

# YOU'RE NOT THE BOSS OF ME

## Fear

Most of us have learned to monitor our behavior enough to look like 'upstanding citizens.' But it's possible to modify our visible behavior while still harboring a heart controlled by toxic emotions like anger. Jesus said that human beings are not tainted by *external* factors, but by *internal* emotions that cause us to dishonor God and others. So it's not enough to modify our behavior. We've got to go a step further and examine the condition of our hearts before we can say no to the toxic emotions that compete for control of our lives.

## Start Talking

Do you remember the first night you ever spent alone in a house? How did it go? How did you feel? What were your strategies for getting some sleep?

Have you ever found yourself in the passenger seat with a really bad driver? How do you approach that dynamic?

If you could voluntarily forfeit the ability to think about the future, would you do it? Why or why not?

## Looking Back

1. How did you do this past week in the fight to keep anger out of the driver's seat?
2. Did you experience any unfairness, or instances in which reality didn't conform to your wishes? How did you respond?
3. Were there any times you found yourself able to lay down your rights in the service of other people, rather than insisting on getting your way?



## What About You?

1. On a scale from 1 to 10, how fearful are you?
2. What are some of your primary fears?
3. What is your go-to coping mechanism?
4. Who or what are your strongest "triggers" when it comes to fear and worry?

## Look It Up

*Read the Following Passages: Matthew 8:23-27, Mark 4:41, Matthew 10:28-31, Matthew 14:22-27, 1 Peter 5:7.*

5. Do you think the disciples' fears are legitimate in these passages? In other words, was there anything to be afraid of?
6. Based on Jesus' response to his followers, what is the appropriate response to circumstances that cause fear?
7. Jesus tells the disciples not to fear those who can kill the body, but instead to "be afraid of the One who can destroy both body and soul in hell." What kind of fear do you think Jesus is prescribing in relationship to God based upon the verses that follow?
8. In these passages we see men who are constantly fretting about their own safety. Scripture and the historical record tell us that they would later voluntarily face gruesome deaths with courage because of their faith in Jesus. What changed?

## Putting It All Together

9. In what areas of your life are you most inclined to let fear take over? (work outcomes, finances, relationships, etc.)
10. What evidence can you appeal to in the coming week to convince yourself that fear shouldn't get the last word?
11. How can you anticipate the moments when fear will jump on you?
12. What would it look like or sound like for you to take Peter's advice and "cast all your cares on Jesus" this week?

