



# IT STARTS WITH ONE

## Stand Alone Message

Tony Ferraro - "Fear"

Small Group Material

July 9th, 2017

Participant Guide

**Bottom Line:** *God's plan for your life is peace, rest, and joy.*

**Study Verses:** *1 John 4:14-18, Isaiah 41:10, Psalm 118:6, Luke 12:4-7, John 14:25-27, Romans 8:14-17*

**Define The Win:** *Participants would confront where fear has taken hold of their heart. They would pinpoint what drives these fears and how these fears are distorting their view of God. Group members would display the courage to let go of their fears and respond to their situation with courage and hope.*

## Key Points

- *We hold on to what we feel is comfortable, not realizing that what we're grasping onto is fear.*
- *Self-examination doesn't stop at the first layer. We must dig deeper to uncover what drives our fear.*
- *Trusting God involves encountering uncomfortable situations.*
- *We struggle with fear because we don't necessarily believe God is God.*
- *Real belief is when our knowledge turns into action.*
- *Fear causes us to isolate, take control, and protect ourselves.*
- *Fear paralyzes us while caution moves us...it just moves with caution.*

- *We get to choose between trusting God with our fears or having our life run by them.*
- *When we choose fear, we make a decision that we are safer relying on our own understanding and abilities than trusting God.*

## **ENCOUNTER**

- **Fear is the belief that God does not exist. Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not? What makes you answer in the way that you do?**
- **What is the difference between fear and caution in terms of movement and taking steps of faith?**
- **What does choosing comfort and convenience have in common with holding on to our fears?**
- **Describe a time where you second guessed what God was doing in your life. What made you doubt His heart and presence?**

## **FORMATION**

- **Read 1 John 4:14-18. What does it mean to “acknowledge God”? How should our acknowledgement lead to reliance on Him? Why can’t fear exist where love is present?**
- **Read Isaiah 41:10 and Psalm 118:6. When we fear, what does that say about our belief in God’s presence and protection? How does God’s presence enable us to face any situation with security, courage, and hope?**
- **Read Luke 12:4-7. How does fear causes us to lose sight of our value in God’s eyes?**
- **Read John 14:25-27 and Romans 8:14-17. What enables us to have peace in this world? What role does the Holy Spirit play in addressing our fears?**

## **EXPRESSION**

- **What are the small fears that keep you from stepping into God’s purpose for your life?**
- **In what situations do you find yourself fighting for control or isolating yourself from God and others? How is fear or anxiety driving this reaction to your circumstances?**
- **God always leads us to places where faith is required. What is your next right step of faith? What is one action you know you need to take but fear is preventing you from doing so?**

**LEADER INSIGHT:** *What do our fears say about our view of God? In the midst of our anxiety or when we are facing uncertainty, this question rarely, if ever, gets answered. We're too busy looking for ways to gain back control, experience sanity or hide our struggles from God and others.*

*Fear can cripple our faith and destroy our connection points toward those around us. We get to choose between trusting God with our fears or having our lives ruined by them. Even though fear is an emotion we experience before something occurs, our anxiety and despair can get its fuel from our past experiences. They create an emotional imprint, that guides our future reactions, when we encounter similar situations.*

*If we paused and took a moment to examine our hearts, we'd come to the realization that living in fear is living as if God doesn't exist. We might know in our mind that God is our protector, but we fail to believe it in our heart. Instead, we fall for the lie from the enemy that God has forsaken us, having left us to figure it out on our own. Or simply, that He doesn't care about us at all. When we choose fear, we make a decision that we are safer, relying on our own understanding and abilities, than trusting God.*

*Yet, the idea that God would abandon us in our greatest time of need is completely contrary to God's heart and nature. Throughout Scripture, we see God tell individuals who are gripped by fear to not be afraid. Why? Because He is with them. Because He loves them. Because He views them as valuable. No matter what we might be facing, we can have complete confidence that the God of the universe is by our side. Overcoming our fears and healing our fear-based wounds require that we honestly interrogate the depths of our faith.*

*God is the conqueror of every fear we have. We must keep this truth in front of us because a life of faith requires us to face uncertainty, troubling situations, and difficulty. After all, without fear, there is no courage and not much faith. The trying times present us with an opportunity to walk in what we believe about God. By displaying courage, we are acknowledging our reliance on Him.*