

LifeGroup Discussion Questions
Matthew 6:25-34 & Philippians 4:6-9
June 21, 2020

Overview:

In researching the topic of worry I came across a list of what stresses people based on their age. From ages 2-4 some of the biggest worries in children deal with potty training and sleeping in a room by themselves. From ages 5-7 they worry about the dark and about fire. From the ages of 8-11 they worry about failing at school and peer rejection. From ages 12-18 they worry about how they look to others and their safety. From ages 18-20 they worry about romantic rejection and being an adult. Basically, worry begins at a very young age for a lot of us. It begins with something as simple as potty training to worry about being an adult. All the while we lose precious time, by worrying, that cannot be regained. Even worse, all the worry we have done from potty training to adulthood didn't accomplish anything.

Jesus addresses the topic of worry in Matthew 6 when He states, "do not be anxious about your life." If we are not anxious about life then what exactly can we be anxious about? Jesus continues by talking about the basic necessities of life like food and clothing, then He starts to illustrate His point. Jesus makes the point that if God is capable of taking care of birds and flowers He is more than capable of taking care of you.

Sometimes when we read the words "don't be anxious about anything" it seems like Jesus is being dismissive of our problems. How can He so casually say not to be anxious? It is a matter of perspective. Does your huge problem allow room for a God sized solution or have you taken control and pushed God out of the equation? Jesus didn't die on the cross for birds or for flowers and yet He makes sure they are taken care of. If God is willing to take care of these small things that He didn't die for will He not also take care of you who He did die for.

Jesus challenges us to seek first God and His kingdom. This is the first step to fighting stress. This doesn't minimize our problems, but it maximizes God's power to handle them. The Apostle Paul mentions focusing on God in Philippians 4:8 when he challenges us to think about the things of God and not the temporary things of this earth. This is mentioned again in 2 Corinthians 4:17 when Paul challenges us to fix our eyes on the eternal, not the things which pass away.

Feel better? Don't be anxious and fix your eyes on Jesus. For the majority of us we still may not feel comfort from our daily worries. Freedom from worry comes in surrender. A lot of our stress is caused by our desire to control all aspects of our lives. When we don't have control we feel afraid. At some level all stress is based in

fear whether real or imagined. We will let God in when big things (death, job loss, divorce) happen but for most of our issues we want to feel in control and handle them ourselves. God is not into negotiating control of our lives. There is only one deal He is willing to make which is: 100% of you for 100% of Him. Anything less means we are not putting God first and seeking His kingdom. Anything less means we are focusing on the temporary and not the eternal. Anything less means we will have worry and stress (fear) in our lives.

Bible Study:

Mind Games

1. Did you know that if you stare at someone's hairline while talking with them they will begin to feel insecure? Feel free to try this in your group.
2. Name the Colors out loud – don't read the words that are written.



3. Read Matthew 6:25-34. What does it mean to first seek God's Kingdom? How does this help you when dealing with stress?
4. Read Philippians 4:6-9. How is it possible to pray with an attitude of thanksgiving when you are stressed?
5. Paul mentions a peace that surpasses our understanding. Have you ever felt a level of peace beyond your ability think or comprehend (one that just brings rest)? What brings you the most peace in times of worry?
6. How much your time, energy, and effort is directed to worrying about things you have no control over? Think about some of your biggest worries from the past. Did stressing over them change anything?
7. In what ways is worry based in fear? How is worry based in a desire to be in complete control?
8. How can being in Christian community help you deal with your worries?