

Fear and anxiety run rampant in today's world.

According to NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness

1. Over 40 million (19.1 %) of Americans have an anxiety disorder.
2. The four leading causes are social media, poor sleep habits, and lowered stigma
3. Anxiety affects 7% of children, ages 3-17 and most people with anxiety have experienced

it before the age of 21

Mental Health America-

1. 21 % of adults (42.5 million) are affected by anxiety disorders.

SingleCare says that anxiety is the most common mental disorder in the U.S. and affects 40 million adults.

Banyan Mental Health says that anxiety affects 6.8 million U.S. adults

NIMH (National Institute of Mental Health says that 31.1 % of U.S. adults experience an anxiety disorder at some time in their lives.

The numbers vary, the anxiety is for certain a huge problem in the U.S. and can start at an early age. It is a significant problem that cannot be ignored.

According to a 2018 Barna study, over half of Generation Z reported experiencing anxiety, with fear of failure, anxiousness over decision making, and uncertainty about the future being the leading causes. Perhaps the most telling, and perhaps concerning statistic found in this study, is the rates were equal between Christians and others.

While we might be tempted to silo concerns about anxiety to youth, as it often wanes with age, according to the Center for Disease control, 15% of all American adults suffer some symptoms of general anxiety disorder. Instances are more common with women than men—or at least reported more often by women.

Suicide is one of the leading causes of death for Americans under the age of 55. And since the start of the pandemic in 2020, Americans over the age of 85 now have the highest suicide rates per capita. People are literally scared to death!

And—scripture speaks loudly about fear and that it is not from God. In fact, it is one of the things that can separate us from God. We first see fear in Genesis 3. Adam's response to God in the garden was to hide, because he was afraid:

**10** He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." (Genesis 3:10)

The Bible is full of stories of bravery, and many verses about overcoming fear.

We sing songs like Joshua 1:9:

**9** Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

Yet, we live in a world full of anxious people, many of whom are faithful Christians, we may even struggle with fear ourselves.

Peter told the scattered Christian under Nero's persecution to:

**6** Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. **7** Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you (1 Peter 5:6-7)

And Jesus himself taught his disciples to overcome fear with with faith:

**26** "So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. **27** What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. **28** Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. **29** Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care.[a] **30** And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. **31** So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

**32** "Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. **33** But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven. (Matthew 10:25-33)

In Romans 8:31-39, Paul tells Christians where we can boldly trust and be “conquerors” through Christ. He gives us great assurance here.

In Philippians 4:6-7, we are told to “Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” Then, in verse 8, Paul tells us WHAT to think about. “Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” How many of us follow these instructions?

Hebrews Chapter 11 is full of characters that showed their faith when facing challenges many fear. This series uses these characters as examples of how faith conquers fear.

### **Schedule**

**Lesson 1: Faith overcomes fear (10/22/2023)**

**Lesson 2: Cain & Able: Fear and Creation (10/29/2023)**

**Lesson 3: Moses: Fear God or Fear Man? (11/5/2023)\*\***

**Lesson 4: Moses Part 2: Fear God or Fear Man? (11/12/2023)**

**Lesson 5: Rahab (11/19/2023)**

**Lesson 6: Jacob: Transforming Life Circumstances into Faith (11/26/2023)**

**Lesson 7: Jacob: Leaving home and returning; changing fear for faith (12/3/2023)**

**Lesson 8: Abraham (12/10/2023)**

**Lesson 9: Out of the fiery furnace: you will be done (12/17/2023)**

**On 11/5/2023 there is an option for a combined class in the auditorium. Class elders and chairs should decide where their class will meet and which Moses lesson(s) will be covered.**