

SESSION 1: SEEKING GOD IN OUR WORRY

Watch the video or read the script together as a group; then discuss the following questions. Keep in mind the questions are meant to prompt conversation, so don't feel the need to use or discuss every question.

BIBLE REFERENCES

Matthew 6:25-27, 26:36-46

QUESTIONS

1. Is worry a sin?
2. Why do you worry?
3. Does knowing that everything is in God's control bring you comfort? How can you remind yourself of this?
4. God is our Provider, God is perfect, and God is peace. Find Bible verses that you can use to reinforce these truths in your life.
5. As a group, come up with a list of other attributes of God that will help you combat worry.
6. When you have a friend that is overcome with worry, what do you say to them? How can you share the security and strength found in Christ with them?
7. How do we replace worrying with seeking?
8. When you find yourself worrying and turn to God in prayer, what will your prayer include? (Try to move beyond, "Help me to stop worrying," or "Take my worry away.")

[illegible]

SCRIPT & ADDITIONAL CONTEXT

SESSION 1: SEEKING GOD IN OUR WORRY

In this session, we'll look at what Jesus teaches us in the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew 6:25: *"Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"*

There are so many things in this world that we can worry about: taking tests, paying bills, raising children, failing health, and countless others. Worrying about these things consumes our time and our energy with no tangible benefits. So if worrying costs us so much, why do we do it?

Think about a situation you have lived through, or are currently living through, that causes you to worry. If there's anything in your power that could help the situation, you'd take the necessary actions to relieve the worry. However, when there is nothing left to do, we feel helpless and not in control. Worry is a symptom of fear and lack of control. When we're living through difficult situations, we fear the outcome. We want to control our circumstances, and when we can't, worry takes hold.

But what does Jesus tell us about worry? He reminds us to focus on the fact that God loves us: *"Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"* (Matthew 6:26). God cares for all of His creation, and yet as His children, we can be assured that He values us that much more. His love for us means that He is always watching over and caring for us.

When we recognize this, our trust in God expands. This is easier said than done in situations where things are not going as we hoped or planned. But that's the point: we cannot only trust God when everything is going smoothly. We have to trust in Him always. This becomes easier when we realize that while some things in life are under our control and within our ability, everything is under God's control and within His ability.

When you start to worry, intentionally seek God and remind yourself of His nature. God is our Provider – not our job, education, or personal abilities. We must acknowledge that He is the One who provides for us. It may not be in the way we expect or want, but He will provide. God is perfect. He never makes mistakes. Because of His perfection, we know that all the good in our lives comes from Him. And, God is peace.

He knows that by allowing us to become who He intends us to be, we'll attain His peace. This might mean living through situations that are difficult, but we know His nature and the promises He makes for our future.

Let's look at how Jesus relied on His Father when worry could have overtaken Him. Before Jesus' betrayal and eventual death, He went into the garden of Gethsemane. He knew the struggle and torment that lay ahead. He was counting on His friends, the disciples, for support, but they fell asleep, leaving Him alone in the garden. Even with the tremendous weight of the task ahead, Jesus was able to focus on His Father and pray to Him three separate times (Matthew 26:36-46). Jesus, our Teacher, demonstrates in this experience that the response to worry is prayer! Jesus intentionally sought His Father, reaffirmed His trust in God, and could then accept His role in the salvation of all people. No matter the circumstances, we can trust in God. Peace, security, and strength are found in Him alone.

Worry has no place in our lives if we have God in our lives. Jesus even says in His Sermon on the Mount, *"Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"* (Matthew 6:27 NIV). It is a matter of practicality to understand that worrying is useless. The more time we spend worrying, the less time we spend seeking God. By choosing to focus on Him and by following Jesus' example, we are laying up treasures in heaven.

Through Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, we can see that He wants our relationship with God to grow. For this to happen, we must depend on Him more and more, and surrender our desire for control. In moments of worry, let Him be the One who supports us as a foundation of strength.