

## **How to Use Sermon Resources**

- **READ AHEAD TOGETHER** - MCG's should use the Devotional at the end of this resource as a reading plan for the week leading up to your meeting.
- **SIT UNDER THE WORD** - This resource is filled with scripture references. Read them aloud, together before you answer any questions.
- **APPLY TRUTH** - The goal is deep discussion and application, not necessarily to complete this resource. Don't squash a good discussion. If you get into something important along the way that's fine.

## **Small Group Discussion Guide**

**Opening Prayer** [ 2 mins ]

**Use the Overview** [ 5 mins ]

- Cover any key points for people who missed parts or all of the sermon

**Scripture Deep Dive** [ 30-40 mins ]

- Opening Question
- Read the scripture for each question then ask the question. Some have multiple scriptures.

**Close in Prayer**

- In this extended prayer time, ask others to pray as they feel led, pray in a circle, pray over one another, pray to your left, or pray for someone specific. Whatever seems best.

**Split Time (if applicable)**

- Men with men, women with women
- Share in a circle. "What's one thing you want to celebrate? What do you need prayer and accountability for?"
- After everyone shares, pray in a circle for the person to your left/right.

## **SERMON OVERVIEW**

### **“Questions Jesus Asked: Can You Add A Moment to Your Life By Worrying?” - Matt 6:24-34**

**Sermon Summary:** This sermon addresses the universal struggle with worry, anxiety, and fear through Jesus' question in Matthew 6. The pastor establishes that worry is primarily a theological problem rooted in our failure to trust God's sovereignty rather than a psychological or sociological issue. Through examining biblical examples of worry—from Adam and Eve to Peter—the message reveals that even faithful believers struggle with anxiety. The sermon presents worry as an attempt to control the uncontrollable, which turns our focus inward, prioritizes self-protection over trust, and can dominate our entire lives.

#### **Key Points:**

- Americans today are more anxious than ever despite being safer, wealthier, and more connected than any previous generation
- Worry is primarily a theological problem, not a sociological, philosophical, or psychological one
- Worry is an attempt to control the uncontrollable
- Worry turns our focus inward, prefers self-protection over trust, and can become life-dominating
- Anxiety is running away from something but never knowing what to run to
- The remedy for worry includes: seeking first God's kingdom, practicing gratitude, and examining our thoughts
- Recent secular research confirms what the Bible has always taught: gratitude fights anxiety
- We must filter our thoughts through a biblical grid asking if they are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, and praiseworthy

#### **Scripture Reference:**

- Matthew 6:25-34 (primary focus)
- 1 Samuel 15:24
- Philippians 4:6
- Philippians 4:8-9

# Scripture Deep Dive

## Opening Question

Matthew 6:25–34 - After reading this whole passage once as a group, identify one specific area of life (finances, health, children, future, relationships, work, etc.) where you are most tempted to worry. Why?

## Point 1: The Reality of Worry

### 1. Biblical Examples of Worriers

**Read: Genesis 12:10–13; Genesis 16:1–4; Exodus 4:10–13**

Compare Abraham's lie about Sarah, Sarah's plan with Hagar, and Moses' objections to God's call. In each passage, identify (1) what they feared might happen, and (2) what they chose to do instead of trusting God. How do these specific fears and actions parallel common ways Christians today respond when they worry?

### 2. Worry in the Church Today

**Read: 1 Samuel 15:24; Matthew 26:69–75; 2 Timothy 1:6–8**

Saul feared the people, Peter feared consequences for identifying with Jesus, and Timothy appears to fear opposition. In each case, state how worry or fear directly affected their obedience. Based on these examples, what does persistent worry almost inevitably do to a believer's obedience and witness?

## Point 2: The Reasons for Worry (A Theological Problem)

### 3. Worry as a View of God

**Read: Matthew 6:26–30**

How does chronic worry about basic needs (food, clothing, future security) imply that we don't trust the Lord to provide for our basic needs?

### 4. Worry as Attempt to Control the Uncontrollable

**Reading: Matthew 6:27; Proverbs 3:5–6; James 4:13–16**

Jesus says worry cannot add one moment to life. Using these three passages, identify at least two concrete ways people try to "add a moment" (control outcomes) through planning or anxiety. Then answer: what is the key difference between wise planning that trusts God and anxious planning that tries to control God?

### **Point 3: The Remedy for Worry – Seek First the Kingdom**

#### 5. Reordering Priorities

**Read: Matthew 6:31–33; Colossians 3:1–3**

For Jesus Followers, what kind of change is the Holy Spirit trying to make in the way we think and seek after “these things” (basic needs)? Using Colossians 3:1–3, describe one practical change in priorities (time, money, attention, or decisions) that would clearly show someone is seeking God’s kingdom before “these things.”

### **Point 3: The Remedy for Worry – Practice Gratitude**

#### 6. Gratitude as a Specific Response to Anxiety

**Read: Philippians 4:6–7; 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18**

Explain why “with thanksgiving” is essential—not optional—in presenting requests to God. Using 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18, what does consistent thanksgiving reveal about your view of God when your circumstances have not yet changed?

### **Point 3: The Remedy for Worry – Examine Your Thoughts**

#### 7. Testing Anxious Thoughts

**Read: Philippians 4:8–9; 2 Corinthians 10:3–5**

Using Philippians 4:8, choose one current anxious thought and honestly evaluate it against at least four of Paul’s criteria (true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, praiseworthy). According to 2 Corinthians 10:5, what does it practically look like to “take that thought captive” and make it obey Christ?

#### 8. From Self-Focus to God-Focus

**Read: (Matthew 6:34; 1 Peter 5:6–7)**

Matthew 6:34 says not to worry about tomorrow; 1 Peter 5:7 says to cast all your cares on God because He cares for you. Identify one “tomorrow” concern (something not yet real but feared) that currently occupies your mind. Then, using both passages, state specifically (1) what Jesus commands you NOT to do with that concern and (2) what Peter commands you TO do with it instead.