

Letting Go of Fear

During the children's time in worship this Sunday we talked about what scares us. Sometimes fears can keep us safe; it's smart to be wary of a hot stove, for example. Sometimes fears can keep us from doing things we might enjoy, like making new friends or trying new activities.

God knows we get afraid. God knows we worry. God also promises us that our fears and worries are not bigger than God's love and care for us. No matter what we go through, no matter what we're afraid of, God is with us. We can offer our fears and worries to God and God offers us comfort and peace in return.

wash your fears away, a prayer practice for younger disciples

1. Think about something that makes you afraid.

2. Tell God about it. God wants us to share what we're feeling and listens to our fears and worries in love. You can share these with your adults too, trusting that they will also listen and assure you that these feelings are normal.

3. Write or draw your fear in washable marker (warm colors work best) on your hand or forearm.

4. Wash away your fear in warm water, giving thanks that while we all have fears and worries, God's love is like the water, washing them away. We do not have to stay afraid or worried because God is with us.



naming your fears, a prayer practice for older disciples

Fears are a normal part of life. They help us recognize possible danger and help us prepare to deal with that danger. Fear can become debilitating, though, especially when we have a stronger flight, fight, or freeze response than the situation deserves. For example, being afraid of the random lion you just encountered on your lawn - a very reasonable fear. Being afraid that a lion will escape from a local zoo and come to your house - that's probably less reasonable.

One of the first steps in moving past the hold fear or worry may have on us is to name the things which make us afraid or anxious.

1. Write everything you're afraid of or worried about on a piece of paper. You could write these in order of what makes you least to most afraid or just as they come to you.
2. Read each fear/worry aloud. Say one of your fears/worries and follow it by speaking this passage: "God is my refuge and strength; a very present help in times of trouble." (Psalm 46:1)
3. Repeat this practice as you read over each fear and worry you've named.
4. Consider sharing this list with a trusted friend or family member. Just as God is with us in times of trouble, God also can work in and through other people to help us find a healthy balance with our fears and worries.



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