



Weekly Resources for Schools

PHASE: PRIMARY

HOW DO WE FACE OUR FEARS?





KEY CONCEPT/MESSAGE:

Fear can be both a helpful and unhelpful feeling. It shows us when something is dangerous (helpful) but can also obscure our view of reality if we fear something that is actually safe (unhelpful).

Christians believe that God can provide comfort when we feel helpful fear and can take away unhelpful fear altogether.

The Apostle John wrote:

*'There is no fear in love, but **perfect love** casts out fear, because fear is by suspicion, but he who fears is not grown up in love. No fear exists where his love is. Rather, perfect love gets rid of fear, because fear involves punishment.'* 1 John 4:18

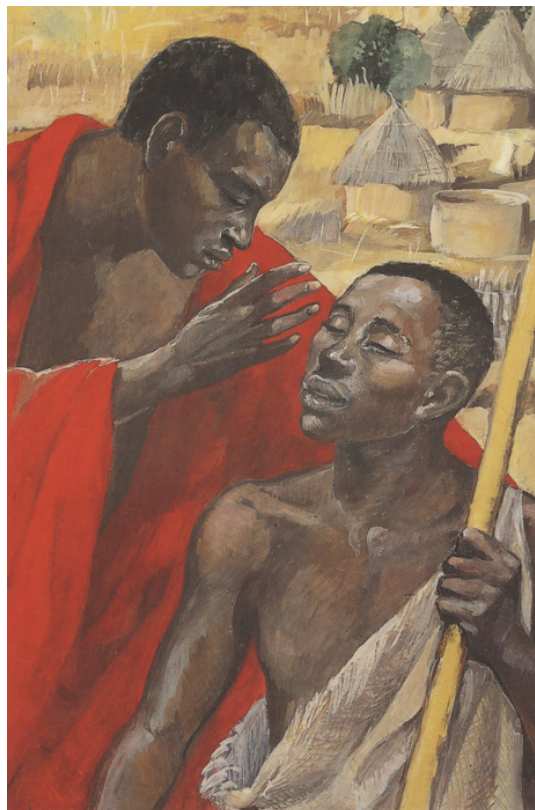
Christians pray to God to ask him for help when they feel afraid. For example, if they fear being alone, they can ask God to be with them. If they fear the dark, they can ask God to be their light.

BIBLE STORY OF THE WEEK:

Jesus heals a man who was born blind

[John Chapter 9](#)

"What have you to say about him? It was your eyes he opened." John 9:17



JESUS MAFA. Jesus cures the man born blind, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=48383> [retrieved November 30, 2020]. Original source: <http://www.librairie-emmanuel.fr> (contact page: <https://www.librairie-emmanuel.fr/contact>).

Gathering

To prepare: This resource looks at ways for children to think about overcoming fear. Some of their fears may be small, some may be more substantial and based in potential danger or harm. Throughout the session, care needs to be taken to handle such fears with sensitivity as well as following safeguarding procedures where necessary.

If you have some stones or small waterproof items (e.g. Lego brick, marble), hand these out to the children at the start. Please follow your school protocols for sanitising equipment. You will also need a large bowl of water.

The children will also need paper or whiteboards for this Gathering.

As we gather for worship today, we are going to begin by reflecting on love.

How does love feel to you? Who do you love? Who loves you?

You might like to draw a heart and write around it all the people who show you love.

Christians believe that God IS love, and that his love is so huge it can swallow up all our fears.

I wonder – what are you afraid of at the moment?

It might be sickness, an upcoming situation that you feel worried about, a friendship that seems to be going wrong.

Take a moment to think about this as we light our candle and begin our worship. As you see the light appear, try to imagine this light driving away any darkness you feel today.

Engaging

Hold onto the object you've been given (stone, Lego piece or similar) and think about the thing you are most afraid of right now. You don't need to tell anyone what it is.

We are all afraid of something. We don't need to be embarrassed about being afraid – it is a part of being human! But we don't need to live afraid.

Christians believe that Jesus came to help us with the things that frighten us. That his love is big enough to overcome fear. Why don't you now place your item inside the heart you drew to remind you that love is bigger than fear?

The problem with fear is that it stops us seeing the good in life. If we are afraid of fire or we are careful with strangers, that helps us live well. But if we are afraid of what might happen when that thing hasn't actually happened, fear is stopping us from seeing 'life in all its fullness'. It stops us from being joyful and peaceful.

Today, we are going to read a Bible story today about Jesus wanting someone to be able to see and live life to the full.

Why don't we read the story together? (There is a version in the Faith at Home video you could use, too)

[John Chapter 9](#)

We see from the Bible reading that this man's life was not going well. He had to sit all day and beg for food. He had no one to help him – his life must have been quite frightening.

When Jesus sees him, he wants to help him. So, he puts mud on the man's eyes and heals him.

I wonder what the man felt about a stranger putting mud on his eyes?!

In that moment, he had no way of knowing what would happen next. Yet Jesus' actions enabled him to be able to see clearly.

He had been born blind, so I wonder what it was like for him to be able to see for the first time?

The rulers ask the man himself what happened. He is so full of joy and of the love that Jesus showed him, he can only say: *"One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!"* (v25)

When we feel loved, we are not so afraid to say things as they are. We can see more clearly and live more joyfully.

Responding

Let's return to that object in your hand, representing the thing you are most afraid of.

Why don't you place it inside the heart you drew? What would it look like for love to swallow up your fear? Can you see how much bigger your heart is than your fear object?

Christians believe that God's love is much, much bigger than our fears. In fact, they believe God's love is infinite – that it goes on forever and ever. Whereas our fears become smaller and smaller the more we surround them with love.

Look back at the names you drew around your heart.

When you feel afraid, which of these people could you go to?

When we talk about our fears with someone we love, it is like putting mud on our eyes so we can see things clearly! It enables us to live life in all its fullness.

Who could you talk to?

Possible extension:

Later on in the Bible story, we see an example of people being afraid. The healed man's parents are questioned by the religious rulers and they don't want to get into trouble.

Have you ever felt like that?

What has helped you when you have been afraid of getting into trouble? Who can you talk to about it?

How might it help to remember this Bible verse?

*'There is no fear in love, but **perfect love** casts out fear... perfect love gets rid of fear, because fear involves punishment.'* 1 John 4:18

Sending

Some people find this acronym helpful to remember where their unhelpful fears comes from:

False

Evidence

Appearing as

Read

This week, if you feel afraid of anything, try to ask if the thing you are afraid of is real. Remember that having conversations with people we love can help make our fears feel much smaller.

Some of you might like to pray to God – asking him to take away unhelpful fears and to bring comfort when the things we fear are real.



Finally, as you finish worship today, let go of your small fear object into a bowl of water.

As it leaves your hand, imagine yourself really letting go of that fear.

You might like to say a prayer together and ask God to protect you from these fears and to fill you all with his infinite love.

The hymn 'Amazing Grace' uses some of the words from today's Bible story: 'I once was blind, but now I see'. As you go out from today's worship, you might like to play this version:

[Songs of Praise virtual choir \(inclusive\)](#)

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

(practical ways to help us explore faith and develop spiritually at home together)

EXPERIENCES that can help us ENCOUNTER:

Create a Self-soothe box

Whilst it is important to be able to share with a trusted person how we feel and to seek help in that way, often we will need to be able to deal with strong emotions on our own, even if it is just for a short time. One way of doing this is to create a self-soothe box. See the below link from the amazing charity Young Minds for ideas.

<https://youngminds.org.uk/blog/how-to-make-a-self-soothe-box/>

[Here](#), young people explain how to make one.

Name that Feeling



Prayer Spaces in Schools have a few ideas for reflection activities which help let go of worries and deal with anxiety.

It's important to know how we feel in order to make sense of the emotion and deal with it well.

['Name that feeling'](#) develops emotional literacy and is a way of processing our own feelings, using emotion cards and Scrabble letters.

ACTIVITIES that can develop PRACTICES-HABITS:

Emotion Journaling

Why don't you try keeping a journal for a few days or weeks?

On a piece of paper, in a book, on the notes on your phone – each time you feel something strongly (happiness, disgust, emotional pain, anger) write down the date and time, what you felt, what had happened to bring on that emotion (don't worry if you don't know), and what you did as a result.

It is good to do both school days and weekend days. After a few days, look back upon your journal either on your own or with a trusted adult. Look for patterns.

What situations bring you joy?

Which cause anxiety or make you feel afraid?

What activities or people help you?

How can you invite in love so your fears feel smaller?

Journaling can help us to understand ourselves and our relationships better, by helping us reflect on how we felt and why.

Don't forget to celebrate the good things too!

Anchoring



Anchoring can help us when we feel fearful or anxious about the situations we are facing.

Anchoring is about bringing ourselves back into the present and acknowledging that we are safe, even when we emotionally feel like we are like a boat tossed around in a storm.

Use the 5 digits of your hand to actively think about the five senses as below.

Find **FIVE** things you see around you.

Find **FOUR** things you can touch

Listen for **THREE** things.

Find **TWO** things you can smell.

Acknowledge **ONE** thing you can taste.

Anything will do – a window, the cat, your hairbrush

Anything nearby – grass, a woolly jumper, your hair

Anything outside your body – birds, sirens, people talking

A flower, a wooden pencil, a flavoured cordial

Either already in your mouth, or something you can drink or eat

After doing this, notice if your anxiety has calmed down and whether you feel more in control.

Do you know of other anchors in your life that settle you in a similar way?

Use the **EXAMEN** prayer to reflect on our feeling anxious and afraid. It has 5 steps, so you might like to count them on your fingers.

1. GIVE THANKS for the people who love you and whom you love.
2. ASK FOR HELP with the times where you feel frightened or worried.
3. REFLECT on your day – when did you feel loved and at peace, when did you feel anxious or afraid?
4. SAY SORRY for the times that you let fear drive you to do the wrong thing.
5. DECIDE how you will choose love over fear tomorrow.

CONVERSATIONS which CONNECT COMMUNITIES

These questions from the Faith at Home video can get you started in talking about fear:

Can you name a time when your fear got too big?
Who has helped you when you're feeling scared?
How can you help others when are feeling scared?

Worry Box

Do you have a worry box in your class?
How do you deal with the worries children raise?
Are there opportunities to talk through imaginary scenarios that help children develop strategies for managing their worries?



COLLECTIVE WORSHIP – OUR APPROACH

INVITATIONAL

Everyone is welcome to take part in collective worship, as much or as little as they or their parents and carers are comfortable with. This means we use invitational language and consider carefully our choice of words and songs. Children are invited to pray but are not compelled or expected to do so; they always have a choice. We invite them to pray or reflect in whatever way they would usually as a family, if that is part of their home experience.

INCLUSIVE

Acts of worship need to be inclusive of all. Therefore, we choose topics and ideas that are shared by different faiths and worldviews. When we present Christian teaching, we make it clear that this is 'what Christians believe', saying things like:

'I wonder why this story might be important to Christians?'

'The story today comes from the Bible (the holy book of Christians), which teaches that ...'

Our worship should be accessible for children and young people with a range of different backgrounds, and so we take care that activities do not require expensive resources. We also offer a variety of activities, so that children and young people with differing needs can all find something they can engage with.

INSPIRING

We aim for our acts of worship to inspire those engaging with them. How might it engage their emotions, enabling a sense of peace, comfort, hope or motivation? How might it inspire them into action, into thinking differently and considering their behaviour or actions? How might it inspire them to reflect on their faith or beliefs, and on the faith or beliefs of others?