

*FearLess Faith*

# RADICAL TRUST

STUDY GUIDE

WHEN I AM AFRAID  
I PUT MY TRUST IN YOU

*PSALM 56:3*





***FearLess Faith***

**RADICAL TRUST**

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## ***FearLess Faith* RADICAL TRUST**

Small Group Study Guide

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154 S Shaffer St, Orange, CA 92866

714-288-4400

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## *Question Answers*


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
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
## *Small Group Essentials*


### THE FOUR KEYS

**Four** key ingredients should be a part of every small group:

 **The Word of God:** Whether we study straight from the Bible or study the Bible through devotional books/guides, we are committed to GROWING from the Word of God in Christ.

 **Growth:** We are here because we want to GROW and see our lives transformed to be more like Christ. As part of this GROWTH we commit to pray for each other. We seek to encourage each other and hold each other accountable in the steps of our discipleship process: CONNECT-GROW-SHARE.

 **Acceptance:** As members of this Life Group we seek to accept each other unconditionally as Christ does each of us, seeking to build strong friendships rooted in Christ.

 **Confidentiality:** Everything shared in this group stays with this group. Gossip and slander are unacceptable. Like Christ, we seek the best for each other.

## *How to Use this Book*

Each session in this booklet corresponds to the video teaching you will be watching with your Life Group. This format is set up for groups that meet for approximately 1 ½ hours. You can make adjustments based on the time limits for your group. Each week the format will be as follows:

**Welcome, Introduction, Ice Breakers and Opening Prayer, Reading the Four Keys (10-15 Min.)**

We encourage you to spend a few minutes getting to know each other and reviewing the Essentials of Life Groups.

**Watch the Video and Respond (20 Min.)**

Watch video, and then discuss what insights were gained, or what caught the attention of the members in the group.

**Discussion Questions (45 Min.)**

Answering all the study questions is not expected or required. Your group may have robust discussion on just a few, or they may move quickly through many. If possible, answer at least one question from each section: Getting Started, Digging In and Application.

**Challenge for the Week (1 Min.)**

Take a few minutes to read through the challenge(s). Consider committing as a group to complete the challenge. As a suggestion, consider holding each other accountable during the week by way of reminders through e-mails, text messages, phone calls, etc.

**Prayer Requests and Closing Prayer (10 Min.)**

Please take time to note any praise reports and prayer requests. Please keep these in prayer during the week.





## BEFORE YOU START



Before diving into the study, we encourage you to watch the video entitled "Before you Begin".



Welcome, Introduction, Ice Breakers and Opening Prayer



Read 'Small Group Essentials - The Four Keys' on PAGE 2



**Watch the Video and Respond**

As we think about the video lesson we just watched, what insights did you gain or what caught your attention or spoke to you?



**Discussion Questions:**

## GETTING STARTED

1. How important is another person's approval to you? Why is it tough to live before an audience of one? How many audiences do you have? Is there a reality to following Jesus for a long time that leads you to live before an audience of one? Why?

2. What do you think it was like to be Sarah? Do you see the value of husband and wife living together in fearless faith and radical trust? Why or why not?

## DIGGING IN

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1. Follow through the story of Abraham from Hebrews 11:1, 8-18. What do you observe were the most difficult times of Abraham's life and why do you feel that way?

2. How are you tested in your life? In what ways was Abraham's faith and trust tested over and over by God? How does the Lord test your faith and trust in Him? Or does He?

## APPLICATION

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1. Abraham had a very strong sense of calling in his life. It's so clear in his behavior and actions. Os Guinness says there are two calls in our life. The first and primary call is the call "to God, by God and for God." The second call is "everything we have, everything we are to live the first calling out." How does that look in 21st Century America? What does that look like in your own life? Discuss.

## CHALLENGE FOR THE WEEK

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1. Take a moment and go around your small group. Give each person an opportunity to speak as to what they are taking home this week. This may include a specific thought, feeling or behavioral application. It may also include a prayer request or specific sharing need. Reminder: Small groups are safe places to share with others, as we share in a confidential context.

## Prayer Requests and Closing Prayer

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 **Welcome, Introduction, Ice Breakers and Opening Prayer**

 **Read 'Small Group Essentials - The Four Keys' on PAGE 2**

 **Watch the Video and Respond**

As we think about the video lesson we just watched, what insights did you gain or what caught your attention or spoke to you?

 **Discussion Questions:**

## GETTING STARTED

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1. Can you think of a time that you faced a frightening or challenging circumstance? How did you manage your fear? Looking back, would you change anything?

2. Do you remember learning about Moses and Miriam as a child, or is the story new to you? What part of the story had the greatest personal impact on you?

## DIGGING IN

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1. Read Exodus 3:1-2 and 2 Samuel 7:8-9. What similarities do you see between Moses and David in these passages? How does this direct us to Jesus?
2. Read Exodus 3:10-4:17. In this passage, God directs Moses to go to Pharaoh and rescue the Israelites. Moses resists God five times. What are the excuses that Moses makes to God? How does God respond?
3. Read Exodus 15, “The Song of Moses and Miriam.” What is the focus of this hymn? What do we learn about Miriam from this passage?
4. Read Exodus 3:14-15 and John 8:58. What does God mean when He says, “I AM who I AM?” What does this tell us about Jesus’s relationship to God?

## APPLICATION

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1. Have you ever made excuses to God or asked, “why me?” in the face of challenges? Review the responses that God made to Moses’s excuses. How does God prove to you that He is with you? What support and help does God give you in times of trial?

2. Read Romans 8:28. How is God working for good in your life? Do you see any ways that you can use challenging experiences to serve God and be a blessing to others? How can you use your experiences to point people to Jesus?

## CHALLENGE FOR THE WEEK

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1. Explore the story of Moses on your own this week by reading selections from Exodus. As you read, look for ways that God kept his promise to be with Moses. How did God's presence in Moses's life help Moses to trust God and fear less?

## Prayer Requests and Closing Prayer

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 **Welcome, Introduction, Ice Breakers and Opening Prayer**

 **Read 'Small Group Essentials - The Four Keys' on PAGE 2**

 **Watch the Video and Respond**

As we think about the video lesson we just watched, what insights did you gain or what caught your attention or spoke to you?

 **Discussion Questions:**

## GETTING STARTED

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1. Can you think of a time when you felt all alone? When you knew the right thing and yet the people in your life were telling you to do something else—maybe the wrong thing? How did it turn out? Which path did you choose?

2. Can you think of a time when leadership or good guidance came from an unlikely source? Was it challenging for you to listen?

## DIGGING IN

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1. Read Judges 4:1-3. What was the consequence that Israel experienced because they started to worship false gods? What happens when people don't experience the consequences of their actions? Do you think God sometimes gives us exactly what we ask for through our sin and foolishness?

2. Read Judges 4:1-10, 16-23, Judges 5:1 and Hebrews 11:13-16, 29-34. We know that Deborah was a faithful example, doing whatever God told her to do even at risk of her life. Was Barak a faithful example? Or was the honor of killing Sisera given to a woman as judgement for his lack of faith? Why or why not?

3. Read Mark 6:1-12. Do we sometimes believe too little about God & His Word? Why might that be?

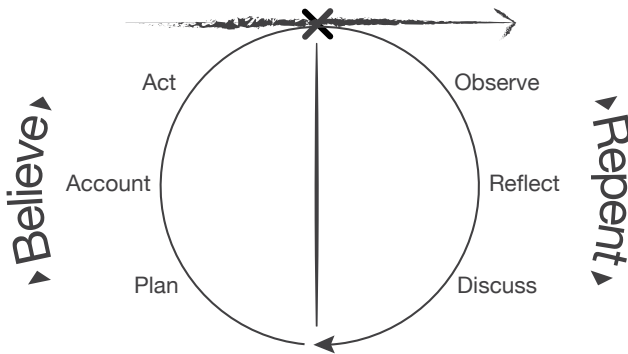
## APPLICATION

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1. What happens if we only have a Judges 4 perspective? What difference would it make if you always maintained both a Judges 4 and Judges 5 perspective?

2. Why do you think the Israelites waited so long (20 Years) to call out to God? Do we ever wait to call out to God? Why do you think that is?

3. Deborah heard the word of God, applied it to her life and taught others to do the same. Do we sometimes struggle to do that? Some people use the learning circle to talk about how to apply the word of God to their lives. Where do you struggle to apply God's word to your life?



**The Learning Circle Summary:** In our lives we encounter learning opportunities that can bring about spiritual growth. A mature Christian seeks to make their way around the learning circle as they respond and act upon what God is showing them in their life. **Observe:** Notice a challenge that presents a growth opportunity. **Reflect:** Take an account of how this challenge is effecting yourself and others, and what God might be trying to show you through it. **Discuss:** Process the situation in discussion with someone you trust. **Plan:** Decide how you are going to respond to this situation in a Godly way. **Account:** Establish an accountability partner. **Act:** Follow through with your plan.

## CHALLENGE FOR THE WEEK

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1. Explore the story of Deborah and Barak by reading Judges 4 & 5. See if your answer about Barak's faithfulness changes. As you read, think about how God is active behind the scene accomplishing His purpose and will. Think about whether this knowledge will help you have radical trust in God.

## Prayer Requests and Closing Prayer

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## Session Four

# RUTH



 Welcome, Introduction, Ice Breakers and Opening Prayer

 Read 'Small Group Essentials - The Four Keys' on PAGE 2

 **Watch the Video and Respond**

As we think about the video lesson we just watched, what insights did you gain or what caught your attention or spoke to you?

 **Discussion Questions:**

## GETTING STARTED

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1. Have you ever read the book of Ruth? Did you learn her story as a child? What about her story was new to you?

2. If comfortable, share a time you've had to leave something or someone behind and step into an unknown future. How did you deal with the anxieties of that transition?

## DIGGING IN

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1. Read Ruth 1:6-22. Who do you relate to most in your life right now: Ruth, Orpah or Naomi? Why?
2. Ruth goes out to find food after she and Naomi return to Bethlehem. She ends up in Boaz's field and he generously provides for her. Read Ruth 2:10b-13 to see her response to his generosity. What good rumors about Ruth were spreading (see also 3:11 and 4:14-15)? Can you share a time when people have really noticed someone else's sacrificial love? How do actions like that bless more than just the direct recipient?
3. While Ruth's sacrificial love foreshadows Jesus' love, so too does Boaz's. Read 3:9 and 4:9-12. How do Boaz's actions as a guardian-redeemer foreshadow Jesus?
4. Read Ruth 4:13-22. At the beginning of Ruth, Naomi's life is bitter and empty. By the end it is filled and hopeful! How did this come about?

## APPLICATION

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1. What or who is God calling you to? A new opportunity, a new place, a new way of thinking? To return home? To go to a new land? To act righteously? To selflessly love another human being? Is there a new area of ministry, of life, of purpose, or a relationship that God is calling you to? What might you have to leave behind to get there?

2. In the culture's eyes Ruth was a nobody, a foreigner and a woman. Yet God used her to bring life to Naomi and in doing so she was included in the lineage of Jesus the Messiah (see Matthew 1:1-6, 17). Are there any people that you view as nobodies or that you look down upon? How can Ruth's story help you value all peoples and cultures?

## CHALLENGE FOR THE WEEK

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1. If you didn't have a chance to already, read the book of Ruth this week. It's only 4 chapters and takes about 10 minutes. Spend some time praying about new areas, situations, or people that God might be calling you too. What will it take for you to take the first step of trust in that direction?

## Prayer Requests and Closing Prayer

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 **Welcome, Introduction, Ice Breakers and Opening Prayer**

 **Read 'Small Group Essentials - The Four Keys' on PAGE 2**

 **Watch the Video and Respond**

As we think about the video lesson we just watched, what insights did you gain or what caught your attention or spoke to you?

 **Discussion Questions:**

## GETTING STARTED

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1. When has God's Word convicted you of sin? Read 1 John 2:8-9.

## DIGGING IN

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1. How did the subsequent guilt make you feel? Read Psalm 51:3-5.
2. Did it affect your relationships with others? Read Genesis 3:1-13.

## APPLICATION

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1. When has God's Word comforted you with forgiveness?  
Read John 8:1-11.

2. How did that make you feel? Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-21.

3. If comfortable, give personal examples of fearless faith and radical trust when the burden of guilt has been overcome.

## CHALLENGE FOR THE WEEK

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1. Read and meditate on Philippians 4:4-7 and Galatians 5:22-23 during the week.

 Prayer Requests and Closing Prayer

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 **Welcome, Introduction, Ice Breakers and Opening Prayer**

 **Read 'Small Group Essentials - The Four Keys' on PAGE 2**

 **Watch the Video and Respond**

As we think about the video lesson we just watched, what insights did you gain or what caught your attention or spoke to you?

 **Discussion Questions:**

## GETTING STARTED

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1. It's always said that hard times prepare you for what's ahead or that the difficulties don't compare to the outcome. Scripture speaks to this in Romans 8:18, have you seen this in your life?

## DIGGING IN

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1. In Esther Chapter 3 Mordecai's actions lead Haman to want to destroy the entire Jewish race. What do you think was at the root of Haman's decision?

2. Look now at Esther 5:9, even during a great celebration, honor and favor, the sight of Mordecai enraged Haman. Why do you think certain people have such power over us to be able to instantly change our mood?

3. In Esther Chapter 2, Esther heeds Mordecai's advice and keeps her nationality a secret. Why is it so difficult to stay silent and show restraint in different or difficult circumstances?

4. Esther displayed a continual teaching spirit, regardless of what she had received and where she was living. What is a lesson you learned from someone else?

## APPLICATION

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1. Have you ever felt that God put you in a specific place for a specific reason? Please share.

## CHALLENGE FOR THE WEEK

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1. If you have not already, read the book of Esther. You can do this on your own during the week, or with your group. Pay close attention to God's presence in the book, while he is not mentioned once. Meditate on all the ways God worked in Esther's life and then in your life. Think of all the times you did not see/hear Him, but as seen is Esther, He was working all along.

## Prayer Requests and Closing Prayer

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# Question Answers

## *Session 1: Abraham*

### GETTING STARTED

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1. Personal responses will vary.
2. Personal responses will vary.

### DIGGING IN

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1. Uncertainty in a new land, new community, facing loneliness, waiting on God to have children, giving up his only son when God asked, trusting God even though he did not see the fulfilment of God's promises.
2. Personal responses will vary.

### APPLICATION

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1. Personal responses will vary.

## *Session 2: Moses*

### GETTING STARTED

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1. Personal responses will vary.
2. Personal responses will vary.

### DIGGING IN

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1. Both Moses and David were working as shepherds when God called them to lead his people. God was with Moses and David. Jesus is our Good Shepherd.

2. Moses resists by arguing that he is not important enough for the job, questioning who God is, expressing concern that the people will not believe him/listen to him, expressing concern that he (Moses) is a poor communicator, and finally asks God to send someone else. Each time God assured Moses that he would be present with him and gave him signs and support to do the work.
3. The Song of Moses and Miriam is a hymn celebrating God's victory over Pharaoh and his armies. The Israelites sang this song after God gave them safe passage across the Red Sea on dry ground. They are entirely focused on the strength of God and his power to deliver them from their enemies. We learn that Miriam was a prophetess and leader.
4. When God says, "I AM who I AM" he means that he is dependable, faithful, trustworthy, and enduring from generation to generation. When Jesus used the name for himself, he claimed to be God. We know that Jesus is true God.

## APPLICATION

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1. God communicates to us through His Word in the Bible. We can come to him in prayer for all of our needs. He surrounds us with Christian people to love, care, encourage, and support us (small groups!).
2. Answers will vary, but participants may share that God has helped them to grow spiritually during trials or to be an example to others who face similar circumstances.

## *Session 3: Deborah*

### GETTING STARTED

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1. Personal responses will vary.
2. Personal responses will vary.

### DIGGING IN

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1. Israel began worshiping the false gods of the people of Canaan. Part of the worship of the false gods was engaging in sexual activity, and their culture enslaved women for the performance of these acts. Consequently, part of their horrible oppression was that this was done

on a large scale to the people of Israel. If people don't experience the consequences of their actions, people will continue to do the wrong thing and inflict increasing amounts of pain on themselves and the people in their lives.

2. Answers will vary based on perspective. Yes, he was being judged - Barak was being judged because he didn't trust Deborah and God and was afraid to go to war without her.

No, he was not being judged - Deborah's statement about who would receive the honor was a mere statement of fact. God wanted to bring Sisera down with two women because of his mistreatment of them. Barak wanted to invite Deborah to battle out of respect and recognition for her as a prophet of God.

3. Yes. Sometimes familiarity breeds contempt. And we are overly familiar and not able to recognize what God is doing because it is too close. We can also forget to have a spiritual and theological perspective of life. It is easy to drift in this world and become distracted and not pay attention to God and His Word like we should.

## APPLICATION

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1. We can easily forget that God is active in our lives and our world. We can become prideful in success despairing in struggle. Maintaining a Judges 4 & 5 perspective will lead us to lives of praise and thanksgiving in success and radical trust in times of trouble.

2. Along with the idol worship came a time of social decay and the fabric of the community came apart and God's people forgot about God and needed to be reminded by Deborah who they were, who their God was and what He had done for them. We may sometimes wait to call out to God because 1) We feel that we are getting what we deserve. 2) We aren't living in community with good and godly people that encourage us to do so. 3) We don't know how. 4) We think we can fix it on our own. 5) We don't want to admit that we are weak and that we need help.

3. Personal responses will vary.



## *Session 4: Ruth*

### GETTING STARTED

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1. Personal responses will vary.
2. Personal responses will vary.

### DIGGING IN

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1. Orpah stays where it is safe and doesn't risk the unknown. Ruth leaves a lot behind to selflessly love Naomi. Notice how this foreshadows Jesus' sacrificial love on the cross. Naomi is filled with grief and feeling very empty about life and her relationship with God. At times it can be helpful to find real people in the Bible to identify with and be honest about how we are thinking and feeling. Use this as an opportunity to explore the state of your walk with God.
2. This section of Scripture and these questions help us think about the good consequences of loving others. Not only does the direct recipient receive life and love but others are encouraged by observing it. They (like Boaz) may reward it and emulate it for others. People notice sacrificial love and it makes a difference, it's like a ripple effect.
3. Boaz paid the price to redeem the family line and name. In so doing he gives life back to Naomi and the lineage of Elimelek, Naomi's husband. Jesus paid a far greater price, with his life, to redeem our names and live and reinstate us as God's dearly loved children.
4. Naomi's life moves from bitter and empty to hopeful and full because of the selfless acts of Ruth and Boaz. Too often we think of following God's will for our own gain. But God often desires our motives to be of serving and helping others. In the end our lives usually are richer and fuller, but this is never the end goal. The end goal is to live a life of selfless love for those he has called us to. This emulates the way and life of Jesus.

## APPLICATION

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1. Answers will vary. Sometimes it's a renewed mind-set toward the people he has already called you to. Your family, your neighbors, your coworkers, etc....
2. Answers will vary. But this is an opportunity to see how God lifted up the faith of a woman in an otherwise patriarchal society. We also have the opportunity to think about how we view other cultures, races, and those who are different from us (disabilities, mental illness, sexual identity). God includes all people in his kingdom and mission. How willing are we to embrace that reality?

### *Session 5: David*

## GETTING STARTED

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1. Whenever confronted with God's Law we are reminded of our failure to keep it. Any Biblical passages which focus on God's commands and our 'doing' something are usually Law passages and show us our sin. Read Leviticus 19:2.

## DIGGING IN

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1. Personal responses will vary.
2. Sin produces guilt – always the sentence of guilt and often the feeling of guilt. Such a feeling can create fear and distrust in relationships. We often feel out of sorts and broken. Isaiah 42 describes those feelings. But, notice how God does not break our bruised condition nor snuff out the smoldering condition, but rather He remains faithful in mercy.

## APPLICATION

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1. God's faithfulness translates into forgiveness (statement of innocence)

and cleansing (transformation). God's forgiveness makes us a new (brand spanking new!) creation. God doesn't look at our old self. Nor should we. Rather, boldly and gratefully move forward in life resting in the grace of Jesus.

2. Personal responses will vary.

3. Fearless faith and radical trust are often accompanied by prayer and a reliance upon God's provision. Such prayer and reliance often result in the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23.

## *Session 6: Esther*

### GETTING STARTED

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1. Personal responses will vary.

### DIGGING IN

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1. Perhaps pride, jealousy... maybe it was that the others were beginning to take notice and thought they didn't have to honor him either.

2. Answers vary.

3. Answers vary.

4. Answers vary.

### APPLICATION

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1. Answers vary.

## ***Ice Breakers*** To do with your group if time allows

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Take something from your wallet/purse and tell how it relates to you.

Tell about the most positive conversation that you had today.

Tell about the most interesting thing that happened to you today.

Tell about the most humorous incident that you experienced in the last year.

My favorite fun activity when I was a child was...

The thing that drives me crazy is...

We celebrated Easter when I was a child by...

My favorite movie of all times is...

My idea of a great vacation is...

My favorite food is...

If I could visit any era of history, I would visit...

My favorite childhood memory is...

My favorite leisure activity is...

Tell about the best birthday present you ever received.

Share one of the happiest days of your life.

Describe what your day was like today.

If you had to move and could only take three things with you, what would you take?

While growing up I saw God as...

What would you do if someone willed you a million dollars?

If you could do anything you want this time next year, what would it be?

# ***Thank You***

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# FearLess Faith → RADICAL TRUST

Enduring today's media-driven, steady diet of disquieting negativity can drag us down, leaving many of us longing for help and direction. We want to be thriving rather than simply surviving. We can find the power to overcome this anxious, fear-filled world. In this study we find inspiration from Biblical figures who navigate their fears and live lives of triumph through faith and a radical trust in God and His promises.



Psalms 56:3-4  
THE MESSAGE

*When I get really afraid  
I come to you in trust.  
I'm proud to praise God;  
fearless now, I trust in God.  
What can mere mortals do?*

↑ This Book Belongs To ↑

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[www.stjohnsorange.org](http://www.stjohnsorange.org)  
Orange, CA | 714-288-4400