



THE
COURAGE
TO RISE
ABOVE

FAITH UNDER FIRE

FAMILY DISCUSSION GUIDE

FAITH UNDER FIRE

OVERVIEW

TRAILER: FAITHUNDERFIREFILM.COM

After an exhausting night saving a young girl from a raging house fire, Fireman Tom Hatcher is at the end of his rope. He couldn't save his wife from cancer - and worse yet - his six year old daughter, Tiffany, is now facing the same possible fate.

When he finds himself in a cold jail cell after attacking a pastor out of frustration with a seemingly absent God, Tom begins to reflect on his downward spiral into despair. But with the help and persistent friendship of the very man he assaulted, Tom is challenged to face his grief and embrace faith in the darkest hours of his life.

HOW TO USE:

Life is full of unexplainable challenges and hardships. Sometimes it is difficult to see God through the lens of our circumstances. Even more, it can seem impossible to explain to children why the God they have been told loves them allows bad things to happen to good people.

This Faith Under Fire Family Discussion Guide is a tool for you to use with your family as you prepare to watch the film. Shared family discussion is an opportunity for you to serve as a mentor to your children. Created for you by **Sonlight Curriculum**, our goal is to provide tools that help you engage with your children so you might bring your own knowledge and insights to the learning process. It is our hope that this guide might add value to your film-watching experience and provide opportunity for memory-making conversation.



Celebrating 30 Years of Connecting Families and Helping Kids Love to Learn

FAITH UNDER FIRE

TOPIC: SACRIFICE

CLIP 1: SACRIFICE

Sacrifice - to surrender or give up, or permit injury or disadvantage to, for the sake of something (or someone) else.

A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for a time of adversity.
- Proverbs 17:17

There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. John 15:13

When asked what they want to do when they grow up, many children excitedly say they want to become a firefighter. It is unlikely that they realize the level of commitment required of such a life choice, but what a wonderful opportunity to introduce the idea of developing the practice of sacrifice, even at a young age.

For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin.
- Romans 3:25

Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us ...
- Ephesians 5:2

In this clip, we watch firefighter Tom Hatcher run into a burning home to save the life of a child. He sets aside worry and fear for his own life to rescue another. Jesus did that for you and me. He paid the ultimate sacrifice for us by giving up his life that we might live.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Can you think of a time when someone sacrificed for you? How did that make you feel?
2. What does sacrifice look like in day-to-day life? Brainstorm practical ways to develop an attitude of sacrifice in your everyday life.
3. Another way of describing an attitude of sacrifice is by calling it a "servant's spirit". If it is difficult to imagine ways that you might sacrifice on a daily basis, perhaps describe some ways you can regularly serve others.

FAITH UNDER FIRE

TOPIC: WORRY

CLIP 2: WORRY

Worry - to suffer from disturbing thoughts, to fret. To have doubt or fear about a situation or decision. To experience apprehension.

So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. -
Matthew 6:34

Worry weighs a person down; an encouraging word cheers a person up.
- Proverbs 12:25

An old Swedish proverb says "Worry gives a small thing a big shadow". Worry affects young and old, big and small, and is no respecter of race, position, wealth, or intelligence. Worry draws you into a black hole (or a big shadow) and keeps you from clearly seeing what is true and what is not. We can either peer at God through the lens of our difficult circumstances, or we can view the truth about those things we cannot change through a "God lens".

Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.
- I Peter 5:7

Do not worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.
- Philippians 4:6

Tom and Sarah Hatcher had a wonderful life together with a nice home and an active daughter. This clip shows us that our brightest hopes and dreams can be dashed in a moment. We then have a choice to make. We can give in to the sorrow and grief of the moment, believing that we are in charge of our future and worrying about what comes next. Or we can make the choice to turn from worry and to speak truth to ourselves.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.
- Philippians 4:8-9

FAITH UNDER FIRE

TOPIC: WORRY

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How did Tom Hatcher choose to respond to the reality of his wife's death? What do you think he was worrying about most?
2. Name some circumstances that you are currently facing that cause you to worry or become anxious.
3. Do you believe that God is bigger than those worries? What verses in scripture support your answer?
4. Brainstorm ways that you can "speak truth" to yourself about your own worries. What are practical ways to keep worry from casting a big shadow in your life?

FAITH UNDER FIRE

TOPIC: JUDGEMENT

CLIP 3: JUDGEMENT

Judgment – the forming of an opinion or conclusion from circumstances; to pass sentence on a person.

He will delight in obeying the LORD. He will not judge by appearance or make a decision based on hearsay. Isaiah 11:3

Do not judge others, and you will not be judged.

- Matthew 7:1

The musical group Casting Crowns wrote a rather convicting song a few years back titled If We Are the Body. The song describes a group of worshippers sitting in church on a Sunday morning and the judgment they pass on strangers who visit. The chorus says, in part, “Jesus paid much too high a price for us to pick and choose who should come. We are the body of Christ.” It is easy to look at someone’s life and draw a conclusion (or pass judgment) about their actions and decisions without knowing what circumstances they are facing. We often act out of self-righteousness when we should act out of love.

Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn others, or it will all come back against you. Forgive others, and you will be forgiven.

- Luke 6:37

Look beneath the surface so you can judge correctly.

- John 7:24

In this clip we see Tom and Tiffany asked to leave the church because of the way Tom acted during his previous visit. Assuming we know the motivation behind a person’s actions will often lead us to incorrect conclusions. Things might have turned out differently if the men had greeted Tom and Tiffany with words of welcome and encouragement as opposed to exhibiting judgment and dismissal.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever been unfairly judged by someone? Describe how you felt when that happened?
2. What do you think Jesus meant when he told the crowd to “look beneath the surface”?
3. If we are indeed the body of Christ, what are some practical ways we can demonstrate that we are?
4. Brainstorm things you might say to welcome a visitor to your church.

FAITH UNDER FIRE

TOPIC: FRIENDSHIP

CLIP 4: FRIENDSHIP

Friendship – the state of being a friend; the act of giving assistance.

There are “friends” who destroy each other, but a real friend sticks closer than a brother. - Proverbs 18:24

The heartfelt counsel of a friend is as sweet as perfume and incense.
- Proverbs 27:9

Vincent van Gogh is quoted as saying “Close friends are truly life’s treasures. With gentle honesty, they are there to guide and support us, to share our laughter and our tears.” True friendship is a rare commodity. It requires time and energy to develop and takes commitment to maintain. One of the most valuable character traits we can cultivate in ourselves is that of being a good friend.

Never abandon a friend – either yours or your father’s.
- Proverbs 27:10

As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.
- Proverbs 27:17

During the time when Tiffany is hospitalized some of Tom’s friends show up at his home to provide a meal and encouragement (see today’s clip). Not only do they share a meal together, but David listens while Tom shares his frustration and anger over his situation. Instead of reacting in anger to Tom’s outburst, David offers understanding and a hug. Sometimes the most valuable thing a friend has to offer is a listening ear.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Who would you consider to be your best friend? What makes them such a good friend?
2. Have you ever had the opportunity to be a good friend to someone who is going through a difficult situation? What was the hardest part of that situation?
3. Discuss how you might know when it is best to offer words of advice to a friend, and when it is better to simply listen and understand.

FAITH UNDER FIRE

TOPIC: FAITH

CLIP 5: FAITH

Faith - confidence or trust in a person or thing; belief that is not based on proof.

Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see. - Hebrews 11:1

You know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.
- James 1:3

Author John Piper says "We give glory to God when we trust him to do what he has promised to do - especially when all human possibilities are exhausted. Faith glorifies God." The eleventh chapter of the book of Hebrews is a long list of individuals who had faith that God was good in spite of their circumstances: well-known Bible names like Abraham, Sarah, Jacob, and Joseph ... all people who had confidence in God even when it seemed their situation was hopeless.

Let your roots grown down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught ... - Colossians 2:7

He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others.
- II Corinthians 1:4

In this clip, Pastor Dan tells Tom that faith means that your brokenness is not the end of your story. We often ask why in the midst of our trials, but what we really should be asking God is what He wants us to do as a result of our circumstances. We seldom understand the purpose for our struggles in the moment, but faith in God's goodness allows us to move forward anyway. Often it is years later that we recognize purpose in our suffering because it allows us to encourage others who experience similar circumstances.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Think about the last time you walked through a difficult situation. Did you ask God why He allowed it to happen? Did you get the answer you were hoping for?
2. Have you ever been able to encourage someone who is walking through a trial because you have been down that same road?
3. Can you think of someone you know who is currently experiencing difficult circumstances? Brainstorm practical ways you can comfort and encourage them.
4. What did a personal trial teach you about yourself or about God?



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