LIFEGROUPS StudyGuide

Things to Talk About and Reflect Upon

"Undeterred"

Points from Sunday's Message

Point 1 - The settled servant isn't fearless by temperament; they're anchored.
Point 2 - When I know whose I am, a fox's threat loses its grip.
Point 3 - When I know my assignment, I can't be talked off the wall.
Point 4 - His courage is love that won't flee.
Point 5 - When I know where I'm going, even death can't scare me off the road.

Key Verse:

"Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem."

—Luke 13:33

Discussion Questions:

1. "Swipe left and delete"

Pastor Miles opened with the flood of political text messages — 47 by ten in the morning, each one a dire warning — and admitted the urge to swipe left and delete. Most threats to our lives aren't political anyway, he said: a terminal diagnosis, the accident you didn't see coming, the violence of wicked people, fears about AI, and the one none of us escape — the persistent passing of time. So what does a settled person do? When podcast hosts ask Miles whether we should be afraid of AI, his answer is 2 Timothy 1:7, written by a man in prison facing execution. Paul wasn't brave by personality; he was anchored. Some of us say, "I'm just not a brave person." Miles's answer: "You don't have to be. You just have to be anchored." Read Luke 13:31 and Hebrews 6:19. Which threat is loudest in your life right now? What would it look like to anchor that fear in the hope "behind the veil" instead of trying to talk yourself into courage?

Further Reading: Psalm 46:1–3; Isaiah 26:3–4; John 16:33; Philippians 4:6–7

2. “Go, tell that fox”
Herod had already beheaded John the Baptist to protect his image, so the Pharisees’ warning was real. Jesus answered, “Go, tell that fox.” Miles cited William Barclay: to a Jew the fox was sly and destructive, but above all a symbol of worthlessness and insignificance. Jesus put Herod in perspective, just as He would tell Pilate, “You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above.” Think of the chihuahua behind the chain-link fence, yipping at Miles on his daily run and sure it was chasing him off. When the nations rage, “He who sits in the heavens shall laugh.” Read Luke 13:31–32 and Psalm 2:1–6. Which people or positions of power are you most tempted to fear? What changes when you see them the way heaven sees them — without sliding into contempt for them?

Further Reading: Isaiah 40:21–24; John 19:8–11; Acts 4:23–31; Proverbs 21:1

3. “But if not”
Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego stood before the most powerful king on earth and said their God was able to deliver them — “But if not,” they still would not bow. Miles called it one of the most powerful responses in all of literature. They didn’t know whether they would live, but they knew whose they were. Paul gives us the same identity: “For our citizenship is in heaven.” Miles is grateful for his passport (even if customs at JFK is the worst place on the planet), but he pointed to the present tense — not “will be,” but is. That makes us ambassadors on assignment. Read Daniel 3:16–25 and Philippians 3:20. Tuesday is Election Day, and Miles urged us to vote, and to vote by the wisdom of God, the priorities of His kingdom and the leading of His Spirit rather than out of fear. Before you fill out your ballot, take a few minutes to pray through what that means for you. Where else this week does knowing whose you are need to loosen fear’s grip?

Further Reading: Philippians 3:17–21; 2 Corinthians 5:17–21; 1 Peter 2:9–17; Daniel 6:10

4. Talked off the wall
Jesus answered a death threat with His schedule: “I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow… Nevertheless I must journey.” Miles loves that word nevertheless — determined, undeterred perseverance. Nehemiah had the same resolve: “I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down.” Miles pointed out that the warnings that pull us off our assignment often sound spiritual, and sometimes they come from people who love us. The believers who warned Paul about Jerusalem were right about the chains but wrong about what he should do. And with his mom sitting in the room, Miles admitted that much of her counsel in his early twenties was bad counsel — not because she was bad-natured, but because she loved him and wanted to keep him from harm. Read Luke 13:32–33 and Nehemiah 6:1–11. What is your “must” right now? Whose voice, even a loving one, is inviting you to come down? Name one step you’ll take this week to stay on the wall.

Further Reading: Acts 21:10–14; John 10:17–18; Luke 9:51–62; Galatians 1:10

5. As a hen gathers her brood

Then Jesus turned and spoke directly to Jerusalem: “How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!” Miles noted it’s the same word twice — I was wanting; you were not wanting. Scripture holds God’s sovereignty and our responsibility together, as in his favorite passage, Philippians 2:12–13. “So who is working, God or you? Yes.” Real power, he said, isn’t God forcing the unwilling; it’s God having enough power to let us say “I will not” and still remain sovereign. And what pressed Jesus on toward the city that would kill Him was love. Read Luke 13:34 and Philippians 2:12–13. On that tightrope, which way do you tend to lean — toward God’s sovereignty or human responsibility — and what do you lose when you do? Who in your life is “not willing” right now? Pray for them by name this week, with Jesus’ heart for them rather than frustration.

Further Reading: Luke 19:41–44; Ezekiel 33:11; Psalm 91:1–4; 2 Peter 3:9

6. The worst any threat can do

Jesus was going to Jerusalem, but He was going through Jerusalem — to the cross, the empty tomb, the ascension and His return. Paul knew where he was going too: “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” “Who says that?” Miles asked. In 2020 many people were devastated by fear, because if this world is your only hope, any threat to it threatens everything. But “if to die is gain, then the worst any threat can do is send me home.” Miles also warned that when we get spun up doom-scrolling about this bill or that politician, we live as practical atheists, trusting the King with our lips but not with our lives. Peace in the storm, he said, is one of the most evangelistic things there is; people see it and say, “I don’t know where you got that, but I want that.” Read Philippians 1:21 and Hebrews 12:1–3. Where does the fear of losing this life still have a grip on you? This week, set a limit on the news and the scroll, and when you feel the pull, read Hebrews 12:3 instead.

Further Reading: Hebrews 2:14–15; 1 Corinthians 15:54–58; Acts 20:22–24; John 14:1–3

Use these blended questions for deeper personal reflection, prayer, or small group discussion.