

## OVERVIEW OF FORMAT

• SCRIPTURE

Daily Bible readings will come from the NIV translation. Each will be shortened to 1 to 4 Bible verses in order to help you get through your readings.

• SAY WHAT?

Translations of the scripture into simple sentences to help you focus on the key point(s).

• BREAKDOWN The devotion for the day that relates the scripture to everyday life to foster growth for you as a student.

• LIVE IT OUT

Practical instruction of what you can do today to fulfill the scripture and purpose covered in each individual devotional.

• PRAYER

Short prayer for you to ask for God's help with the instruction of the day.

REFLECTION

Journaling space to write down what the day's passage means to you, and/or how it has impacted you.

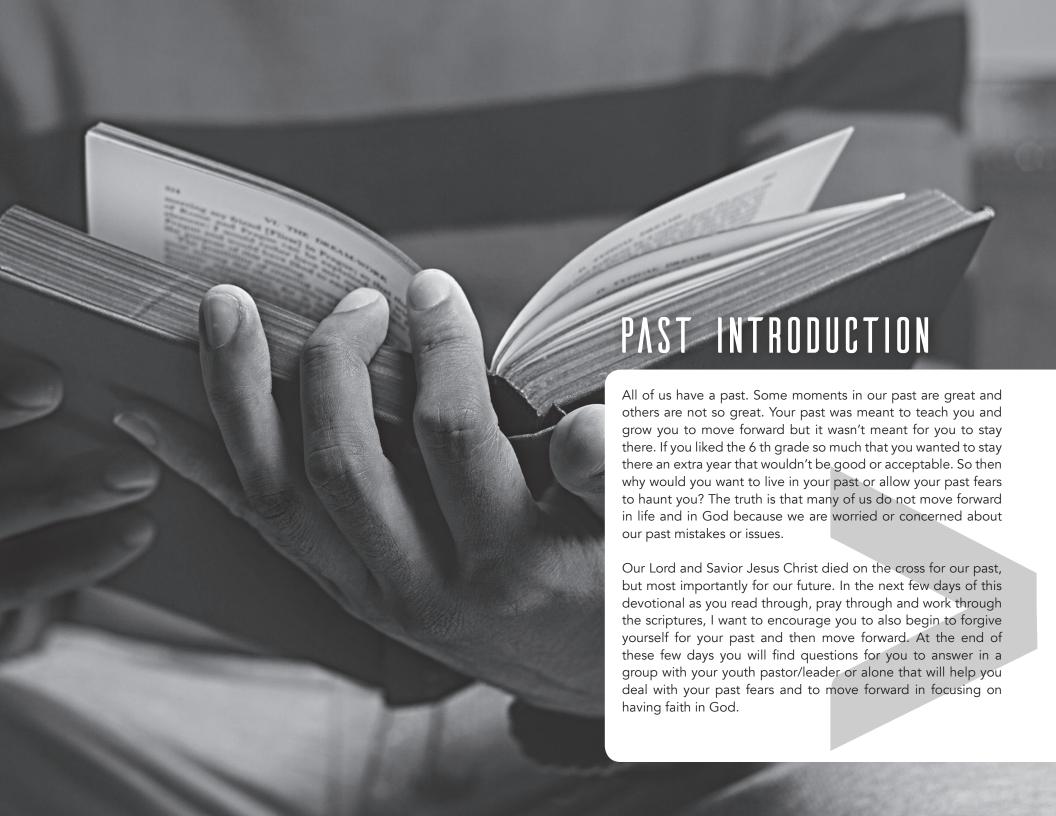
### WHY FAITH GREATER THAN FEAR?

Fear is something that everyone deals with in life. Whether you are young or old, single or married, live at home with your parents or just moved out, there are bound to be some moments of fear. Having moments of fear isn't the problem; however, the problem comes in when you allow those moments of fear to control your life and then you have a "spirit" of fear. The Bible says in 2 Timothy 1:7, "For God has not given us the spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline." The word "timidity" here is the Greek word δειλία "deilia" which is translated as fearfulness or cowardice. This means that while we might face moments of fear throughout our lives, we can't allow this to make us cowards. We have to trust God and have more faith in God than we have fear in the world.

It is like the equation we learned in school using the greater than ">" sign. Whatever is on the open side of the greater than sign is larger than anything else. This is God's equation. I believe God wants us to make sure that our faith is always on the open side.

When our faith is larger, or greater, it keeps us anchored and steady, even during rough and difficult times. It is my prayer that as you read and work through this devotional that you will be encouraged in your faith to overcome ALL of your fears. This devotional is written like our other ones. Each day you will have the "Scripture," which is simply the scripture for the day. The "Say What?" is the scripture explained in a few lines, and the "Breakdown" is the actual devotion for the day. Then we have the "Live it out" which will be a few lines to help you act on this scripture today. The "Prayer" is next and is simply the daily prayer, followed by the "Reflection." This is the section in each day for you to write your notes and thoughts for the day. The reflection is key for you to treat this devotional like a journal to track your thoughts and come back to it later. Ok let's get started with day 1 and section 1 (Past) on this journey that we will take together on the road to Faith Greater Than Fear: 31 Day of Faith Using God's Equation.

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**SCRIPTURE:** 

"SO DO NOT FEAR, FOR I AM WITH YOU; DO NOT BE DISMAYED, FOR I AM YOUR GOD. I WILL STRENGTHEN YOU AND HELP YOU; I WILL UPHOLD YOU WITH MY RIGHTEOUS RIGHT HAND."

ISAIAH 41:10

WHAT? Don't fear anything because I am your God and I am with you no matter what. My strength will help you in all situations.

BREAKDOWN: Have you ever seen someone working out on the beach? I mean really working out on the beach? Not just running and doing pushups but someone who is doing a whole workout routine on the beach? They are doing chin-ups on the bars, dips on the chairs and yes pull-ups on whatever they can get their hands on. When I used to live in Florida, I saw these people all the time and thought to myself "wow they are strong, if I had them in a fight I would win!" I thought this because of how strong they looked to me and knowing that if ever I was in a fight they would be able or should be able to use this strength in my defense. However, the truth is that if I didn't have a real relationship with these people before the fight it would be unlikely that they would step up for me during a fight.

Even though they have the strength to help me, the lack of a real relationship with them would stop the help before it even began. As a young Christian it is important to know that God has more strength than every strong person you see on the beach doing those crazy workouts. However, God's strength is reserved for those who have a relationship with Him. This scripture speaks to the fact that we should not be afraid of anything that comes our way. The Bible says, "do not be dismayed," but instead have faith in God's strength. Isaiah goes on to say that we should not fear because the strength

of God will uphold us with God's right hand. The right hand in the Bible often times shows the importance of the person being held to the person being touched. So saying that God will uphold us with God's right hand gives the understanding of true and full protection no matter what the situation. If we focus on our faith and not our fear, God's hand will cover and protect us.

LIVE IT OUT: Today think about the areas of God's strength in your life and how God is bigger plus stronger than any enemy you can face. Today don't just think about it, ACT like it. Today walk, talk, and live as if God has you in God's right hand through every situation. Don't allow fear to hold you back from trusting in God today.

**PRAYER:** Lord today help me to walk in the security and safety of knowing that you are protecting me. God allow me not to focus on the enemy and his strength but instead allow me to feel Your protection over me through Your right hand. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

REFLECTION:	

**SCRIPTURE:** 

"WHEN I AM AFRAID, I PUT MY TRUST IN YOU."

**PSALM 56:3** 

**SAY WHAT?** The moment fear comes I will turn to you and trust in You, God.

BREAKDOWN: Have you ever had to do the trust test in school? You know the one where you are told to close your eyes and turn your back to the friend and allow yourself to fall back trusting that they will catch you? I had to take this test many different times throughout my school career. If you haven't taken it yet don't worry; your time is coming. As time has gone on and I have done this test over and over, I realized that the test is easiest when the person you have to trust is one that you really do trust. I have taken this test with complete strangers on the first day of class or the first day of training and those times are the hardest. However, I have also taken this test with friends and even family members whom I trust. These are the easiest. They are easier because I already have a relationship with that person, and I know that they have my back for real based on past experience. God is making the same point here through this psalm. We do not need to have fear. Instead, we should be able to move that fear into trust because of our relationship with God in the past.

What do I mean? Good question. This means that if we have a strong relationship with God then we know that God has the "full" ability to catch us when we fall. And the type of fall doesn't matter. Whether it's a big fall or a small fall, God can still catch us because God has done it before. Can you think back in your life, no matter your age, about a time when God caught you when you thought no one else would? Maybe it was a time you didn't study as hard as you should have for a test and your teacher decided to give the whole class one more day. Or maybe it was a more serious situation where you would have been with a certain group of people who

ended up getting in trouble that night but instead God made your parents or someone else take your attention that night? This is what the scripture is describing - our ability to trust in God over our fears based simply on God's past performance. God is the only one who will always catch us and therefore the only one who will always deserve our trust.

LIVE IT OUT: Today think about the areas and times in your life that God has caught you when you were falling. After you remember these times, put NEW trust in God to be with you and catch you in this next season of your life. Today reach out and try something new, in God, knowing that your trust will only be in Him.

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, today help me to trust in you beyond where I am and beyond what is comfortable to me. God, push me to have the kind of faith in You that will allow me to fall back freely knowing that You have me and that You will not allow any harm to defeat me. It's in the name of Jesus Christ that I pray. Amen.

DEFLECTION

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**SCRIPTURE:** 

"PEACE IS WHAT I LEAVE WITH YOU; IT IS MY OWN PEACE THAT I GIVE YOU. I DO NOT GIVE IT AS THE WORLD DOES. DO NOT BE WORRIED AND UPSET; DO NOT BE AFRAID."

JOHN 14:27

**SAY WHAT?** God's Peace is what you will always have with you because God doesn't take it away like the world does. What God gives stays.

BREAKDOWN: When is the last time you would say you have experienced real peace? Go ahead and think about it or write it down. I will wait ©. I remember my last moment of real peace came the other week when my daughter Karis, my wife and I were all in the house on the couch playing "the tickle fest." This is a game my wife and I play with my daughter where we tickle her until she can't take it any more and in turn she, our 2-year-old, tries to tickle us back. It was in this moment that I felt God's peace and honestly God's joy in my life as well. For me this was a moment where nothing else mattered outside of the love and joy of the two people that God has given to me as family. No bills, no work deadlines, no sermon, no books to write. Just us and a bunch of laughing out loud. This moment for me relates to the scripture although it isn't like in this moment I didn't have bills that were due or I didn't have a project I needed to work on. Instead my focus was on enjoying the moment in peace with my family. Even as a student, you have moments of peace that God has given to you. Your job is to make sure that you live in those moments and that you don't allow the enemy to come in with worry and fear.

The enemy wants to rob you of your moments of peace in order to keep you as far away from God and God's peace as possible, but you can't allow this to happen. Our scripture for today says that God gives us this peace, which belongs to God. God has the ownership of it, and God is not like the world that gives and takes away. If God gives it to us it is ours to keep. The scripture goes on to say that because of God's peace that was given to us, we don't need to worry, be upset or be afraid. We can't worry because God has our past and our future. We can't be upset because whatever the world takes away God can give back in triples. Just ask Job. Lastly, we can't be afraid because with God there is truthfully nothing to fear.

LIVE IT OUT: Today do something that gives you God's peace. Maybe it's reading a book or going outside and looking at nature. Maybe it's playing a sport or watching your favorite movie. Do something where you are allowed to block out all of the other issues of life and focus on the peace that only comes from God.

PRAYER: Lord, today help me to find my peaceful place. God, allow me to not only find it but to stay in it for a good amount of time. Jesus, don't allow the enemy to come into my peaceful moment and try to take anything; instead Lord, help me to remove all worry, feels of being upset and all fear so that I can embrace Your peace. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

REFLECTION:	

**SCRIPTURE:** 

"FOR GOD HAS NOT GIVEN US A SPIRIT OF FEAR, BUT OF POWER AND OF LOVE AND OF A SOUND MIND."

2 TIMOTHY 1:7

**SAY WHAT?** God has not made us punks but instead God has given us power, love and self-control.

BREAKDOWN: The term "spirit of fear" here can really be translated as fearful or cowardice. The thought for the term here is someone who is so afraid that they avoid the trouble to the issue. To make it simple: they are punks who run away instead of stand and fight. God hasn't raised us to be "punk" Christians; instead, God has given us the spirit of power, love and self-control. The Greek word for power here (New Testament is mostly written in Greek and Old Testament is written in Hebrew), is the same word that our English word for dynamite comes from. That means that this power God has given us is explosive in nature and whatever it touches can be overcome if ignited. God has given us this kind of love over the world's fear; the scripture also says that we have God's love. This love is the Greek word "agape" meaning full or true love. It is a love that is willing to sacrifice for its' object. This is the kind of love that God wants us to have over fear in every situation we are faced with in life. When we operate in this kind of love nothing can defeat us or stand in our way, because this love trumps it all.

Then God says we also have the spirit of a sound mind or self-control. Having a sound mind in moments of fear is important because that sound mind or self-control is what will allow us to make the correct decision. One of the ways that the fear tries to paralyze us is by making us think that in moments of fear we have no control. God is clear in this scripture that we haven't been given the spirit of fear but instead these three attributes, that when combined, help us to overcome fear and live by the faith that God has given us.

LIVE IT OUT: Today, think about the power, the love, and the self-control that God has given you. Allow these three attributes of our faith to guide you throughout the day. In what ways can you show the strength of God's power in you and God's love to cover you through self-control?

**PRAYER:** Today, God help me to walk in the power, love and self-control that you have given me. Help me to overcome my fears and not run from the enemy. Instead, help me to move with Holy Ghost boldness in You. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

DECLEPTION

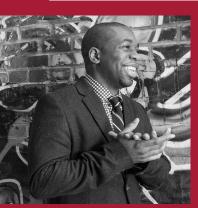
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Fear is something that everyone deals with in life. Whether you are young or old, single or married, live at home with your parents or just moved out, there are bound to be moments of fear. Having moments of fear isn't the problem. The problem comes when you allow those moments of fear to control your life, causing you to have a "spirit" of fear. The Bible says in 2 Timothy 1:7 "For God has not given us the spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline." The word "timidity" here is the Greek word "deilia" which is translated as fearfulness or cowardice. This means that even when we face moments of fear throughout our lives, we can't allow this to make us cowards. We have to trust God and have greater faith in God than we have of fear in the world.

This 31-day devotional is designed to help you live by God's equation for our life. God has created us to have greater faith in Him than fear in the world.

Each day you will have the "Scripture" for the day, the "Say what" where the scripture is explained in a few lines, and the "Breakdown" which is the actual devotion for the day. Then you have to "Live it out." This is designed to help you act on the scripture today. The "Prayer" is next and it's intended for you to pray daily, followed by the "Reflection." This is the section in each day where you write your notes and thoughts. The Reflection is key for you to treat this devotional like a journal to track your thoughts and come back to it later.

OK. LET'S GET STARTED WITH DAY 1 ON THIS JOURNEY THAT WE WILL TAKE TOGETHER ON THE ROAD TO HAVING MORE FAITH, GREATER FAITH THAN WE HAVE OF FEAR, USING GOD'S EQUATION.



Russell St. Bernard is the founder of After The Music Stops LLC, a full-service youth ministry resource company that creates youth ministry resources and tools to assist leaders and parents as they serve their students. Russell is currently the Director of Ministry Operations and Outreach at Reid Temple AME Church's North Campus in Maryland. He created and leads the Eleven 22 Youth Ministry, where students Learn their faith, Live their faith, and Lead with their Faith.

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