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**FEAR GOD – Session 1 of 2**

**[Clip of Francis retelling the “tumbling under water while surfing” story]**



1. Have you ever experienced anything similar – a time when you were terrified? Share your experience, how you felt, and how you reacted.
2. We seldom associate this type of overwhelming terror with the fear of God. Generally speaking, why do you think we are so reluctant to literally fear God?
3. We all come from different backgrounds, and many of us have had different experiences with people, church and God. We often view God in a certain way because of our background and experiences. Being as open as possible, how would you describe your view of God before starting this study?
4. What aspects of the film you just watched stand out to you, and what is your reaction to those things? (Be honest.)

**[Clip of Francis explaining the Biblical model of instinctive, authentic fear when encountering God.]**

5. What do you think it is about standing before God that quickly moves a person beyond respect and awe to outright fear?

In Isaiah 6, God commissions Isaiah to speak on His behalf. Before God begins speaking, however, He shows Himself to Isaiah in a vision. As we read about this vision and Isaiah’s response, we get a taste of what it would be like to encounter God.

Read Isaiah 6:1-5 aloud. It can be easy to read a passage like this without thinking about it. Try having one person read the passage slowly while the rest of the group closes their eyes and attempts to picture the scene being described.

6. How does Isaiah portray God in the passage you just read?
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7. Consider the angels (seraphim) in this passage. What is significant about the way they are described (their wings, their actions, their words)? What does the angel's response to God reveal about Him?
  8. Try to put yourself in Isaiah's shoes – what must it have been like to encounter God in that way? (Note Isaiah's response.)
  9. We can learn a lot by seeing how people in the Bible responded to God. But what about today? It is often much more difficult to see God for who He is in our modern environment. Why do you think that is? What keeps us from seeing God in all His fear-inspiring glory?
  10. In the film, Francis talks about the comfort that God offers to those who fear Him. We'll discuss that aspect next week, but why do you think it's important to start with a healthy fear of God before immediately consoling ourselves with thoughts of God's love and compassion?
  11. It is usually easier to think about concepts like fearing God in an abstract way. Think about how the fear of the Lord should affect your everyday life. How should a person who fears God live differently from a person who does not fear God?

Spend some time in prayer. Before you begin talking however, spend a couple of minutes in silence. Try to picture God as Isaiah saw Him, sitting on His throne, exalted, with angels shouting about His holiness. Then picture yourself coming humbly before Him. Pray for a heart that truly fears Him.

Before your next group, we recommend completing the first session in the *BASIC.WHO IS GOD? Follower's Guide*. The Follower's Guide is designed to lead you to prayerfully and thoughtfully consider how the material you have just discussed should play out in your personal life.