

FEARLESS

SPEAKER NOTES

5 SESSIONS

SESSION 1 – FEARLESS LIVING

(Open with a worship set, if you have a worship team available.)



VIDEO: *FEARLESS*
(LOCATED IN YOUR VIDEOS FOLDER. RUNTIME: 01:19)

Welcome

Welcome to Fearless. I love the theme of this weekend... Fearless!

Anybody here ever do something fearless before? Any of you ever taken a longboard down a hill that was just a little too steep? Or go rappelling down the side of a mountain? Skydiving? Anyone? (Wait for hands to be raised)

You're crazy!

Well, during this event we are going to do something truly fearless together! We are going to share the good news of Jesus with the people in our community. We are going to be unleashed to engage others with the gospel message. And it's going to take a Holy Spirit inspired fearlessness to do it!

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You see, I'm convinced that evangelism is the ultimate extreme sport for us as believers! Sharing your faith can give you a bigger adrenalin rush than any extreme sport! And that's exactly what we are going to do!

Are you pumped up for that? (Amp up the audience by asking the question again.)

When I think of the word fearless, I think of extreme sports. I think of sharing my faith. But I also think of some crazy, stupid, fearless stuff I have done in my life. And I have done a lot of crazy things! But as dumb as I was, it was usually my friends who were even crazier than me.

How many of you have a fearless friend who is always getting you into trouble? How many of you ARE the fearless friend who is getting everyone else into trouble? Move away from these people!

PERSONAL ILLUSTRATION

OPTION 1:

Use your own personal story about knowing or being a fearless friend who is willing to step up and protect someone weaker. Here is an example from Greg Stier's life: I had a friend like that growing up. This guy's name was Art, and Art was fearless! He was always getting into trouble... always doing crazy stuff... always playing practical jokes... playing basketball... And Art was kind of funky looking. He was a big guy who had a small head and had really white skin. But it was great to have Art around because he wasn't afraid of anything—and he had the muscle to back it up.

When the two of us graduated from high school, I went off to college, while Art joined the Army. He was in the 82nd Airborne and spent years in Special Forces. He spent five years in Iraq. While there, Art was shot at by snipers, had his truck blown up twice by roadside bombs and willingly went back to Afghanistan to work with the Armed Forces over there—Art was fearless!

Whenever Art was around, I was never afraid. Once two construction workers were cussing me out, but I said to them, "Say hello to my friend," and there was Art, and suddenly everything was cool, baby!

OPTION 2:

But on a more serious note, all of us have heard heroic stories of fearless people. Think of the 343 firefighters who sacrificed their lives rushing into the Twin Towers on 9/11, when everyone else was running away. Or maybe you're familiar with the heartrending story of a young Jewish girl named Anne Frank—perhaps you remember her from *The Fault in Our Stars* or from reading her diary. During World War II, a few brave Christians, who were trying to save this Jewish family from being sent to a concentration camp and exterminated, hid Anne's family from the Nazis. Think how fearless those doing the hiding had to be! Think of the risks these Christians took... and some of them paid dearly, because they were eventually found out and imprisoned for their efforts to hide the Jews.

Well, guess what? You have a fearless friend too! Jesus is your fearless friend! This weekend is not about you being the fearless one, but about you knowing the fearless ONE—the One who has all the muscle of the universe at His disposal to back you up—Jesus Christ!

Overview

This weekend we are going to learn how to live a fearless life from the book of Ephesians. This weekend you will learn to:

- **TAKE THE CHALLENGE**
- **FACE THE DANGER, AND**
- **UNLEASH THE POWER.**

But it all starts with taking the challenge. There are two challenges I'm going to give you!

The first is to **accept God's love fully!** Listen to Ephesians 3:17-19...

"And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love

that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”

You are unbelievably loved. Turn to the person next to you and say, “You are unbelievably loved.” Now turn to the person on the other side of you and say, “Well, that was awkward!”

PERSONAL ILLUSTRATION

OPTION 1:

Use your own personal story about being reminded of love. Here is an example from Greg: My five-year-old son started a weird ritual before I left on each of my many work trips. My son would draw a heart symbol on my hand like this (I use a marker to draw a heart on my hand). When I asked him why he did this, my son simply answered, “Daddy, I don’t want you to forget me. I want you to think of me and how much I love you every time you look down at your hand.” And I would do everything possible to make sure the heart didn’t come off. When I took showers, I’d leave my hand outside the shower. Why? That little heart symbol reminded me of how much my son loved me and how much I loved him.

OPTION 2:

Have you ever been to a wedding before? There are a lot of interesting rituals and customs at weddings—and no, I’m not talking about your strange uncle who shows off his dated dance moves at every family gathering. Take the rings, for instance. (If you have a ring, point to it.) Wedding rings are a visible symbol of a couple’s love and commitment to one another. They’re made from a precious metal that will never tarnish, which symbolizes the unchanging nature of the couple’s love. Their circular shape is a symbol that the couple’s love will have no end. When the husband and wife put on their rings, they are making a statement to the entire world: I am taken; I belong to someone.

Did you know that God also carries a symbol of His love for you on His hand? Isaiah 49:16 says,

"I have written your name on the palms of my hands."

And it's written there with a permanence that never fades or tarnishes.

As deep and rich as our love for another person might be, it is nothing compared to how much God loves us! God loves us so much He sent His Son to die for us! God loves us so much that, as we will be learning during our time together, the entire Trinity is invested in inviting us to experience their immeasurable love.

Some of you may have a hard time believing God loves you because of something you did wrong or because of a lie from the enemy that you believe about yourself.

You may think you are unlovable or unforgivable but, instead, realize that you are unforgettable. The Father won't forget you, because even before you were born, He had a picture of you in His mind. The Son won't forget you, because you were the joy set forth before Him that motivated Him to endure the pain of the cross. The Spirit won't forget you because He dwells within everyone who believes as an unbreakable seal of His eternal love.

So the first challenge is to **accept God's love fully**. The second challenge is to **share God's love fearlessly**. Once you truly take the challenge of accepting God's love for you, then you won't be able to stop sharing God's love with others. His love will make you fearless!

In Ephesians 6:19-20, the Apostle Paul said,

"Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should."

Why should we declare the gospel fearlessly? Because there are people all around us who desperately need the love of Jesus. And Jesus has called us to share His message of grace with them.

Our faith in Jesus isn't limited to attending church, reading the Bible and praying to God. Those are all good, important things, but left alone they can miss the point of why Jesus has us here on earth. That is, Jesus has

called each of us to reach out to the lost and hurting and share His message with those around us. This is why we go to church, read Scripture and have a relationship with our Lord, because we realize that He brings us life, and, in response to His life and love, we share His gospel with others.

Did you know that Jesus hung out with the lost and hurting of His day? He hung out with people who were considered to be no-good sinners and losers. Jesus, born in a barn, raised on the run and ordained in the obscure town of Nazareth, was a rogue carpenter turned rabbi who spun Israel upside down in just over three years.

THE Cause that Drove Jesus

Jesus' heart burned and broke for the lost and hurting—His passion to rescue the lost is what drove Him. We get a glimpse of His heart for THE Cause (or mission to save the lost) in the Gospel of Luke. Now if you grew up in children's ministry, you're probably familiar with this passage I'm going to read because of the children's song about Zacchaeus being a "wee little man" who climbed the tree in order to see Jesus, but I want you to consider this passage with fresh eyes. As I read, listen for clues about, first, who Zacchaeus really was and second, why Jesus really came.

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner."

But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." Luke 19:1-10

So who was Zacchaeus really? He was a loser and an outcast—he worked for the IRS of his day as the chief tax collector—which was not a position that helped you win friends.

And why did Jesus really come? Here in this passage, we see Jesus' heart for THE Cause of reaching the lost. It can be summed up in this one verse:

"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." Luke 19:10

These thirteen words unveil the reason for Jesus' incarnation: A **search and rescue mission** for a race on the run from its Creator. He came to save what was lost.

All humanity was lost the moment Adam and Eve betrayed God. Their choice unleashed sin into this once perfect, pristine world.

Like a fireman on call from God, Jesus slid down the fire pole of heaven to the earth below and became flesh, like us. With singular focus and unfailing love Jesus entered into the inferno to rescue us from the flames. These flames are a product of our own sin, and still, Jesus runs into the raging fire so that He can throw us to safety. But this heroism cost Him something—His life that He gladly gave up for us. He died the death that we deserved.

Jesus came to search for sinners and to rescue them from the Evil One. He came to find those who had run from Him in the Garden. He came to rescue those who were going to curse Him on the cross. He came to save us. He came to save you. And He came to save your friends.

And our great King has passed on to us, His children, this same mission of rescue. He has given us the great privilege of being His hands, feet and mouthpiece: hands to serve the poor, feet to pursue the doomed and mouths to speak the good news of the gospel. He could have given this mission to the angels; He could have written the gospel in the sky; He could have made all dogs bark John 3:16, but He gave this mission, this great cause, to us:

"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." John 20:21

As God's children, we have been entrusted with the ultimate mission and the ultimate message. 1 Thessalonians 2:4 says,

"...we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. We are not trying to please men but God, who tests our hearts."

In light of this, just like the early Christians, *we must speak*. We must share the good news with others. We are all called and compelled to make disciples who make disciples, to share the good news and get others to share it as well—until everyone hears the message of the gospel presented in a clear and compelling way. This is THE Cause that Jesus has called us to accomplish while here on earth.

I'd like to show you a short video clip of just one high school student who took Jesus' call to join Him on His search and rescue mission seriously.

 **VIDEO: MEET COLIN**
(LOCATED IN YOUR VIDEOS FOLDER. RUNTIME: 01:19)

"But I'm Too Busy"

But so many times we miss out on sharing the gospel because we think we are "too busy."

PERSONAL ILLUSTRATION

OPTION 1:

Use your own personal story about being too busy to share God's love. Here is an example from Greg: I was at the grocery store with my two young kids when we unexpectedly came across a lady who needed the love of Jesus. But I was in a hurry... It was a Sunday afternoon, I needed to pick up a few things for my family and put my daughter down for her nap.

So I rushed down the aisle with my two kids in tow when we came upon a lady who stopped me to ask for help with reading a product label. "I forgot my glasses, and I can't read what it says," she said. "Can you help me?"

I impatiently read the label for her, but all the while my five-year-old son Jeremy noticed that the lady had tears in her eyes. So Jeremy said to her, "Don't cry, lady, cuz God loves you. Tell her about Jesus, Daddy."

Now remember, I was in a hurry here, and the last thing I wanted to do is start a counseling session in the grocery aisle with a teary, distraught woman. But then the lady said, "I'm mad at God. He doesn't love me. My dog just got hit by a car and died. And I bought that dog to comfort me in my grief. You see, my fifteen-year-old son died of cancer. My son is dead, and now my dog is dead."

Instantly, my impatience melted away in compassion for her suffering. I took the opportunity and shared Jesus' hope with this woman. So together, we stood hugging and crying in the middle of the grocery store. But it all started because my young son noticed the need in that lady's eyes. I was too busy shopping, but Jeremy saw her brokenness and acted. In that moment, Jeremy was drawing a heart on her hand, that heart represented the love of God for her!

OPTION 2:

There was a girl who had immigrated to the United States. Not knowing English, she began to study and observe others. Whenever asked how her day was, she would always reply, “Busy, very busy.” Some thought this odd, particularly since she would often enjoy leisure activities. When someone finally asked her why she felt so busy, she revealed that she was simply copying Americans. She thought it was the way you replied politely to this sort of question.

We live in a fast pace, constantly busy culture. Many of you struggle with busyness. You have school, homework, sports, activities, hangouts, choirs, etc., so taking the time to actively pursue a friend with the gospel can slip your mind. Yet our busyness can oftentimes be an excuse, or even a sin. That is, we should never be too busy to share God’s love with those He has put in our lives. But sometimes we hide behind our busyness because we are afraid to share the gospel.

In this crazy world of meetings, work, school, sports, hobbies, texting and Twitter, it’s easy to think that we are too busy to do the heavy lifting of reaching the lost for Jesus Christ. After all, that’s what pastors and missionaries get paid to do, right? Wrong!

Jesus has strategically placed you in your school, family, neighborhood and circle of friends to carry the good news to them. He has positioned you to take THE Cause as your own and to take this message to those you know.

Romans 10:14-15 says:

“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”