

HEART CONNEX

Truth Flowing from One Generation to the Next—Through Strong Heart Connections

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Freedom from Worry and Fear—Richard Ross, Ph.D.

1. Heart Surprise (Today a parent goes first): Say: **You will probably face a serious crisis in your life one of these days. One thing I want you to remember when you face that crisis is that you can trust God. He is faithful. I know this because...**

2. Read Scripture: Invite a family member to pray. Ask family members to read Esther 8:5-16. Discuss the Truth and Untruths in light of these verses.

Truth

- God can free believers from their worries and fears.

Untruths

- God doesn't care about the tough situations I face.
- God can't do anything about my worries and fears.
- I've got to rely on myself to get out of tough situations.

3. Explore Scripture: Reread today's verses and say: **Esther's story reveals how God is faithful to help believers who are facing tough times.** Point out that the king had made an earlier decision that allowed people to attack and kill the Jews in his kingdom. Say: **Persian law didn't allow for the repeal of any decree made by a king. Because of Esther's plea, though, the king declared a new law that gave Jews the freedom to protect themselves.** Share that the king made sure the new law was translated into various languages, and he sent riders to all the lands to communicate how the new law would help the Jews. Say: **The Jews responded by protecting themselves and celebrating God's deliverance.** Remind your family that sometimes God acts in mysterious ways to help His people. Emphasize that Esther's plea and the king's response are examples of how God hears and responds to our prayers.

4. Think It Through: A teenager will lead this step.

5. Nail It Down: Say: **Imagine failing a test that meant a lot to your overall grade for the year.** Ask: **How would you feel?** Discuss responses. Say: **Suppose your teacher announced that she was throwing out the test scores.** Ask: **How would that change your feelings?** Point out that such a turn of events would be cause for celebration, but what happened to the Jews is much more important than any test. Say: **Imagine the joy they experienced. When we stop to think about it, we all have reasons to thank God for the freedom He provides from worry or fear.**

6. Pray: A teenager will lead this prayer.

7. Blessing: Say: **May God bless you daily with freedom from worry and fear.**

Parent Tip: The research is overwhelming. Parental harmony contributes enormously to the emotional health of children, while marital conflict has devastating effects. Parents who are warm, romantic, and even appropriately affectionate in front of their children take a giant step toward raising kingdom kids.