

Love Does Session 4: Leader Guide

BE NOT AFRAID

Jesus said, "Go live a really, really full life. One that is chocked full of adventures." – Love Does video

INTRODUCTION

In 1975, the movie jaws broke box office records and was hailed as the one of the summer's blockbusters. However, as celebrated as the 1movie is for its domestic gross earnings, great performances, and iconic score, Jaws is famous for another reason as well. The film's antagonist, a motorized replica of a great white shark, kept breaking down during production. Because of this, the film's director, Steven Spielberg, had to shoot "around" the shark, implying its presence in scenes while never showing it directly to the audience. But instead of making the movie worse, it actually made it better. Not being able to see what the heroes were hunt-ing built such suspense and dread that once the shark was finally "on screen" -out in the light-it was actually a relief. Once you could see it, it was not nearly as intimidating.

The same is true of the things that scare us today. Our fears have power over us only when they are kept in the dark. Their hiddenness fuels all sorts of shame and humilia-tion in our lives and drives us to make bad decisions because we are afraid. However, when we name our fears and speak them aloud-especially to someone else-the God of the universe can dispel them with the light of His love. Just like the shark in jaws, our fears become less scary once they are out in the open.

This is a bit of what we're doing in Session 4 of Love Does. What are you afraid of? Are there fears that keep you locked up inside? Is there an anxiety that keeps you from acting and chas-ing after what Jesus is calling you to? Do you think that addressing these fears head on, exposing them, and maybe even laughing about them will give God a context to bring freedom into your life?

There's a reason God frequently says, "Don't be afraid" in the Scriptures. It's because we don't have to be. Fear, in many respects, is a choice...and when we lean on our Creator

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and entrust ourselves to His love, we find that the things we fear most are not so scary after all.

CHECKING IN

As you begin, go around the group and answer this question:

What is one thing you were scared of as a child that you're not scared of today?

HEARING THE WORD

Read Mark 6:45- 52 aloud in the group. Then briefly answer the questions that follow.

45Immediately Jesus made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. 46 After leaving them, he went up on a mountainside to pray. 47Later that night, the boat was in the middle of the lake, and he was alone on land, 48He saw the disciples straining at the oars, because the wind was against them. Shortly before dawn he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them, 49but when they saw him walking on the lake, they thought he was a ghost. They cried out, 5Dbecause they all saw him and were terrified. Immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." 51Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed, 52for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.

What does this story mean to you?

Why does God's activity sometimes make us afraid?

WATCH THE VIDEO

Watch the Session 4 video clip, using the space below to take notes. When the video ends, take a moment to reflect on one or two things that you learned, disagreed with, or were surprised by.

GROUP DISCUSSION

- 1) Before everyone shares in the large group, turn to one or two people next to you and finish this sentence, "After watching the video one question I now have is..."
- 2) Community Reflection 2. Bob uses the phrase "live a full life." What do you think makes a life "full"?
- 3) Bob shares how Adam saw the potential in the boat for adventure. He saw that same potential in his life. How do you see your life? Is there a potential for adventure? Why or why not?
- 4) What things draw you away from magnetic North, away from the life God wants you to have?
- 5) What's the difference between being brave and being foolish when it comes to stepping out to trust God?
- 6) Bob says that by using Scripture on one corner and people-who know God and are wise on another, we can triangulate where we are in life. Does this work? If so, how?
- 7) If your life is a boat, describe where it is in relationship to the dock. Is it tied tightly? Is it free to sail? Share where you are today and then what helps or hinders you from untying the boat,