

**COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE****COVID Exposures**

FEAR &amp; FRIENDSHIP

**OVERVIEW**

This COVID-era, along with all the other tensions pressing in on us, has exposed various issues we constantly face. To be sure, COVID didn't cause these issues any more than a truck driving over a bridge causes a crack to finally give way. As followers of Jesus, we need to be attentive to the world around us and the temptations inside of us that we might apply the truth of the gospel to all parts of our lives as we seek to find complete joy in Jesus.

**APPLY // FIGHT YOUR FEARS**

**Main Idea:** Living in a broken, sinful world presents us with many things to be fearful about, but we have greater reasons not to fear – the Lord's character, care, and promises.

1. Read Psalm 56.
2. What are some reasons in this Psalm that might make David afraid?
3. Notice in verse 3 David says, "When I am afraid" not "if I am afraid." Why is it healthy to admit our fears? What's the danger in denying our fears? What's the danger in normalizing fear?
4. In his fears, David turns to the Lord, his character and promises. What are some specific ways we can do the same? Why is living in gospel community an important part of helping us turn to the Lord and trust him in the midst of our fears?
5. Discuss the various ways David explicitly or implicitly calls forth the character of the Lord in this Psalm. How do these attributes of the Lord help us in the midst of our own fears?
6. Read Romans 8:31-32. How do Paul's words echo Psalm 56? How does the cross of Christ help us ultimately interpret our fears?
7. David repeatedly fears the Lord (Ps. 25:14; 34:9; 103:11, 15, 17). Why is fear of the Lord the true antidote to all other fears? In other words, why should we seek not to become fearless but fear-full?

**NOTE:** People will differ on whether/how biology and chemical processes in the brain play into worry/anxiety. That can be a worthy, helpful discussion—however, given our limited time it's not going to be best to discuss that complex facet of the issues at hand.

**OBSERVE & INTERPRET // LONLINESS & FRIENDSHIP**

**Main Idea:** Living in a broken, sinful can be lonely. Through Christ, we can have friendship with the Lord and each other.

1. Read Genesis 1:26-28. What does it mean we are created in the image of God? What does this tell us about our need for community?

2. Read Genesis 2:15-18. Notice it says, "It is not good that the man should be alone." What does this mean? Why is it not good? What's the significance in this being the first thing called "not good" by God? Is this the same thing as Adam being lonely? Why or why not?
3. Read Genesis 3:8-14. How does sin affect relationships with God and each other? Why does sin often lead to loneliness and isolation?
4. Read Genesis 3:15. What does God promise in this verse? How does this point to Jesus?
5. Read John 15:12-15. What do you notice about friendship in these verses? How does Jesus describe friendship? What is Jesus getting at when he says "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends."
6. Read Revelation 21:3-5. How does this picture of heaven show us what relationships will be like in heaven?

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Relationships developed and deepened during accountability provide regular encouragement, and when necessary admonition, to spur each other on to delight in the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Ask one another heart-probing, clarifying questions, and help each other apply the gospel to your lives.

**QUESTION:** Are there fears you are struggling with you need to admit to God or another CG member?