



**Gods With Us**



**When  
We're  
Afraid**



# God Is With Us: When We're Afraid

## Main Idea

God's Spirit is with us all the time and gives us the courage we need.

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## BIBLE CONNECTIONS

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Isaiah 41:10

Don't fear, because I am with you; don't be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will surely help you; I will hold you with my righteous strong hand.

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## BACKGROUND FOR LEADERS

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It can be difficult to learn how to understand and express big feelings, especially hard feelings like anger, fear, sadness, or loneliness. Often, we teachers, ministers, and parents wonder if talking about these things might bring them about, and choose to avoid conversation about them. But the best way we can equip the children in our care to navigate these inevitable big emotions is by having honest conversations about them. We can grow our vocabulary for naming our feelings and use stories and practices to help us manage and express them. This cultivates "emotional intelligence," or the ability to be aware of and express our own emotions, as well as knowing how to offer empathy to others and develop healthy relationships.

Fear is a normal emotion and often helps keep us safe. Sometimes fear can show up and keep us from living abundantly and as faithful followers of Jesus. Cultivating skills that help us assess when fear is helping or hindering us is important.

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## GATHERING ACTIVITY

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### *Drawing and Transforming Our Fears*

**Say:** Sometimes we are afraid, and we might be afraid of all kinds of things. Everyone has their own worries, silly to serious.

**Ask:** What are some things that you're afraid of?

**Say:** Using paper, markers, and crayons, draw a picture of your fear.

After the learners have had plenty of time to work on their drawings, **say:** Now I invite you to add something to your picture that makes it so completely silly that it's not scary anymore. You might need to turn your paper over and do a new picture, or you can add to the original drawing.

After the learners finish their projects, invite them to share their pictures with the group, including what they drew as their fear and what they added to make it less scary.

#### Supplies:

- Paper
- Markers
- Crayons

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## STORY CONNECTION

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**Say:** In the Bible, there is some version of the phrase, "Don't be afraid," over three hundred times! God knows that we will be afraid at times, but invites us to be brave even when we feel scared.

**Say:** We know from the story of Moses that even when life is hard and we are called to do scary things, God is with us.

**Say:** One day Moses was hard at work taking care of his family's livestock, and he saw a bush that was on fire but not burning up. How strange! Even stranger, the voice of God spoke out of the bush and told Moses that he was being called by God to go lead the Israelites, who were enslaved in Egypt, to their freedom. To do this, Moses would have to do a lot of public speaking to preach God's message to the Israelites and stand up to a very powerful bad king. Moses was terrified. He was having a very strange experience and did not want to go to Egypt. He wouldn't know what to say or do! But God said to Moses, over and over, "I'll be with you."

TIP: Telling the story in a calm, smooth voice will draw the children into the story.

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## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

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**Say:** God didn't change Moses' situation, but God helped Moses be brave and do the right thing by being right there with him.

**Ask:** What is something that feels scary to you? Is it less scary to know that God, who is so strong and loving, will be right there with you?

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**PRACTICE AND REFLECTION**

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*Noticing How We Are Afraid*

Print out enough copies of the “Fear Activity” handout on page 5 for each child to choose one of the children to use in the activity. Cut the children apart.

**Say:** Fear, like all of our emotions, is trying to tell us something. Our minds and bodies tell us to be afraid when we sense that something is wrong. When your stomach drops on a roller coaster and you have a fearful feeling even though you’re safely strapped in, that’s the same feeling that helps protect you if you fall down. When we feel afraid, we can listen carefully to the fear to learn what it’s telling us.

**Ask:** For example, what do you think fear of heights might be telling you? How is that keeping you safe?

**Say:** Sometimes we feel and can understand fear in our bodies. Let’s think of that thing that scares us. Close your eyes and see if any part of your body is feeling that fear. Are your shoulders tight? Did your breathing change?

**Say:** On the handout on page 5 with the picture of a person, circle any body part that holds and feels fear.

After the learners have completed their worksheet, **say:** Now we’re going to get quiet for a moment. Take a big, deep breath, and imagine that all the fresh new air is like the Holy Spirit, coming into our bodies and bringing peace and courage. The breath goes to your tight fists or your fast heart and gives calm and strength.

**Say:** When you breathe out, imagine that you can breathe out the tight, fearful or worried feeling and let it go.

**Say:** Scared feelings might not go away completely, but you are practicing listening to and helping your body and spirit be brave.

*Send home the “Practice and Reflection at Home” sheet on page 4 with each child. This will help engage the whole family in this spiritual practice together.*

**Supplies:**

- “Fear Activity” handout on page 5
- Pencils

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**PRACTICE AND REFLECTION AT HOME**

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Today your child learned and reflected about how God is with us when we're afraid. It can be hard to know how to manage such a big emotion, but instead of squelching fear, we can learn to listen to what this emotion is telling us and come up with ways to express what we need.

What's something that you're afraid of? How do you manage that fear and act bravely when you don't feel like it? Can you think of something that scares your child? This week, keep an eye out for something that may makes him or her worried. You may or may not feel like you need to have a conversation with your child, but when you notice something that causes fear or worry, imagine a way to give her or him some care and encouragement. Whether it's a big test, a recital, a hard conversation with a friend, or a new activity or school, your child will be emboldened by knowing that someone they love and trust believes in them.

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**FURTHER READING**

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Check out, "Let God Take Care of Worries," at Philippians 4:6-7 in the *CEB Deep Blue Kids Bible*. God knows that we are afraid sometimes and invites us to turn our worries into prayers.

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**FEAR ACTIVITY**

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