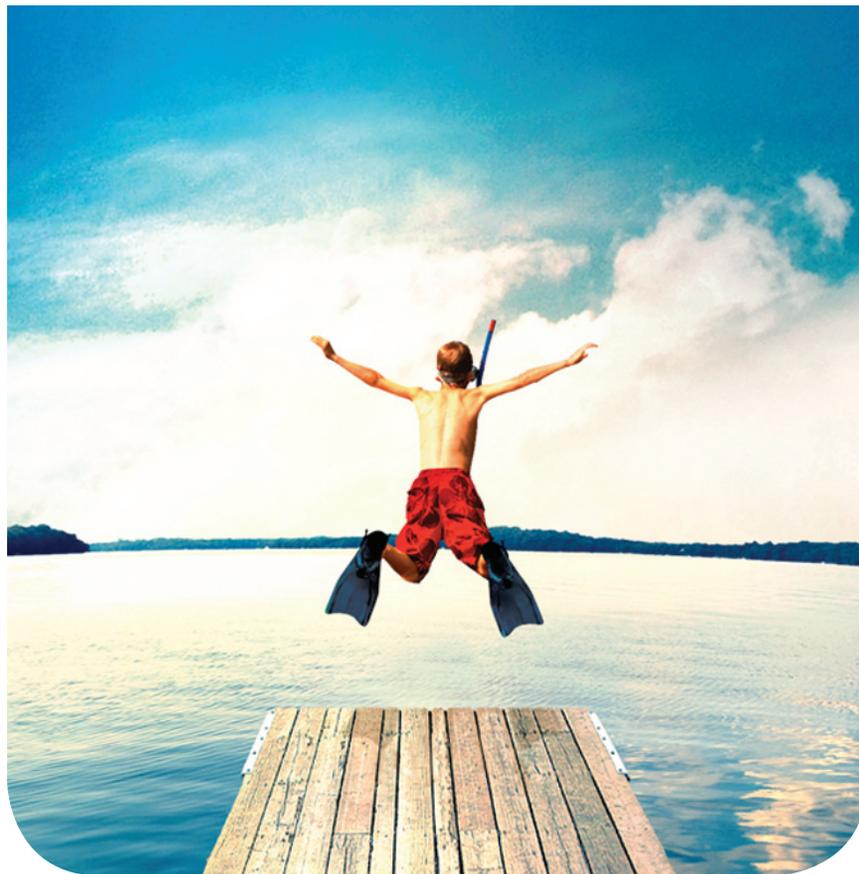


FEARLESS

SERMON
NOTES



RELATED PRODUCTS

Fearless: Imagine Your Life Without Fear by Max Lucado

Fearless Small Group Discussion Guide

Fearless Small Group Leader's Guide

FEARLESS

SERMON
NOTES

BASED ON THE BOOK BY
MAX LUCADO



THOMAS NELSON
Since 1798

NASHVILLE DALLAS MEXICO CITY RIO DE JANEIRO BEIJING

© 2009 Max Lucado

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, scanning, or other—except for brief quotations in critical reviews or articles, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Published in Nashville, Tennessee, by Thomas Nelson. Thomas Nelson is a registered trademark of Thomas Nelson, Inc.

The publisher is grateful to Kate Etue for her collaboration and writing assistance in developing the content for these sermon notes.

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from THE NEW KING JAMES VERSION. © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked KJV are taken from the KING JAMES VERSION.

Scripture quotations marked NASB are from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®. © The Lockman Foundation 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995. Used by permission.

Scripture quotations marked NCV are taken from the New Century Version®. © 2005 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NIV are taken from the HOLY BIBLE: NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation. © 1996, 2004. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois 60189. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked MSG are taken from *The Message* by Eugene H. Peterson. © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000. Used by permission of NavPress Publishing Group. All rights reserved.

FEARLESS

CONTENTS

Introduction	6
Using This Tool	7
1. Why Are We Afraid?	8
2. Fear of Not Mattering	13
3. Fear of Disappointing God	17
4. Fear of Life's Final Moments	21
5. Fear of Global Calamity	25
6. Fear of God Getting Out of My Box	30

FEARLESS

INTRODUCTION

There's a stampede of fear out there. Let's not get caught in it. Let's be among those who stay calm. Let's recognize danger but not be overwhelmed. Acknowledge threats but refuse to be defined by them. . . . Let's be numbered among those who hear a different voice, God's.

—from *Fearless*

Imagine your church wholly untouched by angst. What if faith, not fear, was your congregation's default reaction to threats? If you could hover a fear magnet over your community and extract every last shaving of dread, insecurity, and doubt, what would remain?

Envision a day, just one day, absent the dread of failure, rejection, and calamity within the walls of your office or sanctuary. Can you imagine a life where the ones you love don't fear?

This is the possibility *Fearless* offers. By examining what makes us afraid and drawing closer to God we can abandon those fears. And as a pastor or teacher, you're in a unique position to help those struggling to find the light at the end of the dark tunnel of fear.

USING THIS TOOL

Surely the best sermons are those forged through personal study and experiences with God. A sermon that bears the passion and refinement that comes from a heart captured by the message is a sermon that will stir and change lives. We wouldn't presume to write your sermon for you. We know neither your context, the story of the people you'll be speaking to, nor the journey of faith you're on. So we've refined the message into an outline with key concepts, supporting Scripture references, and quotes from Max's book on the topic, *Fearless*. We recommend reading the corresponding chapters in *Fearless* as you prepare for each week's sermon.

The *Fearless* book has fifteen chapters, and the Discussion Guide focuses on six of those chapters—also highlighted here. You may choose to correlate your sermon series with the weekly small groups or Bible studies that meet within your church. That way small group members will have additional reinforcement for their discussions during the week.

FEARLESS

WHY ARE WE AFRAID?

OBJECTIVE

To introduce and remind your church or group of the following realities:

1. Life isn't meant to be a luxury ride—it's filled with difficult experiences.
2. Fear can be healthy, but an inappropriate response to fear is sinful.
3. Our Father is capable of calming the storms in our lives.

PREPARATION

Read Chapter 1 in *Fearless* and record your thoughts in a journal. Meditate on all that it stirs in your heart and mind. Pray for an extended amount of time, asking God to show you what he wants your listeners to hear.

FEARLESS

WHY ARE WE AFRAID?

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

“Jesus got into a boat, and his followers went with him. A great storm arose on the lake so that the waves covered the boat.” (Matthew 8:23–24 NCV)

“Suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea.” (Matthew 8:24)

“In the world you will have tribulation.” (John 16:33)

“Jesus was sleeping.” (Matthew 8:24 NCV)

“Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?” (Matthew 8:26)

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear.” (2 Timothy 1:7)

*“Jesus got up and gave a command to the wind and the waves, and it became completely calm. . . . ‘What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!’”
(Matthew 8:26–27 NCV)*

FEARLESS

WHY ARE WE AFRAID?

OUTLINE

- I. The Great Seismos
- II. Jesus Remains Unstirred in the Storm
- III. Fear Can Be Healthy
- IV. The Father Is Capable of Calming Our Storms

OPENING QUESTION: *Why are you afraid?*

- I. The Great Seismos
 - A. Life is stormy.

“Jesus got into a boat, and his followers went with him. A great storm arose on the lake so that the waves covered the boat.” (Matthew 8:23–24 NCV)

- B. Matthew used the word *seismos*—a quake, a trembling eruption of sea and sky (also used in Matthew 27:51–54 at Jesus’ death at Calvary and in Matthew 28:2 when Jesus arose from the dead).

- C. This storm came suddenly.

“Suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea.” (Matthew 8:24)

FEARLESS

WHY ARE WE AFRAID?

II. Jesus Remains Unstirred in the Storm

A. The absence of storms doesn't set us apart.

"Don't Christ-followers enjoy a calendar full of Caribbean cruises? No. This story sends the not-so-subtle and not-too-popular reminder: getting on board with Christ can mean getting soaked with Christ. Disciples can expect rough seas and stout winds."

"In the world you will [not 'might,' 'may,' or 'could'] have tribulation." (John 16:33, brackets mine)

B. The difference for Christians is whom we discover in the storm.

"Jesus was sleeping." (Matthew 8:24 NCV)

"Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" (Matthew 8:26)

III. Fear Can Be Healthy

A. Fear can keep us from danger, but an inappropriate response to fear is sinful.

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear." (2 Timothy 1:7)

"Fear will always knock on your door. Just don't invite it in for dinner and, for heaven's sake, don't offer it a bed for the night."

FEARLESS

WHY ARE WE AFRAID?

IV. The Father Is Capable of Calming Our Storms

A. Jesus handled the great quaking with great calming.

“Jesus got up and gave a command to the wind and the waves and it became completely calm.” (Matthew 8:26 NCV)

*“What kind of man is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”
(Matthew 8:27 NCV)*

FEARLESS

FEAR OF NOT MATTERING

OBJECTIVE

To introduce and remind your church or group of the following realities:

1. We long to be important.
2. God views us as his masterpiece.

PREPARATION

Read Chapter 2 in *Fearless* and record your thoughts in a journal. Meditate on all that it stirs in your heart and mind. Pray for an extended amount of time, asking God to show you what he wants your listeners to hear.

FEARLESS

FEAR OF NOT MATTERING

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

“Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.” (Matthew 10:29–31 NIV)

“Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God.” (Luke 12:6 NIV)

“I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” (Psalm 139:14)

“I was made in secret and skillfully wrought.” (Psalm 139:15)

“If I could count [God’s thoughts of me], they would be more than all the grains of sand.” (Psalm 139:18 NCV)

“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” (Ephesians 2:10 NLT)

FEARLESS

FEAR OF NOT MATTERING

OUTLINE

- I. Someone Special
- II. Fearing Nothingness
- III. God's Masterpiece

OPENING QUESTION:
Does God really care about you?

I. Someone Special

A. Everyone desires significance.

"I am fearfully and wonderfully made." (Psalm 139:14)

"I was made in secret and skillfully wrought." (Psalm 139:15)

"If I could count [God's thoughts of me] they would be more than all the grains of sand." (Psalm 139:18 NCV)

II. Fearing Nothingness

A. We fear insignificance.

"We drop names of important people, wear college rings on our fingers, and put silicone in our breasts, flashy hubcaps on our cars, grids on our teeth, and keep cigarette butts in jars. We fear we don't matter."

FEARLESS

FEAR OF NOT MATTERING

B. We don't have to be afraid—we matter to God.

“Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.”
(Matthew 10:29–31 NIV)

“Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God.” (Luke 12:6 NIV)

III. God's Masterpiece

A. We are God's idea—his creation.

“For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” (Ephesians 2:10 NLT)

FEARLESS

FEAR OF DISAPPOINTING GOD

OBJECTIVE

To introduce and remind your church or group of the following realities:

1. Our sin cannot separate us from God's love once we are his.
2. Forgiveness is ours if we accept it.

PREPARATION

Read Chapter 3 in *Fearless* and record your thoughts in a journal. Meditate on all that it stirs in your heart and mind. Pray for an extended amount of time, asking God to show you what he wants your listeners to hear.

FEARLESS

FEAR OF DISAPPOINTING GOD

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

“Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven.” (Matthew 9:2 NASB)

“[We are] delivered from the power of darkness and conveyed . . . into the kingdom of the Son.” (Colossians 1:13)

“He who believes in Him is not condemned.” (John 3:18)

“Everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day.” (John 6:40 NIV)

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.” (1 John 5:13)

“Perfect love expels all fear.” (1 John 4:18 NLT)

“If our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.”
(1 John 3:20)

“God’s readiness to give and forgive is now public. Salvation’s available for everyone! . . . Tell them all this. Build up their courage.” (Titus 2:11, 15 MSG)

“If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.” (1 John 1:9 NLT)

FEARLESS

FEAR OF DISAPPOINTING GOD

OUTLINE

- I. Strays
- II. The God Who Does Not Abandon Us
- III. Tether Your Heart to His Promise

OPENING QUESTION:
Can your past really be forgiven?

I. Strays

- A. Just like stray animals, we too are prone to wander far from home.
- B. Jesus will search for us.

“Take courage, son; your sins are forgiven.” (Matthew 9:2 NASB)

“[We are] delivered from the power of darkness and conveyed . . . into the kingdom of the Son.” (Colossians 1:13)

II. The God Who Does Not Abandon Us

- A. Jesus loves us too much to leave us in doubt about his grace.

“He who believes in Him is not condemned.” (John 3:18)

“Everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day.” (John 6:40 NIV)

FEARLESS

FEAR OF DISAPPOINTING GOD

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.” (1 John 5:13)

“Perfect love expels all fear.” (1 John 4:18 NLT)

III. Tether Your Heart to His Promise

A. Nothing fosters courage like a clear grasp of grace.

“God’s readiness to give and forgive is now public. Salvation’s available for everyone! . . . Tell them all this. Build up their courage.” (Titus 2:11, 15 MSG)

B. If you haven’t accepted God’s forgiveness, you’re doomed to fear.

“If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.” (1 John 1:9 NLT)

FEARLESS

FEAR OF LIFE'S FINAL MOMENTS

OBJECTIVE

To introduce and remind your church or group of the following realities:

1. We don't have to fear death.
2. Jesus' resurrection is real.

PREPARATION

Read Chapter 10 in *Fearless* and record your thoughts in a journal. Meditate on all that it stirs in your heart and mind. Pray for an extended amount of time, asking God to show you what he wants your listeners to hear.

FEARLESS

FEAR OF LIFE'S FINAL MOMENTS

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

“Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust in me. There are many rooms in my Father’s house; I would not tell you this if it were not true. I am going there to prepare a place for you. After I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me so that you may be where I am.” (John 14:1–3 NCV)

“The living know they will die, but the dead know nothing.” (Ecclesiastes 9:5 NCV)

“There is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back.” (1 Corinthians 15:23 NLT)

“Let me go over the Message with you one final time.” (1 Corinthians 15:1 MSG)

“[Jesus] was raised from death on the third day . . . he presented himself alive to Peter . . . his closest followers . . . more than five hundred of his followers . . . James . . . the rest of those he commissioned . . . and finally . . . to me.” (1 Corinthians 15:3–8 MSG)

“Free those who were like slaves all their lives because of their fear of death.” (Hebrews 2:15–16 NCV)

FEARLESS

FEAR OF LIFE'S FINAL MOMENTS

OUTLINE

- I. Not Afraid of Death
- II. Can We Trust Jesus?
- III. Let's Die with Faith

OPENING QUESTION:

Are your days spent in fear of your final hour?

I. Not Afraid of Death

A. We long to die without fright or a fight.

"Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust in me. There are many rooms in my Father's house; I would not tell you this if it were not true. I am going there to prepare a place for you. After I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me so that you may be where I am." (John 14:1-3 NCV)

B. We have a new hope.

"The living know they will die, but the dead know nothing." (Ecclesiastes 9:5 NCV)

FEARLESS

FEAR OF LIFE'S FINAL MOMENTS

II. Can We Trust Jesus?

A. Paul defends the logic of the resurrection.

“There is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back.”
(1 Corinthians 15:23 NLT)

B. Paul reviewed the facts.

“Let me go over the Message with you one final time.” (1 Corinthians 15:1 MSG)

“[Jesus] was raised from death on the third day . . . he presented himself alive to Peter . . . his closest followers . . . more than five hundred of his followers . . . James . . . the rest of those he commissioned . . . and finally . . . to me.”
(1 Corinthians 15:3–8 MSG)

III. Let's Die with Faith

A. Redefine the way you look at the grave.

“Free those who were like slaves all their lives because of their fear of death.”
(Hebrews 2:15–16 NCV)

FEARLESS

FEAR OF GLOBAL CALAMITY

OBJECTIVE

To introduce and remind your church or group of the following realities:

1. Catastrophes dominate the day; don't let them dominate you.
2. We can trust Jesus.

PREPARATION

Read Chapter 13 in *Fearless* and record your thoughts in a journal. Meditate on all that it stirs in your heart and mind. Pray for an extended amount of time, asking God to show you what he wants your listeners to hear.

FEARLESS

FEAR OF GLOBAL CALAMITY

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

“You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains. Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” (Matthew 24:6–14 NIV)

“See to it that you are not alarmed.” (Matthew 24:6 NIV)

“Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this I will be confident.” (Psalm 27:3 KJV)

“All these things [challenging times] are the beginning of birth pains.” (Matthew 24:8 NIV)

“These things must come to pass.” (Matthew 24:6)

FEARLESS

FEAR OF GLOBAL CALAMITY

OUTLINE

- I. Things Will Get Worse
- II. Pollyanna Optimism, Chicken Little Doom
- III. A Whole New World

OPENING QUESTION:
What if things only get worse?

- I. Things Will Get Worse
 - A. Bravery is still an option.

“You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains. Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” (Matthew 24:6–14 NIV)

FEARLESS

FEAR OF GLOBAL CALAMITY

B. Don't freak out.

“Don't freak out at the heresy, calamity, and apostasy. Don't give in or give up, for you'll soon witness the victory. Jesus equipped his followers with far-sighted courage. He listed the typhoons of life and then pointed them 'to the end.' Trusting in ultimate victory gives ultimate courage.”

“All these things [challenging times] are the beginning of birth pains.” (Matthew 24:8 NIV)

II. Pollyanna Optimism, Chicken Little Doom

A. We gain nothing by glossing over the brutality of human existence (Pollyanna Optimism), rather we should be rationally aware of the reality we face.

“See to it that you are not alarmed.” (Matthew 24:6 NIV)

“Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this I will be confident.” (Psalm 27:3 KJV)

B. The Old Testament people of God knew peace.

“Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this I will be confident.” (Psalm 27:3 KJV)

FEARLESS

FEAR OF GLOBAL CALAMITY

III. A Whole New World

A. Every trial and trouble has a place in God's grand scheme.

"These things must come to pass." (Matthew 24:6)

B. Above all chaos, a divine plan reigns.

"Everything will work out in the end. If it's not working out, it's not the end."

FEARLESS

FEAR OF GOD GETTING OUT OF MY BOX

OBJECTIVE

To introduce and remind your church or group of the following realities:

1. Jesus is much more than just a “great man of history.”
2. We need to know the transfigured Christ.
3. Fear of the Lord is recognition that we are not God.

PREPARATION

Read Chapter 14 in *Fearless* and record your thoughts in a journal. Meditate on all that it stirs in your heart and mind. Pray for an extended amount of time, asking God to show you what he wants your listeners to hear.

FEARLESS

FEAR OF GOD GETTING OUT OF MY BOX

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE

“Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves.” (Matthew 17:1)

“He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.” (Matthew 17:2)

“[Jesus’] clothes shimmered, glistening white, whiter than any bleach could make them.” (Mark 9:3 MSG)

“God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all.” (1 John 1:5 NCV)

“Who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners.” (Hebrews 7:26 NIV)

“They were speaking about his exodus from this world, which was about to be fulfilled in Jerusalem.” (Luke 9:31 NLT)

“Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” (Matthew 17:4)

“While [Peter] was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!’” (Matthew 17:5)

“They fell on their faces and were greatly afraid.” (Matthew 17:6)

“The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear?” (Psalm 27:1)

FEARLESS

FEAR OF GOD GETTING OUT OF MY BOX

OUTLINE

- I. The Transfiguration
- II. Jesus Is the “Beloved Son”
- III. A Holy, Healthy Fear
- IV. We Need to Know the Transfigured Christ

OPENING QUESTION:

How long has it been since a fresh understanding of Christ buckled your knees and emptied your lungs?

I. The Transfiguration

- A. Jesus wanted his followers to see where he got his fortitude.

“He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.” (Matthew 17:2)

- B. Christ as his truest self.

“God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all.” (1 John 1:5 NCV)

“Who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners.” (Hebrews 7:26 NIV)

“They were speaking about his exodus from this world, which was about to be fulfilled in Jerusalem.” (Luke 9:31 NLT)

FEARLESS

FEAR OF GOD GETTING OUT OF MY BOX

II. Jesus Is the “Beloved Son”

A. Getting Jesus out of the box of “great men of history.”

“Jesus is not ‘a’ son or even ‘the best of all sons.’ He is the ‘beloved son.’ ‘Beloved’ means ‘priceless’ and ‘unique.’”

“While [Peter] was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!’” (Matthew 17:5)

B. Seeing Christ in cosmic greatness.

“They fell on their faces and were greatly afraid.” (Matthew 17:6)

III. A Holy, Healthy Fear

A. Most of our fears are poisonous, but this fear is different.

“From a biblical perspective, there is nothing neurotic about fearing God. The neurotic thing is not to be afraid, or to be afraid of the wrong thing. That is why God chooses to be known to us, so that we may stop being afraid of the wrong thing. When God is fully revealed and we ‘get it,’ then we experience the conversion of our fear. . . . ‘Fear of the Lord’ is the deeply sane recognition that we are not God.”

FEARLESS

FEAR OF GOD GETTING OUT OF MY BOX

B. As awe of Jesus expands, fears of life diminish.

“A big God translates into big courage.”

IV. We Need to Know the Transfigured Christ

A. Jesus blew the sides out of the disciples’ preconceptions; may he blow the sides out of yours too.

“The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear?” (Psalm 27:1)