



Session 1: Bringing down the giant of fear

NOV 1 - NOV 9

ICEBREAKER

Looking up definitions beforehand, see how many of the following fears the group can define: Agoraphobia, Homilophobia, Pentheraphobia, Xenophobia, Ephebiphobia, Dentophobia, Consecotaleophobia.

KEY THOUGHT

Like the Israelites, we can be faced by Goliath-like giants that block our path to all that God has in store for us. But when we trust God, He gives us the courage and power to overcome every one.

KEY VERSE

'I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel'
1 Samuel 17:45

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. How can our giants intimidate us?
2. How can the Holy Spirit help us?
3. Are some of our fears imaginary?
4. What false remedies do some people use to overcome fear?
5. How has prayer helped you overcome fear?
6. How does our understanding of God's omnipresence affect our fears?

7. Which fears are healthy and which are unhealthy?
8. In Psalm 5:7 NKJV uses the word 'fear' but the NIV translation uses 'reverence'. Which is better?
9. Discuss the two facts that kept Jesus free from fear.

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

'Pilate said, "Don't you realise I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" Jesus answered, "You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above"' John 19:10-11

PRAYER POINTERS

- Pray that the Holy Spirit will instruct and help you and the group as we study this issue together.
- Pray for people to overcome their fears and experience a new boldness in God.

Session 2: Bringing down the giant of jealousy

NOV 10 - NOV 16

ICEBREAKERS

How have you been tempted by jealous thoughts regarding the success of another person? To what extent would you say that Western consumerism and the debt crisis are based on jealousy?

KEY THOUGHT

The giant of jealousy is a killer. We must make up our minds in God's name to halt it. If we don't, it will eventually destroy us.

KEY VERSE

'Anger is cruel and fury overwhelming, but who can stand before jealousy?' Proverbs 27:4

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. What is the difference between good and bad jealousy?
2. Discuss the quote from Charles Swindoll that appears on 11 November.
3. Why may we be jealous of other Christians and churches?
4. Discuss the fable that appears on 13 November.
5. How does self-centredness produce jealousy?
6. Why should we not 'keep up with the Joneses'?
7. Discuss Selwyn's comment: 'It is the intense longing for admiration that leads many people into difficulties', which appears on 16 November.

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

'I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will even do greater things' John 14:12

PRAYER POINTERS

- Confess and repent of any jealousy.
- Pray God's blessing for those who might be tempted by jealousy.



Session 3: Bringing down the giant of lust and unhealthy desire

NOV 17 - NOV 24

ICEBREAKER

How does modern society fan the flames of lust?

7. Discuss G.K. Chesterton's quote (appearing on 23 November).
8. Discuss the idea that sexual desire is just one aspect of our creative nature.

KEY THOUGHT

Desires are God-given aspects of the personality, but they should be our servants and not our masters or else we will be consumed and dominated by them.

KEY VERSES

'a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him'
2 Peter 2:19
'sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace' Romans 6:14

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. Consider how desire can be seen as a God-given force of the personality, but also why it needs to be properly controlled.
2. How can sin bind, blind and grind us?
3. How can we bring sex into the open in our thinking?
4. Discuss the comment made by the academic mentioned on 20 November: 'My feelings overwhelm my intelligence'.
5. How can we celebrate sex in freedom rather than being dominated and shamed bit?
6. Why is lust more a problem of the mind than the body?

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

'But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.' Matthew 5:28

PRAYER POINTERS

- Pray for single people in the church to live pure lives and resist temptation.
- Pray for wise and sensitive teaching and for godly outlets for your creative passions.

Session 4: Bringing down the giant of shame

NOV 25 - NOV 30

ICEBREAKER

How should a husband apologise and make amends with his wife for the shame of forgetting their wedding anniversary?

KEY THOUGHT

Guilt and shame can cripple our personalities and hinder our spiritual effectiveness as past memories trap us in the tangle of regret. But Jesus brings total forgiveness and sets us free!

KEY VERSE

'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness' 1 John 1:9

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. How can memories of the past affect us?
2. How can we 'forget what is behind' as Paul did?
3. Define what it means to repent.
4. What is the difference between remorse and repentance?
5. Why may it be difficult to forgive ourselves?

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

"Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin."
John 8:11

PRAYER POINTERS

- Ask God to show you any unconfessed sin and where you may need to make restitution.
- Thank God that His forgiveness is total and that He chooses not to remember your sins.



Session 5: Bringing down the giant of despair DEC 1 - DEC 7

ICEBREAKER

What are your plans for Christmas?

KEY THOUGHT

The truth of the cross gives us hope that whatever difficult circumstances we face, God is working all things for good. He is also with us to encourage and strengthen us until the day we finally see Him face-to-face.

KEY VERSE

'Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise Him, my Saviour and my God' Psalm 43:5

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. Discuss how God brought Elijah back from despair.
2. Have you experienced a spiritual low after a spiritual high?
3. What is the difference between devastation and despair?
4. How is Christian hope different to a person hosting a garden party who hopes it will not rain?
5. What is the difference between worldly optimism and Christian hope?

6. How would you explain your reason for hope if someone asked?
7. How does the message of the cross help us in desperate circumstances?

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

"My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death ... Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." Mark 14:34,36

PRAYER POINTERS

- Thank God that He is with you at all times to fill you with faith, hope and love.
- Pray for those who are going through difficult circumstances.

Session 6: Bringing down the giant of pride DEC 8 - DEC 14

ICEBREAKERS

As we approach Christmas, watch this funny video of the Silent Monks: www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRhjWdr-LAA
What do you consider your best attribute or achievement?

KEY THOUGHT

Pride is one of the most dangerous giants because it displaces God and puts self in the centre of our universe.

KEY VERSE

'When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.' Proverbs 11:2

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. Discuss the quote by William Law on 8 December.
2. Discuss the words of Dr A.C. Craig., quoted on 9 December.
3. What causes us to want to be the centre of attention?
4. Why is spiritual maturity both desirable and dangerous?
5. How can Christ's life provide us with an antidote to pride?
6. What is the difference between good pride and bad pride?

7. What is the difference between humility and low self-esteem?

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

'Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.' John 13:14

PRAYER POINTERS

- Confess any areas of pride.
- Pray for a gentle and humble spirit that regards others as more important than yourself.



Session 7: Bringing down the giant of revenge

DEC 15 - DEC 21

ICEBREAKER

Watch the following two stories:

Gordon Wilson: www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p010gppk

Jimmy Mizen's parents: www.youtube.com/watch?v=cRQo720qa1g

KEY THOUGHT

The passion for revenge breeds bitterness and can limit the power of the Holy Spirit flowing in our lives.

KEY VERSE

'Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge'
Leviticus 19:18

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. How have you dealt with the desire to 'get even'?
2. Discuss Selwyn's statement found on 16 December: 'To cultivate the virus of resentment is as harmful as cultivating a virus in the body.'
3. How may bitterness affect us?
4. Discuss the story of the farmer told on 18 December.
5. What do you understand by the concept of Christ occupying territory in your heart?
6. Why is forgiveness always the right response?
7. Discuss the three basic elements of forgiveness described on 21 December.

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

'When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate' 1 Peter 2:23

PRAYER POINTERS

- Pray for anyone who has hurt or offended you.
- Pray that God will strengthen you to forgive, pray and serve those who treat you badly.

Session 8: Bringing down the giant of self-pity

DEC 22 - DEC 31

ICEBREAKERS

What was your highlight over Christmas?

What has most impacted you in this issue and how will you change as a result?

Watch the video clip of a Christmas flash mob:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXh7JR9oKVE

KEY THOUGHT

Self-pity causes us to focus on ourselves rather than face and overcome the issues of life with God's strength.

KEY VERSES

'I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.' 1 Kings 19:14
'I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.' Philippians 4:13

DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. What misfortunes could give rise to self-pity and why is some misfortune inevitable?
2. Why might Christmas seem to have a negative effect on some people and how can we respond to them?
3. Discuss Selwyn's statement: 'no one understands you better than Jesus'.
4. Discuss the words of Dr Robert C. Barnes mentioned on 26 December.

5. How can we be immune to the effects of self-pity?
6. How can adversity teach us to be God-reliant and not self-reliant?
7. Discuss what Dr G. Campbell Morgan said of 'a certain young preacher' on 29 December.
8. Why may reformed drug addicts be the best counsellors for other addicts?
9. Go over the principles of bringing down the giants that try to block your spiritual progress, summarised on 31 January.

THE EXAMPLE OF JESUS

Dying on the cross, Jesus 'said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son" and to the disciple, "Here is your mother."' John 19:26-27

PRAYER POINTERS

- Pray for God to help you overcome the giant of self-pity and be more focused on God's next step for you.
- Pray for strength and courage to defeat any giants that block your spiritual progress.
- Give thanks to God for the past year and pray for an outpouring of His Spirit in the New Year.