



Groups

Thanks for checking out our sermon-based Study Guides! If you've never used our Study Guides before, you'll find some basic instructions beginning at the bottom of page 2.

SERMON-BASED STUDY GUIDE
for the Sermon given on January 2, 2022,
"I Am Not Afraid" — Matthew 2:1-18



Happy New Year. May the Lord be with us all in 2022. Chances are, your holiday plans were interrupted by the Omicron variant. In fact, if you are having this first meeting of the year, you deserve a big congratulations! Well done in finding a way to meet in a time of cancellation and interruption. So as we move into our study, let us remember that we use this time in order that we might learn more how to practice the way of Jesus. Our hope is that we grow in love for the Lord and draw closer to one another in study, discussion, worship, and practice.

But before we dive into last week's sermon, let us take a few moments and get a pulse on how we are feeling as 2021 ended and how we are feeling as we headed into 2022. What do you find yourself reflecting on, processing, and hoping for this week?
(Leader, be sure to pause, acknowledge what has been said, and open your time in prayer.)

Group Discussion Questions

Q – Pat opened her message with a question aimed at exercising our creativity. To paraphrase, she asked along the lines of "If you had some crayons in front of you, what would you draw on an index card that represented a fear you had? Maybe a dollar sign. You fear not having enough money for college or retirement or to pay the rent..." and listed other examples from corona virus affecting a high-risk loved one or a broken heart among other pains and fears

- Think for a moment if you were given an index card and some crayons today - What would you draw on yours? What fear do you have that you want to ask God to walk alongside you today?

Q – If we do careful read of the story of Jesus’ birth, we can see there are potential fears all throughout the account. Let’s read Matthew 2:1-18 and see how many we can identify in this passage and feel free to include others beyond these sets of verses that seem relevant. *(The most obvious answer in this text is escaping Herod’s edit of murdering all boys under two years old. But there is also fear in traveling to Egypt as the ancient world was very dangerous. There would be concern of what they would find in Egypt as they wouldn’t have any/much family of support there).*

Q - A key point in Pat’s message was that God provides for us in the midst of fear. One example she used was when the Magi gave their gifts, this provided the Holy Family with means to support themselves as they fled to Egypt. This was among the provisions that God gave in the midst of fear.

- What other ways do you see God providing for the Holy Family?
- Similarly, what ways has God provided for you and your loved ones?

Q – As we near the end of our time today, let us be ever-mindful of the beginning of this new year in the challenges and hopes it brings in our lives and in the lives of others?

- As we enter a new year, what are your hopes in the midst of your fears, anxieties, and concerns?
- Lastly, as we enter this new year, how can we come alongside others and be used by God in Kingdom-redemptive ways a Pat said, showing that God is closer than you might think?

How to Use These Study Guides:

- Consider sending out the Scripture passage to your group members ahead of time.
- Begin each meeting with a short time of checking in with one another.
- You may want to begin the discussion by reading the Scripture passage together out loud, or by summarizing the passage if everyone has read it ahead of time.
- Don’t feel like you need to discuss every question included in the Study Guide. Pick one or two to start with, and see how the conversation flows.
- If your group meets over Zoom:
 - You may need to do more overt facilitating over Zoom than you would in person. Feel free to call on people to invite them to share.
 - Try to be sensitive to attention spans over Zoom—keep the meetings shorter than they would be in person.
- Be sure to set aside time for sharing prayer requests and praying together.

Group Leader Support: Please reach out to your Campus Pastor or your Coach if you have any questions about leading your group or concerns about your group dynamic. If you have questions about or feedback on the Study Guides, please reach out to Pastor Tim or Pastor Rachel from the Group Life team.