

# FEAR NOT

READ: JOSHUA 1:9; ISAIAH 41:10

*Editor's note: This story addresses school violence and may not be suitable for some children.*

Paxton had a sick feeling in his stomach on the bus ride home from school as he thought about the day's events. He couldn't get the shrieking alarm or the wide, frightened eyes of his classmates out of his mind. Even though it had turned out to be a false alarm, Paxton could barely concentrate the rest of the day.

That night, he picked at his dinner. Mom took off her gun and badge and sat down at the table to eat with him.

"Officer Dwiley told me there was a false alarm at the school today," Mom said. "A man walked past the office without signing in. Everyone's on high alert after what happened at the school in Stenson last week. I'm glad they're being extra cautious, but it must have been scary for you. Paxton?" Mom frowned. "Are you feeling okay?"

Paxton slowly shook his head. "My stomach and head hurt all the time."

Mom reached across the table to squeeze his hand. "A school shooting is a very scary thing, even for adults."

"Easy for you to say," Paxton muttered, pulling his hand away. "You carry a gun."

Mom sighed. "Carrying a gun doesn't make me less scared. While you were at school today, I was praying for your safety and saying that verse I told you about."

"God hasn't given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind," Paxton recited.

Mom smiled. "Fear is a natural response when something horrible like this happens. But we can't let it overwhelm us. We have to choose to trust God to protect us and those we love. And even if something terrible were to happen, Jesus would be there with us. He died and rose again to defeat sin and death so we could live with Him forever. Even though scary things happen in this world, we can have peace knowing He is always with us." Mom squeezed Paxton's hand again. "Will you say that verse at school tomorrow whenever your stomach or head start hurting?"

"Okay," Paxton said. "I'll try."

"Good," said Mom. "And I'd like you to talk to the student counselor too. It's good to have another adult there at school who knows how you're feeling." ♥

CHRISTA HOGAN

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## FEAR NOT—GOD IS WITH YOU

**KEY VERSE:** FOR GOD HAS NOT GIVEN US A SPIRIT OF FEAR, BUT OF POWER AND OF LOVE AND OF A SOUND MIND. 2 TIMOTHY 1:7

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Do the bad things that happen in this world fill you with fear? You may feel scared when you hear about them in the news or from friends. Maybe you even know someone involved in a scary incident. Whenever you feel afraid, turn to Jesus. He loves you and wants you to feel His peace. Trust Him to be with you when you feel afraid, and talk to an adult about your feelings too.