

TALK IT OVER

First Things First

Week 1: *First Things First*

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Icebreaker: What's one thing you're looking forward to this year?

Matthew 6:25-32 (NLT) "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

First Things First

- ✓ **Context – that which goes with the text**
 - ✓ Author: Matthew – first of the gospel writers
 - ✓ In the middle of Jesus' longest teaching – Sermon on the Mount
 - ✓ How to live as a follower of Jesus and serve as a member of God's Kingdom
- ✓ **Observation – what do we see?**
 - ✓ "worry" and "worrying" are repeated words
 - ✓ Addresses the basic necessities of life; what we eat, drink, wear
 - ✓ Contrasts and comparisons
 - a. Life is more important than food
 - b. Body is more important than clothes
 - c. Birds don't worry about food, but have plenty to eat
 - d. Flowers don't worry about clothing, but look great
 - e. Pagans worry about these things; believers don't have to

- ✓ **Interpretation – what did this mean to the original hearers?**
 - ✓ Agrarian culture – dependent on weather for food and water
 - ✓ Two options: worry or trust God
 - ✓ Pagans = Greek *ethnos* = people joined by practicing similar customs, referring to the unbelieving Gentiles = worry a lot
 - ✓ God has the ability to provide everything we need when we put Him first.
- ✓ **Application – what does this mean for us today?**
 - ✓ We live in a very different context – not worried about necessities
 - ✓ *Matthew 6:33 (NIV) But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*
 - a. First = Greek: *proton*: before, at the beginning, in the first place
 - b. God's Kingdom – External – primary topic of Sermon on the Mount. God's Kingdom is already here AND not yet fully experienced.
 - c. God's Righteousness – Internal – make God our first priority in every decision that we make; we become more like Jesus
 - ✓ *Proverbs 14:12 (NLT) There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death.*
 - ✓ *Romans 14:17-18 (NIV) For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval.*
 - ✓ Big Idea: When give God our first and our best, He takes care of the rest.

Discussion Questions

- ✓ What is competing with God for first place in your life right now? (what gets my time, attention, and money?)
- ✓ If God could meet ANY need in your life in 2024, what would be your top priority?