

(CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER continued)

Written Worry: Set a timer for three minutes. Have everyone write down single words of things they are currently worried about today, this week, this month, and this year. Explain that the goal is to write as many worries as possible on one page of your journal. Have each person pick three worries to share with the group. Do not elaborate at this time, and resist the temptation to solve each other's problems. Instead, receive their sharing in humility. Once all have shared, pick a question to discuss together.

- What worries are most common for our group?
- How have your worries changed over the past decade?
- Are there items on your list that you think God will not help you with?
- Does writing and speaking your worries help you worry less or more?
- Leave some time now or at the end of small group for elaboration via journaling or sharing in pairs as needed.

CONNECT WITH SCRIPTURE (Read the passages and review the sermon outline. Then select the best questions or customize the questions for your group):

- Read Matthew 6:25-34
- Read the main points from the sermon outline.
- What topic in the sermon and scripture stood out to you?
- The passage begins with the word therefore- a conjunctive adverb- which begs the question: what is it connected to? How is verse 24 connected to the topic of worry?
- Why do you think Jesus used the examples of food and clothing as objects of worry?
- What point is Jesus making when he looks to the birds and the flowers?
- How does this passage characterize God's provision?
- Why is the command do not worry stated three times in this short passage?

CONNECT WITH GOD'S MISSION IN THE WORLD (select one question for discussion)

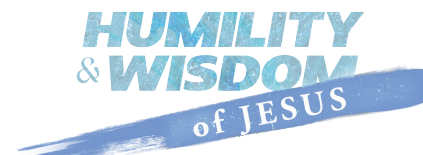
- How does worry interfere with your spiritual growth?
- What links have you made between worry and your physical or emotional health?
- How does having faith in God's provision impact your witness to the world?
- How do we seek first his Kingdom and his righteousness?
- What is the best way to deal with worry and anxiety as a follower of Jesus Christ?

PRAYER

End your time in prayer writing down any prayer requests in your journal. Take a moment to note any prayer requests that God has answered from previous weeks. This is a great opportunity to remind the group of the Lord's provision.

MESSAGE OUTLINE

November 21, 2021
Pastor Jamie Nelson



PART 4—MATTHEW 6:25-34

Mathew 6:25-34 (NIV)

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.

1. God knows your needs.
2. Have faith in God's provision.
3. Seek the Kingdom of God first.
4. Deal with trouble in smaller bites.

(Message Outline continued on next page)

MESSAGE OUTLINE (continued)

QUOTES:

"Some people spend so much time worrying about what might happen that they never enjoy what is happening [now] . . . Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday." —**Billy Graham**

Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow. It empties today of its strength. —**Corrie Ten Boom**

Earthly possessions dazzle our eyes and delude us into thinking that they can provide security and freedom from anxiety. Yet all the time they are the very source of anxiety. —**Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

UPCOMING SBPC ADVENT EVENTS!

Christmas Concerts

Sunday, December 5, 9:00 and 11:00 am

Alternative Christmas Market

Sunday, December 5, 9:00 am–1:00 pm

Women's Christmas Brunch

Saturday, December 11, 9:00 am

Christmas Eve Services

Friday, December 24, 3:00 and 5:00 pm

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS—November 21, 2021 *Humility and Wisdom of Jesus—Part 4: Matthew 6:25-34*

CONNECT WITH GOD (choose one of these practices that best suits your group or use a practice from a previous week)

- **Being with God:** Mark Thibodeaux, an expert in Ignatian Spirituality, has divided prayer into four stages. The most elementary prayers are talking at God, where we say grace at dinner, ask for help, and make statements of thanksgiving. Eventually we begin talking to God, using our own creative and imaginative language. Next we stop talking and our prayer becomes listening to God with intent and expectation that the Holy Spirit will speak to our hearts. Finally prayer can become being with God. At this point all transactional prayer language ceases, and we simply recognize and enjoy God being with us without the anxiety of saying the right thing, thinking the right thing, or hearing the right thing.

For the next three minutes simply be with God. Don't ask for anything or listen for anything, just acknowledge God's presence in the quiet, in the loud, in the awkward, and in the uncomfortable. After the time is up, discuss your experience together.

- **One Minute:** Set a timer for one minute. Sit in silence, letting go of the anxieties of the day, the worries of tomorrow, and the urgency of the present. Allow the anxious thoughts to drift away and focus your heart on Jesus Christ.
- **Breath Prayer:** This ancient form of prayer is a reminder of the nearness of God in everyday life and his provision— even in each breath we take. As we breathe in, we pray in our mind and heart, Lord Jesus Christ... and as we exhale, pray, have mercy on me. Do this in silence, together at your own pace, until everyone has prayed/breathed this ten times.

CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER

Journaling: Many spiritual practices this year will require a journal. If you are a small group leader be prepared with paper and pen for those who are without. Please remember that there is no right way to journal. Journals can be intermittent, upside down, written, drawn, or doodled. They are a way to capture what God is doing in you over time. Journaling with your small group will include a prompt; however, in your time alone with God, allow the Spirit to be your leader.

(CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER continued on the back panel.)