

(1) An Opening THOUGHT

“Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, it empties today of its strength.”

Corrie ten Boom | *Clippings from My Notebook*

(2) Read the TEXT Together

²⁵ “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? ²⁶ 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? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?”

²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ 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? ³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

Matthew 6:25-34 (NIV)

(3) Key POINTS

- Jesus commands us not to worry about our daily provision (food, drink and clothes).
- Don't worry reason 1: God provides for his creation, and we are the most valuable part.
- Don't worry reason 2: Worry is not a positive use of our time.
- Don't worry reason 3: When we worry about our daily provision, we're imitating those who don't understand what is most important in life.
- Don't worry reason 4: Our good, heavenly Father knows what we need.
- The (single) key to shift from worry to joy is to make God (and his work) the top priority of our lives.

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Do you have questions or comments about this resource?
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GROUPS RESOURCE

A WEEKLY GUIDE TO HELP GROUPS FOLLOW JESUS TOGETHER

(4) Looking to the WORD

Jesus tells us in this passage to not worry, or to not give things anxious concern.

- What reasons or examples does Jesus give us to not worry?
- What does Jesus specifically allude to as things people often worry about?
- What alternative course of action does Jesus command us to take?

(5) Looking at our WORLD

- As a GROUP, talk about worry in today's culture. Where do you see it? What impact is it having on relationships, communities, schools, places of work, etc.?
- What kind of impact/influence does it have on people around us when we live a life of peace (rather than worry)? What does it do for our witness?

(6) Looking at our LIVES

Jesus tells us to "...seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33). Jeremy quoted Matthew Henry on Sunday: "Let your waking thoughts be of God... Let him that is the First, have the first."

- How are you doing with seeking God's Kingdom first?
- What is one way your GROUP can support and encourage you towards this?
- Read Matthew 6:25-34 in The Message translation. What especially challenges you about what you've read, and what is something that you can put into practice today?

(7) Looking AHEAD and PRAYING Together

Here are this week's On-Ramps:

- How is "do not worry" going for me? And do I want to change?
- How much energy and joy is worry stealing from me?
- What is competing with God in my thoughts and preoccupations?
- What would need to change in my life for God to become my top priority?

In what ways might you take action on these? Include this in your prayer time.