

Sermon Study | The Way Back From Fear | Luke 1:26-38 December 1, 2019

When fear reminds you of who you aren't, let God's favor remind you of who you are. God tells us: You can't fail because Jesus already succeeded. You won't be rejected because Jesus has already been accepted. You are enough because you have favor with God. Do not be afraid—God's favor is the way back from fear.

**Note to Leaders: Spend some time reading these verses together as a group. Maybe read them out loud or in a few different versions. Or print off the Scripture and take time as a group to underline and circle certain repeated words or things that stand out to you. You may also want to start off or end your time by checking in on anything that stood out from the sermon in general and/or the Daily Bible Readings over the course of the week!*

Warm-up question: Share about a time, big or small, when you were overcome with fear.

Read Luke 1:26-38

- Luke, the author, wrote a very detailed account of the life of Jesus, including the events leading up to His birth—the first Christmas. List out all the details you find in just the first two verses of this section and why you think each detail is significant.
- Gabriel has a message for Mary in verses 28-38. How does Mary react to the message according to verses 29, 34 and 38? How would you react if you were in Mary's position?
- Describe a time when God changed the picture or expectations of what you thought your life might look like. How did it bring fear into your life?
- Gabriel doesn't just tell Mary not to be afraid—He gives her a reason she doesn't need to be afraid. What is the reason and what does it mean to be favored?
- Ryan described favor as a 'being a recipient of God's grace' which means everyone who professes faith in Christ is favored by God. When do you fall into a trap of believing that God's grace is only for the future and not for today? What does it mean that God's grace is enough to cover your fears?

Read Matthew 1:19-25

- What is Joseph contemplating in verse 19 and how does this demonstrate his righteousness?
- An angel similarly interrupts Joseph's plans in verses 20 and 21 with the same phrase he spoke to Mary: 'do not be afraid.' Why is Joseph not supposed to be afraid? What is the confirmation of this message according to verses 22 and 23?
- How is Joseph's reaction to the angel's message in verse 24 similar to Mary's reaction?
- Describe how you think Joseph and Mary probably faced fear of failure, fear of rejection, or fear of not being enough. How does it compare to your fears of these same things?
- Where do you need to stop letting fear remind you of who you aren't and flip the script, and let God's favor remind you of who you are?

REFLECT

What is God saying to you through His word? How and when will you respond?

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