MICHIGAN SUMMER YOUTH CAMPS

EVEREST

FIELD MANUAL

EVEREST

WHERE FAITH AND FEAR COLLIDE

Field Manual – Devotional Guide

Michigan Church of God Youth and Discipleship

EVEREST : Field Manual – Devotional Guide
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DAY ONE

Where Faith and Fear Collide

"Do not be afraid of them, the Lord your God will fight for you." - Deutronomy 3:22

The expedition of a lifetime is waiting for you. Have you ever wondered what a true adventure might be? An adventure that would take you to the craziest places and lead you into doing the craziest things? I've got great news for you. That life is the exact life God has in plan for you! A life that is packed with adventure and one that you will one day will sit back and say "Look what God did in my life!"

The downfall to this extreme adventure is that you must be willing to fight against something we all struggle with, fear. Fear is the one thing that can absolutely torment us and keep us away for God's plans for out life. Guess what though? God knew that we would struggle with fear so instead of just letting us sit around with our fears and not be able to handle them, He addressed them head on. You would think that He would have commanded us to love more, not to steal, or lie or murder more but no, He let the command "Do not be afraid" appears more than anything else!

That's right "do not be afraid" appears in the NIV version of the Bible over 70 times. This does not include variants of the word such as "fear not," and "do not fear," and the like. There are several interesting things about this.

First of all, the Bible isn't saying there is nothing to be afraid of. Let's be real life can be scary. That however does not mean we need to be scared of it.

Second, the command "do not be afraid" more often than not, is followed by and action that God will be taking.

Finally, notice that “do not be afraid” is not a suggestion, God doesn’t say, “If you don’t want to be afraid, that’s an option. Either way. Be afraid or don’t. It’s up to you.” No, it’s a command. He is giving an instruction on how to approach the circumstance. By default, approaching it in a different manner would be a form of disobedience.

In today’s reflection, ask yourself are you living by the command that God gives us to “Do not be afraid”, or does fear overwhelm you life?

Today’s Thoughts by Justin Sharpe

ACTION STEPS:
1. Read Deuteronomy 3:22 .
2. Pray and ask God what He is saying to you through this verse.
3. Write down any thoughts or ideas He is giving you and things you need to personally work on in the Today’s Field Notes section.

Today’s Field Notes:

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DAY TWO

Facing Your Fears

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Phillipians 4:6-7

Bottom Line: 3 steps to becoming less anxious, and more trusting.

How do we respond when fear has a hold of us?

1.**Define your fear.Not all fear is harmful.**

The fear of the Lord is *the* beginning *of* knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. (Proverbs 1:7, NIV)

Most often though, our fear is about not trusting God with the direction of our life. Fear has to do with the idea that you're alone and helpless, which is a slap in the face to a God who died to be with you forever.

Question your fear-
Who is bigger – God or your problem?
Who loves you with a never ending love?
Who sees you as perfect and righteous due to your faith in Christ?
Who knocked down the walls of Jericho?
Who got Joseph out of prison?
Who parted the Red Sea?
Who saved Noah from the flood?

Who really took down Goliath?
Who died on a cross for your sins?
Who defeated Satan, sin and death?
Who is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords?

And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?
Matthew 6

In other words what has fear done for you? When has it ever solved any of your problems? Has it been your friend? Has it helped? Ask these questions! Journal through them! And then do this…

1.**Replace your fear**

We can, however, decide that we are going to respond differently to fear than we have in the past. God gives us a replacement for fear in Philippians 4.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

It's been said before, "Why worry when you can pray?" I love that question. When you get afraid, you have a couple options. You can call a friend, you can lay in your bed and fret, you can try to get out of your problems on your own power … or you can pray.

Now, to be clear, I do not believe that God always extinguishes our problems when we ask him to. Sometimes he says "no" and makes you go through it. But that's not the point. The point of the Christian life is not to be problem-free. It's to be with Jesus. And one thing he has promised us is that if we repent of sin and trust in him alone as savior, we get HIM. For now. For forever.

Todays Thoughts by: Rick South

ACTION STEPS:

1. Read todays key verses again. Proverbs 1:7, Matthew 6:25-27, and Phillipians 4:6-7
2. Pray and ask God what He is saying to you through these verses.
3. Write down any thoughts or ideas He is giving you and things you need to personally work on in the Today's Field Notes section.

Today's Field Notes:

DAY THREE

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." – Joshua 1:9

I struggle sometimes with remembering that God is truly everywhere. Sometimes we make ourselves believe that there are certain places or circumstances that God doesn't show up or hang out. When I am at my best and I am full of joy, it's easy to feel like God is with me and that He is causing good things to happen in my life. However, when I hit a rough spot or I am going through something hard, it's easy to feel like I am all alone and that no one sees my struggles.

In moments like these, we have to remember what God says to us. In this verse from Joshua, God tells us flat out that we have nothing to worry about! He tells us to be brave! He tells us not to be discouraged. But He doesn't just tell us that for no reason. He promises that He will be with us wherever we go. And God never makes an empty promise.

This means that there is no where, no thing, and no circumstance that could make God leave us or takes His presence from us. He is with us no matter what. He will guide our steps and give us courage if we just keep our eyes on Him. How different would your life look if you applied this truth? How different would it be if you lived like Jesus is always there and He is guiding you through everything, good or bad?

Todays Thoughts by Rich Colon.

ACTION STEPS:

1. Read todays verse again, Joshua 1:9 .
2. Pray and ask God what He is saying to you through this verse.
3. Write down any thoughts or ideas He is giving you and things you need to personally work on in the Today's Field Notes section.

Today's Field Notes:

DAY FOUR

Walk upon the water

So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" —Matthew 14:29-30

Peter was willing to put it all on the line. He and the other disciples had been straining against the waves and wind all night long when Jesus appeared to them, walking on the water. Wanting to prove his courage to Jesus, he made an amazing statement: "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water" (Matthew 14:28). These were rough seas, and Peter was willing to literally step onto them because He was looking at Jesus. That gave him confidence and courage.

It went well for awhile until Peter started to sink. And why did he sink? Because he took his eyes off Jesus and put them on other things. The Bible tells us, "When he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid" (verse 30).
Circumstances can be frightening. When your teacher informs you of a pop quiz, when one of your parents loses their jobs, when you have a friend or family member facing death, it can scare you. It can devastate you. And it can cause you to take your eyes off Jesus.
Where fear reigns, faith is driven away. But where faith reigns, fear has no place. Faith and fear don't mix. As you bring in faith, fear will walk out the back door. But if you invite fear as a resident in your life, then you will drive faith away.

Peter had faith. He had his eyes on Jesus. He was doing the impossible. But then he started to sink, because he took his eyes off Jesus. In his case, he looked at the wind. In our case, it might be something else. But when we forget God, we will start to sink.

Todays Thoughts by Justin Sharpe

ACTION STEPS:
1. Read Matthew 14:28-30.
2. Pray and ask God what He is saying to you through this verse.
3. Write down any thoughts or ideas He is giving you and things you need to personally work on in the Today's Field Notes section.

Today's Field Notes:

DAY FIVE

Faith to take the Mountain

" For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope." - Jeremiah 29:11

Accepting the call and promises of God in our life can sometimes be scary.

In Numbers 13:1-3 God tells Moses to send out men to explore the land that God had promised them. So Moses sent out 12 spies to explore the land. When they gave their report it was said that the land was awesome! There was plenty of food and houses for everyone. However there were giants in the land so big that they looked like grasshoppers next to them. Wow thats huge.

Obviously that can be very scary…. Right. Two men remembered all the miracles that God did to deliver them from Egypt. Joshua and Caleb were their names. I really like these guys.

They had a NO FEAR attitude. The scaredy cats spread rumors and made everyone afraid and they voted to not go in. As a result of not having faith to overcome their fears God made them all wander the desert for 40 years until they all the scaredy cats died. Because of their faith in God and His promises, Joshua and Caleb were allowed to not only live to cross the river, they defeated the giants and took the land. They were blessed for their obedience.
What about you, has God asked you to do something that is scary? Maybe start a Bible study at your school, or start witnessing to others about your faith. Have you allowed fear to stop you?

You can do it, whatever it is. God's got your back. Be bold, be strong and be courageous.

When you are afraid remind yourself of all the testimonies that you've heard in church and read in the Bible. God is faithful. In Jeremiah 29:11 it says, " For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."

Go take the mountain!!

Today's Thoughts by Felix Martinez

ACTION STEPS:
1. Read Number 13:1-3 .
2. Pray and ask God what He is saying to you through this verse.
3. Write down any thoughts or ideas He is giving you and things you need to personally work on in the Today's Field Notes section.

Today's Field Notes:

DAY SIX

Fear of the Unknown

"The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."And Abram left, as the Lord told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Haran." – Genesis 12:1-4

Fear can come in many different forms. Fear can look different for each of us, but it something that all of us experience. One of the biggest fears people can have is fear of the unknown. If you are anything like me, I am a person who likes to know exactly what the future holds for me. I would like to know exactly where God is leading me. But even though God does have a plan for our lives and he is leading us, he doesn't always show us exactly how he will get us to where he wants us to be.

In Genesis 12, God speaks to Abram. For all we know this could have been the very first time God had ever spoken to Abram. God asks Abram to do a pretty big thing. He asks Abram to leave everything he knows, leave what he is comfortable with, leave his security, and travel to a place that he has never seen before. And this place was not nearby, it was over a 500 mile journey!

We believe that God has a plan and purpose for each and every one of our lives. But it is easy for us to begin to fear the future because we don't know exactly how God is going to get us there. Abram left from his home to go to a

land that he didn't even know the location of. But he had faith to believe that God would lead him to where he needed to be.

The unknown can be scary, but we have to understand that if we stay near to God, he is leading us to where we need to be. **Psalm 37:23 tells us that "The steps of a righteous man are ordered by the Lord."** We have to have faith and believe that even when we feel like we don't know where we are headed, God is ordering our steps. God led Abram's steps and he ended up where God wanted him to be, in the promise land.

We should not fear the future or the unknown. We should believe and know that God is leading us right where he wants us to be, in our own promise land. People who decide to allow God to use them in extraordinary ways put their fear aside and allow God to lead them, even when they didn't know where they would end up. Allow your faith in God to overcome your fear of the unknown!

Today's Thoughts by Evan Keene

ACTION STEPS:
1. Read Genesis 12:1-4.
2. Pray and ask God what He is saying to you through this verse.
3. Write down any thoughts or ideas He is giving you and things you need to personally work on in the Today's Field Notes section.

Today's Field Notes:

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DAY SEVEN

Jesus Calms the Storms

When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Silence! Be still!" Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm. Then he asked them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" - Mark 4:39-40

Picture yourself in this situation, you are a disciple of Jesus, you and your eleven other buddies are on a boat when a massive storm comes. You are scared, trying to figure out how to avoid this impending doom. You look back and Jesus is completely relaxed, in fact he is asleep. So, you wake him up. Jesus speaks to the storm, the storm listens, Jesus then looks to you and asks: "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" This question shows us something. Something so many Christians forget, where there is fear there is no faith. Fear and faith cannot exist in tandem. You are going to have one or the other. In this storm the disciples had fear. In your storm what will you have?

But how does one dispel fear? Fear is a natural reaction, we are human, we trigger human emotions without realizing it. Well, if fear is the antithesis of faith that means the reversal is true. Faith is the antidote for fear. Faith is a choice. But, how do we choose faith? Faith is simply cultivated through an intimate relationship with God and strengthened through prayer. Dig into the bible, deepen your relationship with the God who calms all storms. Life is full of storms. We never know what's ahead us. We have all experienced pain, fear, and loss. We've all been in those situations where we wonder where Jesus is in the midst of it all. But today through this passage, Jesus is speaking directly into your situations. He is saying to your storm: "Silence! Be still!"

This day you are in the middle of a storm, an Everest you need to climb. This is where fear and faith collide. What will you choose? Will you trust in the God who can quell all storms? Or will you give in to fear? The choice is yours.

Todays Thoughts by Brandon Arp

ACTION STEPS:

1. Read Mark 4:39-40.
2. Pray and ask God what He is saying to you through this verse.
3. Write down any thoughts or ideas He is giving you and things you need to personally work on in the Today's Field Notes section.

Today's Field Notes:

DAY EIGHT

You Will Not Fall

Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked, for the Lord will be at your side and will keep your foot from being snared. - Proverbs 3:25-26

Fear is not an imaginary word. Fear is a real, living, breathing darkness that consumes even the strongest people of faith. Jesus told us countless time in the bible “do not fear” yet why is fear one of the hardest things to conquer? I have found that it is impossible to conquer fear without the word of God and the declaration of that very word.

When I was a single 23 year old girl living alone in an apartment in a foreign town away from my family and friends fear began a battle with me that it almost won. Struggling with fear as a child this was not a battle that was completely unknown to me. This time it came back stronger than ever and ready to conquer me and my mind. Many nights I was crippled by this monster unable to move or even breathe. One night God reminded me that he gave me a greater weapon than fear ever had. His word.

If I had to pinpoint a specific fear during this time I couldn’t because there were so many but in one desperate moment I opened the Bible to find exactly what I had been looking for. “Have no fear of sudden disaster or the ruin that overtakes the wicked..” When I read “sudden disaster” that spoke volumes because it covered a multitude of fears. Then I saw right after that God promised that he would be at my side and keep me from falling. I think I proclaimed that scripture for the next two hours over my life and my mind.

We must learn and remember that no matter what the fear is in our lives, God promised that he would never let us fall. He promised that he would be by

our side. Fear is nothing but a lie and in our darkest moments we must pull ourselves up and declare his word over our lives. God never breaks his promises. Don't give fear the power because you have the greatest power living inside of you. Read the word. Declare the word. Conquer the battle

Today's thoughts by Tara Sharpe

ACTIONS STEPS
1. Read Proverbs 3:25-26
2. Pray and ask God what He is speaking to you through this scripture.
3. Write down any thoughts or ideas He is giving you and things you need to personally work on in the Today's Field Notes section.

Today's Field Notes:

DAY NINE

Preparing for your mountain.

And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down and prayed, saying Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. Luke 22:41-42

In October 2005, an avid adventurer, Ian Taylor and a group of friends began discussion the possibility of climbing the highest mountain on earth, Mt Everest. To prepare he climbed the highest mountain in 3 different continents; June 2007 he climbed Mt Blanc in Europe (15781 ft.) September 2007, he climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro in Africa (19341 ft.) and in January of 2008 he summited Mt Aconcagua in South America (22841 ft).

He had to intensify his 6 day per week exercise regimen to survive the 72 trek to the top of 29029 ft Mt Everest. 5 days each week Ian jogged a 10K followed by an hour long spin class then onto interval training and time on the stair master. On the 6th day, he loaded 65lbs in a backpack and set out on a 8 hour hike.

Jesus also prepared to climb a mountain. He went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. Soon he would be climbing Galgotha not only to carry a cross, but bearing the weight of all of the sin of mankind on his shoulders. Upon reaching the summit, Jesus laid down his life for each of us proclaiming, " It is finished!"

On May 23rd, 2008 Ian Taylor made history at 29 years of age to be the youngest Irishman to step foot on the top of Everest. Jesus changed eternity for all who will believe in Him.

Today's thoughts by Tom Jablonski

ACTIONS STEPS

1. Read Luke 22:41-42
2. Pray and ask God what He is speaking to you through this scripture.
3. Write down any thoughts or ideas He is giving you and things you need to personally work on in the Today's Field Notes section.

Today's Field Notes:

DAY TEN

Fearless

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."- 2 Timothy 1:7

Bottom Line: What if fear didn't stand between you and what you've always wanted to do? What could you accomplish or experience? Jasmine Murray says that her song Fearless is born out of real life fear and a realization that God doesn't want us to be frozen by what we're afraid of.

Fear is something that everyone has felt at one time or another in their life. But you don't have to struggle with fear for the rest of your life. Fear doesn't have to be what defines you.

Listen to the song Fearless by Jasmine Murray-

The lyrics say, "Bring on the unknown, lead me and I'll go," what's keeping you from saying that over your life?

Jasmine sings, "I believe You're with me now," do you believe God is with you?

Deuteronomy 31:6 NIV says, "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."

God has called us to be fearless and He's called us to be bold. Know that you can overcome anything.

Don't let fear define you. Be Fearless!

“The song Fearless is such a strong declaration of understanding what it means to overcome fear and what it means to truly be bold & fearless. It’s a message that I want people to listen to and know that they can overcome anything.” – Jasmine Murray
Today’s thought by Rick South

ACTIONS STEPS

1. Read 2 Timothy 1:7
2. Pray and ask God what He is speaking to you through this scripture.
3. Write down any thoughts or ideas He is giving you and things you need to personally work on in the Today’s Field Notes section.

Today’s Field Notes:

DAY ELEVEN

Gripped.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? -Psalm 27:1

We all know what it's like to be gripped by fear. And fear works with its close buddy, worry. The two often work together. You can get caught up playing that what-if game, tying your stomach in knots.

In fact, modern medical research has proven that worry can actually break down your resistance to disease. More than that, it actually diseases the nervous system, specifically that of the digestive organs and heart. Excessive worry can even shorten your life!

We all know what it is like to be afraid of something, but too often we are afraid of the the wrong things in life. At the same time, we are not afraid of the right things in life- or maybe I should say the right One in life. We don't fear God. Yet the Bible tells us the fear of the Lord is the beginning of all wisdom.

To fear God doesn't mean cowering in terror before Him. Rather, the fear of God has been properly defined as a wholesome dread of displeasing Him. If I have sinned, it is not the fear of what God will do to me. Rather, it's the fear of what I have done to Him. That is what it is to fear the Lord.

The remarkable thing about fearing God is that when you fear God, you fear nothing else. On the other hand, if you don't fear God, you fear everything else.

David said, “The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” Only the person who can say, “The Lord is the strength of my life” can the say “of whom shall I be afraid?”

Are you gripped by fear and worry right now? Let the Lord be the strength of your life.

Today’s thoughts by Justin Sharpe

ACTIONS STEPS
1. Read Psalm 27:1
2. Pray and ask God what He is speaking to you through this scripture.
3. Write down any thoughts or ideas He is giving you and things you need to personally work on in the Today’s Field Notes section.

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DAY TWELVE

CASTAWAY

Cast all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7

"When I am afraid, I put my trust in You." - Psalm 56:3
Notice, it does not say, "I never struggle with fear." Fear strikes, and the battle begins. So the Bible does not assume that true believers will have no anxieties. Instead the Bible tells us how to fight when they strike. For example, 1 Peter 5:7 says "Cast all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you." It does not say, you will never feel any anxieties. It says, when you have them, cast them on God. My response to the person who has to deal with feelings of anxiety everyday is to say, that's more or less normal. At least it is for me, ever since my teenage years. The issue is: How do we fight them?
The answer to that question is: we fight anxieties by fighting against unbelief and fighting for faith in future grace. And the way you fight this "good fight" (1 Timothy 6:12; 2 Timothy 4:7) is by meditating on God's assurances of future grace and by asking for the help of His Spirit.
So the question remains, if your still struggling daily with fear, anxieties and the like how much time are you truly devoting to meditating on God's promises for your life. I challenge you to look further beyond you situation or circumstances and ask God to give you peace in to combat all you fears and all your anxieties.

Today's thoughts by Justin Sharpe

ACTIONS STEPS
1. Read 1 Peter 5:7
2. Pray and ask God what He is speaking to you through this scripture.

3. Write down any thoughts or ideas He is giving you and things you need to personally work on in the Today's Field Notes section.

Today's Field Notes:

About the Authors

This book has been compiled of entries from pastors, youth pastors and leaders from the Michigan Church of God Youth and Discipleship Department. Each of the contributors have been on their own unique journey which led them into leadership within the Church of God in Michigan. Each one of them have had to overcome their own fears along the way. Our hope and pray is that this short devotional will help assist you on your journey of overcoming fear. Please enjoy it, share it and don't let your adventure stop here!

For more information on Michigan Youth and Discipleship or any other information pertaining to Michigan Church of God please visit our website at:

www.michigancog.org

Acknowledgments

Michigan Church of God Youth and Discipleship department would like to thank all of those that contributed to this devotional guides. Thanks to your efforts many students and leaders will have the opportunity to further their relationship with Christ and hopefully help them with their journey of overcoming fear.