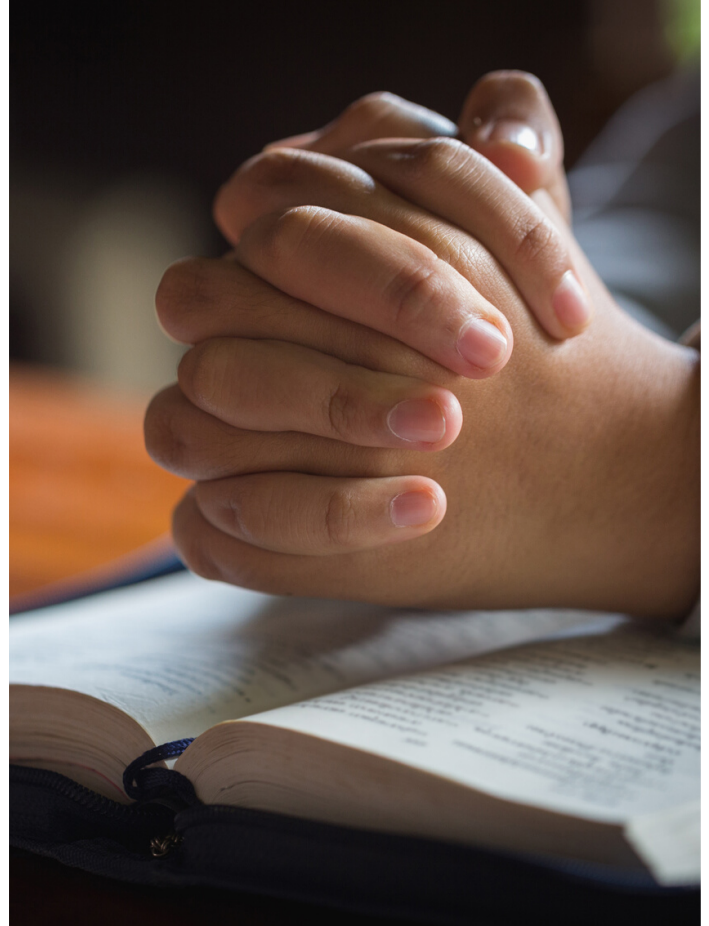
GOD CREATED ORDER NOT BALANCE

“Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.” Deuteronomy 6:5

We live in a world that is out of balance. Wouldn't you agree? When life feels out of whack, fear is waiting at the door of our hearts to be welcomed inside. Everything that seems imbalanced at the moment rocks our sense of security to the core. We respond by tirelessly striving to create normalcy, and a sense of balance for ourselves. It's exhausting! This causes a surface level frustration to rule and ultimately a deep gnawing uneasiness to creep into our souls.

There is something in each of us that is looking for perfection. It is wired in our DNA and so our western culture has made it a life quest to seek balance for inner peace and tranquility. We believe that there are states of being, which can be attained by effort; but it's not going to happen and here's why.

God our Father, the Maker of all mankind, is simply NOT a God of balance. He is a God of priority, not of balance. And, by definition, priorities are intrinsically “out of balance”. That which exists at the top is inherently more valuable than what follows. God's remedy for frustrated, “balance chasers” is this:



***“Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”
Deuteronomy 6:5***

Stated a second time by Jesus in Matthew 22:37

GOD CREATED ORDER NOT BALANCE

God's Word is clear that we should not love ice cream the same as we love Him. He asks for a disproportionate amount of our heart's desire, like all of it, if you didn't notice. He commands an imbalanced amount of affection and attention.

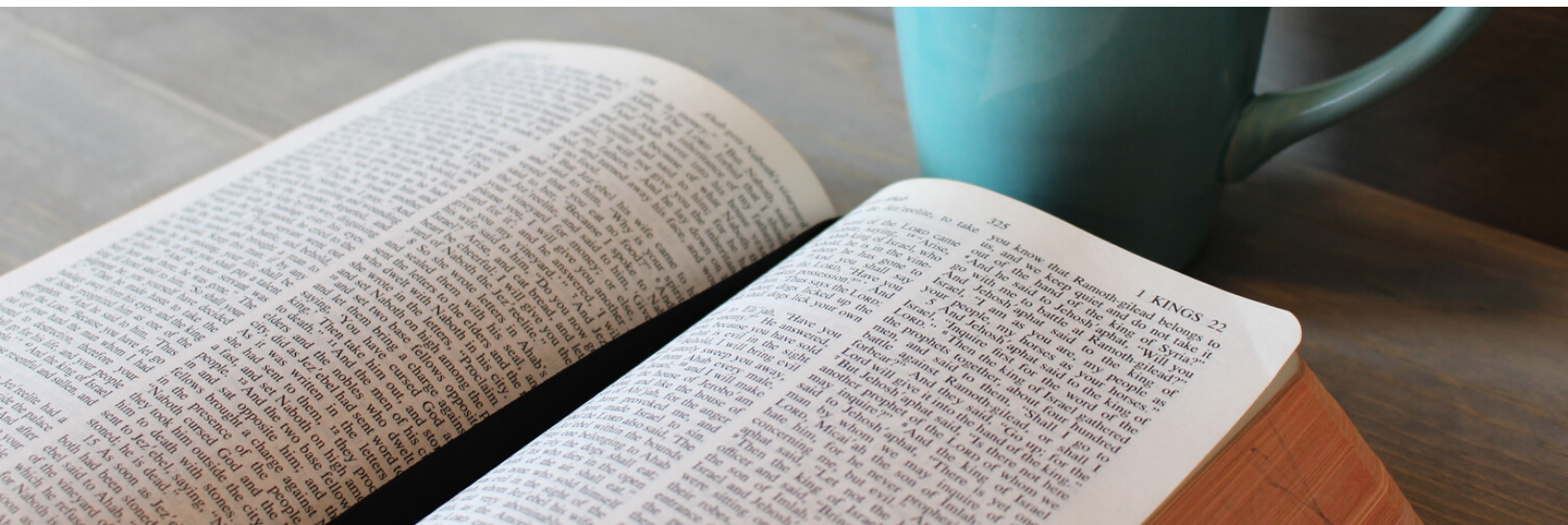
Thankfully, obeying such actually protects us when circumstances like what we face today with the pandemic threaten our sense of balance and safety. This is the key that unlocks the door to peace, rather than fear. When Jesus is invited in, striving ceases and peace rules. Your heart is kept safe.

*"In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone LORD, make me dwell in safety."
Psalm 4:8*

LORD, make this true of me today. Help me to make loving YOU, my priority. Your Word tells me that peace is waiting for the invitation to come into my heart. In light of what I see in this world, the illness, the fear, the angst ... give me the desire to put all of my affections and all of my fears in YOUR hands on this day. I pray this in the powerful, loving Name above all names, Jesus! Amen

Reflective question: Have you ever considered that you've put loving people, things, or circumstances in this world above loving God? Take time today to honestly ask God to search your heart and explore the priorities that reside there. Then make a list of what comes to mind, leaving some room at the top of the paper. Lastly, write out Deuteronomy 6:5 at the top of your paper, ABOVE the list of others.

xoxo Paula
Paula Webb



Praising God in the Battle

"Give thanks to The LORD; His faithful love endures forever." 2 Chronicles 20:21

Every morning for the past ten years my aunt has sent us a Bible verse of the day. Her text is typically the first notification on my phone as she has been encouraging our family with God's love in just a few small words each day.

In a world where fear runs rampant and anxiety is a social norm, as Christians, we don't have to succumb to the pressure of panic and despair. We have the privilege of knowing God has already won the battle! (1 Corinthians 15:57) He has defeated death and fear and has given life and freedom through Jesus Christ. (John 3:16-17)

Those are the words of our daily texts.

Fear and anxiety aren't anything new or unique to our culture; both have been around since the beginning when creation fell (Genesis 3) and sin entered the world. Generations have been fighting this battle. If we're honest, there's no way we can do it alone. Apart from the LORD, we simply cannot. We also need each other to stand firm in the fight. We must be reminded that no matter what we face, Jesus Christ has overcome the world (John 16:33).

Throughout Scripture, the LORD has shown us how to fight against the angst and despair. His battle plan has been laid out in the Bible and involves *prayer, petition, and praise.*

There's a story about an Old Testament king, Jehoshaphat, who received news that his kingdom was about to be attacked. Alarmed, he went straight to the LORD. He called all the people of Judah to fast and come together to seek help from the LORD.

Jehoshaphat stood before his people and prayed to God. He acknowledged his faith in the LORD, knowing that they could not defeat the army on their own, but they believed God could.

" Then Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem at the temple of the Lord in the front of the new courtyard and said: 'Lord, the God of our ancestors, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you. Our God, will you not judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.' All the men of Judah, with their wives and children and little ones, stood there before the Lord." 2 Chronicles 20:5-6, 12-13

Prayer. Petition. Praise.

The next piece of the story is remarkable: The LORD responded with victory! Jehoshaphat and his kingdom received a miraculous victory the next day. Although victory was already theirs, the LORD commanded Jehoshaphat and his army to show up and go to battle. As they were marching in, King Jehoshaphat reminded his people, "Listen to me, all you people of Judah and Jerusalem! Believe in The LORD your God and will you be able to stand firm." 2 Chronicles 20:21b.

After that, King Jehoshaphat appointed singers to walk ahead of the army and praise the LORD for His promise. They sang, "Give thanks to The LORD; His faithful love endures forever." 2 Chronicles 20:21.

At that moment the opposition started fighting among themselves although Jehoshaphat's army had yet to arrive on the battlefield. The war was over before they even got there!

We are in a fight against fear and panic in today's world. We have the choice to choose faith in God over fear in the world. Like my aunt's daily text, we can find ways to encourage each other to praise God in the midst of our battles. We can come together to pray to the LORD, petition and ask Him for His help, and praise Him for His goodness.

Let's make a decision today to stand before the LORD and give Him our worries, wonders, AND our praise before the battle. Let's rally our people to believe in the LORD our God so we can all stand firm in Him. God is the One who can truly fight for us.

Dear Lord, we give you our praise and thanks for this day. Even in the midst of today's battle, we acknowledge that your faithful love endures forever. Help us to stand firm in your truth. Amen.

Reflective question: How can you encourage someone with a prayer or Bible verse in these troubling and confusing times? Write out a prayer to God about the battle you are facing. Ask Him for His strength to fight the battle. Praise Him for being our Almighty God, our Victor!

xoxo Jess

Jessica deLinde Dyckman

FINDING REST IN SILENCE

"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." John 16:33

My job sometimes requires me to speak with people on the worst day of their lives. As a journalist, I am a frequent peddler in the tragic, the unfortunate and the downright disappointing, and most days I am a practiced compartmentalizer. Then there are the times when troubles are too great to be confined to my nine-to-five, and they spill over into every aspect of my life.

In recent days, it is a global pandemic that is relentless in its efforts to capture my attention. When it became clear just how deeply the coronavirus would impact our world, I was consuming every article I came across, the television was constantly blaring, and I opened every notification on my phone alerting me to the newest numbers and developments.

My days are typically filled with news, but this was another level. It seemed like I could not talk or think about anything other than this new and pressing danger. All things considered, I thought I was coping well. Until I woke up terrified one night after a particularly vivid dream about the end of the world.

I decided there, lying awake in my bed, that enough was enough. I would need to make space in my life and in my heart to fill with something other than anxiety or fear over this pandemic. Because I do not believe the world is coming to an end, and I have faith that the God who has seen his people through a great number of trials, plagues and pain remains constant, powerful and good.

This is the same God who delivered Israel out of Egypt and went before his chosen nation battle after battle. They were conquered, and then they were rescued. He sent them kings and prophets to guide them, even when they forgot his faithfulness. And then, after promising to send a great rescuer, he was silent for 400 years before the coming of Christ.

It must have been agonizing to wait in silence, even with the promise of redemption.

"O you hope of Israel, its savior in time of trouble, why should you be like a stranger in the land, like a traveler who turns aside to tarry for a night? Why should you be like a man confused, like a mighty warrior who cannot save? Yet you, O Lord, are in the midst of us, and we are called by your name; do not leave us." Jeremiah 14:8-9

Finding Rest in Silence When the Daily News is Overwhelming

Now, facing a global crisis, it can be hard to find God's voice. Yet unlike the Israelites, on the other side of history, we have a great comforter in Christ.

In Hebrews 1, we're told that God *"has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power."*

Jesus was not silent in the midst of trouble. Let's consider his words.

"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." John 16:33

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid." John 14:27

Can't the same God who upholds the universe by the word of his power, who has the ability to speak a storm into submission, also calm the raging anxiety in us?

"And he woke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, 'Peace! Be still!' And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, 'Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?'" Mark 4:39-40

Practically, conquering fear looks like daily submission to the LORD and choosing to rest in silence.

For me, this means first turning my attention to the LORD before I can turn my attention to the day's concerns, a prayer over my keyboard each morning or a verse on which to meditate.

It also means confining the news to the nine hours I sit at my desk, presently a makeshift one at my kitchen table. When my workday is done, I turn off the television and disable the news alerts on my phone. I trust that whatever I miss will be there in the morning, and I allow myself to take heart in the silence. I take walks with my husband and we talk about our daughter, due in July, our interests or the new things we're reading or watching. All the things that used to fill our conversations are still there, and they are a welcome break from the present weariness of the world.

Redeemer God, we look to you in times of trial and plague. We trust that you will deliver us from death and redeem our suffering. I know that you are able to save, I believe that you will, and even if not, I trust in your proven character (Dan. 3:17-18). I will worship you because you are always mercifully, miraculously good.

Reflective question: What in your life is creating so much noise that it is keeping you from resting in silence? Consider practical parameters that you can implement in your daily routine as an act of faith over fear that God the Redeemer is in control and he is faithful.

xoxo Chelsea

Chelsea Prince



"Peace I leave with you; my
peace I give to you. Not as the
world gives do I give to you.
Let not your hearts be troubled,
neither let them be afraid."



John 14:27

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

DAY 1 What areas of your life are currently being governed by the flesh? How can you turn them over to the Spirit? Write out an honest prayer to the Lord filled with the fears, worries, wonders, and praises of your heart. God can handle your hurts and your honesty. Ask Him to strengthen your faith and give you His steadfast Spirit in this battle.

DAY 2 *"Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne."* Revelation 4:2 This passage points to the absolute reign and sovereignty of God over everything. What areas of your life are you vulnerable to not believing in His control or His care?

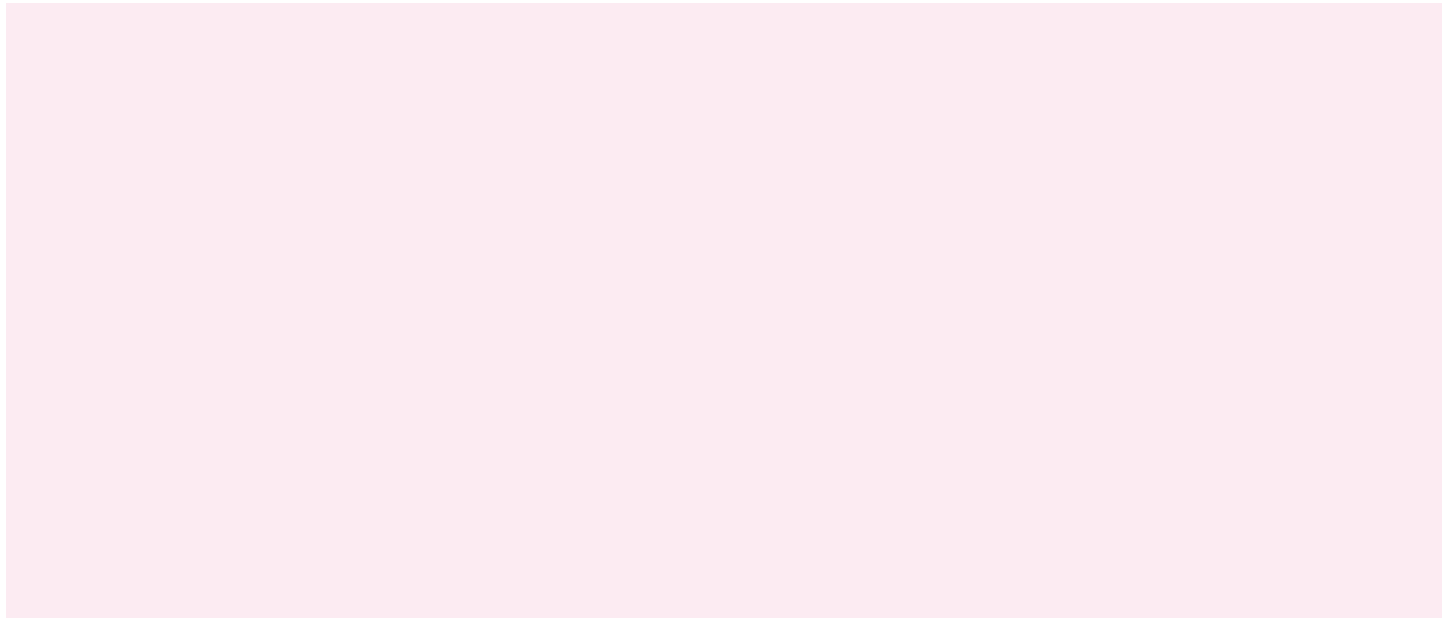
REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

DAY 3 Have you ever considered that you've put loving people, things, or circumstances in this world above loving God? Take time today to honestly ask God to search your heart and explore the priorities that reside there. Then make a list of what comes to mind, leaving some room at the top of the paper. Lastly, write out Deuteronomy 6:5 at the top of your paper, ABOVE the list of others.

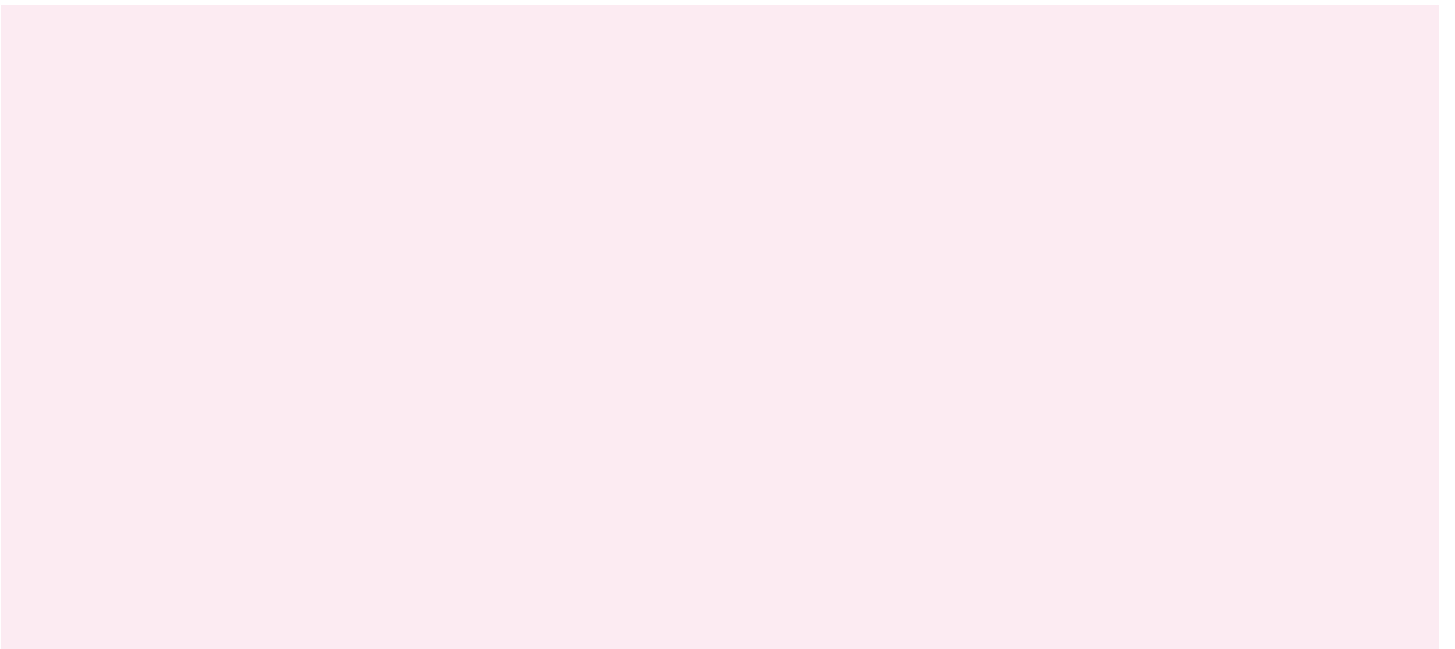
DAY 4 How can you encourage someone with a prayer or Bible verse in these troubling and confusing times? Write out a prayer to God about the battle you are facing. Ask Him for His strength to fight the battle. Praise Him for being our Almighty God, our Victor!

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

DAY 5 What in your life is creating so much noise that it is keeping you from resting in silence? Consider practical parameters that you can implement in your daily routine as an act of faith over fear that God the Redeemer is in control and he is faithful.



BONUS Throughout each devotion, you've been encouraged to choose faith in God over fear in the world. Write out 2 or 3 Bible verses in the space below that have brought you peace and comfort.



Faith Over Fear Contributors



JESSICA WUERFFEL

Jessica Wuerffel is a personal fitness trainer and group exercise instructor in Georgia. She has a husband of 21 years, three kids, and two fur babies. Jessica strives to spend each day serving others in any capacity God deems necessary. You can follow Jessica on Facebook at @FitnessWithJessW



JULIE JAGGERS BRIERLEY

Julie Jagers Brierley has a heart for women's ministry and has been involved in helping women find their God-given passions for more than ten years. She has an extensive background in corporate development/training and ministry with a degree in broadcast journalism. Her hobbies include horseback riding and any opportunity to go on adventures with her husband of twenty years and her two hilarious teens.



PAULA WEBB

Paula Webb is a Bible teacher and speaker who leads with her love for Jesus. She has pastored women in a large, non-denominational church in Southern California and has been married to her crush for over 20 years. When she is not in a basketball gym cheering on one of her sons, you can find Paula on Instagram @paulawebb.life or her website including a blog, devotional teachings, speaking and mentoring opportunities www.paulawebb.life.

Faith Over Fear Contributors



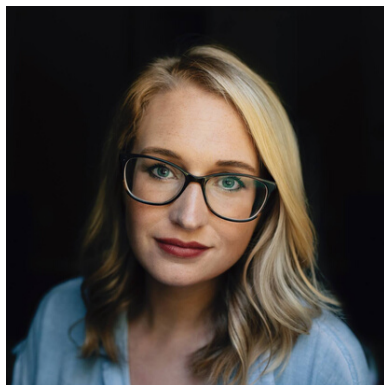
JESSICA DELINDE DYCKMAN

Jessica deLinde Dyckman is the Founding Editor of The Courageous & Kind Project, where a good idea turned into a beautiful dream! She's grateful for the Lord's help and good girlfriends who have made C&K come alive. Jessica and her husband are new parents and new residents of Atlanta, Georgia. Follow Jes at @jdelinde on IG or www.jessica-delinde.com



CHELSEA PRINCE

Chelsea Prince is a church planter's wife and journalist in the Atlanta area. Connect with her on Instagram @Chelsea_Prince or by email at chelseaprince519@gmail.com.



RACHEL CONEY

Rachel Coney is a wife, mom of two and graphic designer. She hosts a parenting podcast with her sister in law called Surviving Motherhood. Follow along @survivingmotherhoodpodcast on Instagram

Connect with Us



COURAGEOUS AND KIND PROJECT

We are focused on helping women courageously live out God's best for their lives. Through biblical truth, Christian fellowship, and authentic encouragement, we will create a community of women who are confident in God's love, courageous to overcome their fears and failures, kind to one another, bold to tell their story, steadfast to serve, and eager to give. We carry this mission out by authentically telling stories of courageous and kind women empowered and inspired by God's love.