

Devotional Guide week 2: *Why Are You Afraid?*

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
You know the storms that rage around us and within us.
You know the fears we name easily, and those we try to hide.
As we open your Word together, open our eyes that we may see more clearly
who you are,
and open our hearts that we may trust you more deeply.
When you ask us, "*Why are you afraid?*"
help us to hear your voice not as judgment, but as invitation.
Speak your peace into our lives today.
Amen.

Scripture Readings

Take time to read (or re-read) the following passages slowly and prayerfully.
If you are in a group, consider reading them aloud, using more than one voice.

- **2 Kings 6:8–23**
- **Matthew 8:23–27**

As you read, notice:

- Where fear appears in the story
- How God responds to fear
- What changes when eyes are opened or when Jesus speaks

Scripture Summary

2 Kings 6:8–23

Elisha's servant wakes to find their town surrounded by enemy forces. All he can see is danger, and fear overwhelms him. Elisha, however, sees a deeper reality. He prays that God would open the servant's eyes, and suddenly the hills are revealed to be full of horses and chariots of fire—the protecting presence of God. The threat was real, but it was not the whole story. God was already at work.

Matthew 8:23–27

The disciples find themselves caught in a violent storm on the Sea of Galilee. Even though Jesus is with them in the boat, fear takes hold and they believe they are about to drown. Jesus asks them, “*Why are you so afraid?*” and then demonstrates his authority by calming the wind and waves. The disciples are left in awe, beginning to grasp that Jesus is not only a teacher or prophet, but God himself—Lord over creation.

Sermon Recap – Key Themes

The sermon explored Jesus’ searching question: “**Why are you afraid?**”—a question that invites honest reflection rather than shame.

- Fear is a powerful force in our world and in our personal lives. It can shrink our vision, narrow our hope, and convince us that our problems are greater than God.
- Faith does not prevent storms. Being with Jesus does not mean a life free from difficulty, suffering, or loss.
- The heart of the gospel promise is **presence**, not protection from trouble. God does not always remove the storm, but he is always present within it.
- In Matthew 8, the disciples’ fear reveals a deeper question: *Who is Jesus?* The calming of the storm shows that God himself is in the boat with them.
- In 2 Kings 6, Elisha’s servant learns that fear often comes from limited sight. When God opens his eyes, he realises that God’s power and protection far outweigh the threat.
- Jesus himself knows fear. In Gethsemane, he faced the coming cross with deep anguish, yet entrusted himself fully to the Father.
- Faith does not deny fear—it replaces it with trust. The safest place is not a calm sea, but knowing that Jesus is with us, whatever the storm.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

Use these questions for personal journaling or group conversation.

1. When you hear Jesus ask, “*Why are you afraid?*” what emotions or thoughts rise within you?
2. Which part of the storm stories do you relate to most right now—the disciples’ panic, Elisha’s servant’s fear, or Elisha’s calm trust?
3. Are there areas of your life where fear has begun to take the place of faith? What does that look like in practice?
4. In Matthew 8, Jesus is present in the boat before he calms the storm. How does that shape the way you think about God’s presence in your own difficulties?
5. Elisha prays, “*Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see.*” What might God be inviting you to see differently in your current situation?
6. The sermon reminded us that faith does not promise a quick end to suffering, but it does promise that we are never alone. How does this challenge or comfort you?
7. Where have you seen—or where might you hope to see—God bringing peace, not by removing the storm, but by strengthening you within it?

A Prayerful Response

You may wish to sit quietly for a moment, holding before God any fears that feel close to the surface. You might imagine placing them into Jesus’ hands, one by one.

A simple prayer you can return to during the week:

Lord Jesus, in every storm, teach me to trust you.

Closing Prayer

Faithful and loving God,
We thank you that you meet us in the middle of our fears,
not with condemnation, but with compassion and truth.
When the winds rise and the waves threaten,
help us to remember that you are in the boat with us.
Open our eyes to your presence,
strengthen our trust,
and lead us forward in hope.
May your peace guard our hearts and minds,
now and always,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

