FEARLESS
Fear of Global Calamity
Lesson 5 – Chapter 13

Objective
To introduce and remind your church or group of the following realities:
1. Catastrophes dominate the day; don’t let them dominate you.
2. We can trust Jesus.

Preparation
Read Chapter 13 in Fearless and record your thoughts in a journal. Meditate on all that it stirs in your heart and mind. Pray for an extended amount of time, asking God to show you what he wants your listeners to hear.

Supporting Scripture
“You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains. Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” (Matthew 24:6–14 niv)

“See to it that you are not alarmed.” (Matthew 24:6 niv)

“Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this I will be confident.” (Psalm 27:3 kjv)

“All these things [challenging times] are the beginning of birth pains.” (Matthew 24:8 niv)

“These things must come to pass.” (Matthew 24:6)
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Outline

I. Things Will Get Worse
II. Pollyanna Optimism, Chicken Little Doom
III. A Whole New World

Opening Question: What if things only get worse?

I. Things Will Get Worse

A. Bravery is still an option.

“You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains. Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” (Matthew 24:6–14 niv)

B. Don’t freak out.

“Don’t freak out at the heresy, calamity, and apostasy. Don’t give in or give up, for you’ll soon witness the victory. Jesus equipped his followers with far-sighted courage. He listed the typhoons of life and then pointed them ‘to the end.’ Trusting in ultimate victory gives ultimate courage.”

“All these things [challenging times] are the beginning of birth pains.” (Matthew 24:8 niv)
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II. Pollyanna Optimism, Chicken Little Doom

A. We gain nothing by glossing over the brutality of human existence (Pollyana Optimism), rather we should be rationally aware of the reality we face.

“See to it that you are not alarmed.” (Matthew 24:6 niv)

“Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this I will be confident.” (Psalm 27:3 kjv)

B. The Old Testament people of God knew peace.

“Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this I will be confident.” (Psalm 27:3 kjv)

III. A Whole New World

A. Every trial and trouble has a place in God’s grand scheme.

“These things must come to pass.” (Matthew 24:6)

B. Above all chaos, a divine plan reigns.

“Everything will work out in the end. If it’s not working out, it’s not the end.”
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DISCUSSION GUIDE

EXAMINING FEAR
1. “Life is a dangerous endeavor; we pass our days in the shadows of ominous realities. The power to annihilate humanity has, it seems, been placed in the hands of people who are happy to do so.
   a. "What ominous realities have the most power to frighten you?"
   b. How do you think you’d feel if a nuclear bomb went off in some part of the United States?

2. "It was as if Jesus counseled the disciples, ‘Don't freak out when bad stuff happens.' 
   a. Do you have a personal action plan for dealing with bad stuff? Explain.
   b. What have you learned from observing the way others handle difficulties?

3. “False prophets always minimize the role of Christ and maximize the role of humanity…. Stick to one question – is this person directing listeners to Jesus? If the answer is yes, be grateful and pray for that individual. If the answer is no, get out while you still can."
   a. Why do false teachers inevitably point people away from Jesus? To what do they generally direct the attention of others?
   b. How well do you know Jesus? Would you be able to tell if someone was painting a false picture of him? Explain.

4. “All things, big and small, flow out of the purpose of God and serve his good will. When the world appears out of control, it; isn't."
   a. How can bad stuff serve God's good will? Describe a time in your life when bad stuff served God's good will.
   b. How do you generally react when your world seems to be spinning out of control? How would you counsel yourself in such times?

5. “Everything will work out in the end. If it's not working out, it's not the end."
   a. Do you agree with the statement above? Why or why not?
   b. How can this statement bring comfort and alleviate fear?

EXPOSING FEAR
1. Read Matthew 24:4-14.
   a. How many times is some form of deception mentioned in this passage?
   b. What does this tell you about knowing sound doctrine as a tool against fear?
   a. What kind of fears do verses 2-3 and 6 mention? How does the psalmist counteract these fears?
   b. How do verses 8-11 allay our fears of major catastrophes?

   a. What types of human-caused disasters are mentioned in verses 1-3? How does the psalmist respond to them?
   b. What confidence does the psalmist express in verses 5-10? How did he gain this confidence? What can we learn from his experience?

4. Read Revelation 2:10
   a. What kind of suffering is promised to some believers?
   b. How can these believers overcome their fears of such suffering?
   c. What does God promise to those who overcome their fears and remain strong in Christ?

BATTING FEAR

Write out the following statement and place it in a prominent location that you will see often (on your refrigerator, in your car, on your office desk, etc.):

“Everything will work out in the end. If it’s not working out, it’s not the end.”