

Fear vs. God

Many kids go through stages where fear seems to be ruling their lives. They may have trouble sleeping and avoid any situation that might involve whatever fear they are preoccupied with in the moment.

It's not just kids, of course. Parenting itself creates the opportunity to be afraid of all kinds of new things we had never worried about before. Some of us become fearful people on behalf of kids who don't seem to have the sense, yet, to know what they should be afraid of for themselves.

But we also have a unique opportunity as Christian parents to begin equipping our kids with the primary tool for vanquishing fear now and for the rest of their lives—faith in a bigger God.

We're pulling our talking points for the week from Psalm 46, a psalm that describes very real dangers in relationship to a very powerful God to make the point that God is bigger than whatever may frighten or worry us.

We hope a few of the following questions will provoke a good conversation with your child about fear and trusting God to take care of us.

Talking Points:

- What are a few things that really scare you? [Parent: Open up; be honest about some of your own fears, as well.]
- Can you think of a time recently when you felt really scared about something? What did you do? [Parent: Again, encourage openness by being open.]
- When you think about some of the things that scare or worry you most, what can you imagine that would make you completely unafraid of that thing? [Parent: Encourage brainstorming even of impossible things, e.g., never having to fall a sleep, a spray that could instantly make all snakes disappear, the ability to completely forget anything bad that has happened in the past, etc.]
- Do you think God wants us to be afraid? Why or why not?
- Does talking to God about your fear help you to feel less scared? Why or why not?
- What does work best to help you to overcome fear?

- What does the word “refuge” mean to you? [Parent: A refuge, basically, is a place of safety from whatever is threatening you.]
- Psalm 46:1 says that God is our refuge. How does God protect us from the things that we’re afraid of? Why does He protect us?
- If you were as strong, say, as Superman—or 4 times bigger than you are right now—would you be afraid of the same things? Why or why not?
- Psalm 46:1 also says that God is our strength and that He is ready to help at all times. Do you believe God is stronger than whatever you’re afraid of, that He is stronger and bigger than anything we can imagine?
- Psalm 46:2-3 describes worst cases that people might fear—earthquakes and floods, maybe a tsunami. What is the worst thing you can imagine happening with what you’re afraid of? [Parent: Talking about the worst case scenario is a way of bringing it into the light and discovering either how unlikely it is or that it is survivable. Leaving the worst unspoken often gives it more power.]
- The next verses in Psalm 46 describe that when God is in a city, He can keep it safe even if the worst thing happens because He is there and more powerful than any terrible thing that could ever happen. How confident are you that God could take care of you even if the worst thing happened?
- Psalm 46:8-9 show us that God is not afraid to use His power against evil to make it stop. He has all the power He needs to step in when the time is right. How confident are you that God can protect you by destroying evil?
- Psalm 46:10 gives one strategy for responding to fear. It says we should “be still” and “know that I am God.” How could we do better at stilling our thoughts and focusing on God’s power when we’re afraid instead of focusing on what is scaring us? [Parent: Help brainstorm strategies, including prayer, reading the Bible, listening to Christian music, or talking to someone about God’s power.]