



LEADER NOTES & KEY SCRIPTURES

LEADER TIPS: There isn't time to cover every question – **choose what's best for your group.**

“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)

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. 9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Philippians 4:4-9 (NIV)

Because of what Christ has done for us, the default disposition of the Christian’s heart is peace. The goal for this series is to evict the mindsets that are disturbing that peace. The occupants of your mind, such as fear, stress, worry and rejection, have no legal right to stay, but must be forced out. Let’s partner with the Holy Spirit to see that happen in our lives!

Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- What are the signs that indicate you are worrying too much? (Ex. Nail biting, cheek chewing, foot tapping, upset digestive tract, distraction, etc.)
- When do you tend to worry most: At work? Traveling to and from work? At home? At night?

Start thinking. Ask questions to get your group thinking.

- Take time to ensure that everyone filled-in all of the Sunday message notes blanks. You might follow this by asking: What stood out or spoke personally to from Sunday’s message?
- “Fear and anxiety are responses, but worry is a choice.” Discuss. Agree/Disagree? Why?
- “Your worries are wild.” What does that statement mean? (Answer: You may feel like they help you stay in control, but they can turn on you and take control of you, instead.)

Start sharing. Choose from these questions to create openness.

- Read Matthew 6:25-34 aloud. What legitimate grounds does Jesus give us in this passage for worry? (Answer: None, because of our loving Heavenly Father.)

At the heart of worry and anxiety is unbelief. When we worry, what are we not believing about **God**? (Ex. That He’s truly good, will care for our needs, understands our needs...)

What are we not believing about **ourselves** when we worry? (Ex. That God truly loves us, that we’re worthy of His care, that God hears us when we pray, etc...)

- On Sunday, Pastor Matt taught that God cares about the big things and the small things that touch our lives. Briefly share how you have experienced God’s concern for what others might consider insignificant matters in your life.
- Discuss some unhealthy ways to deal with worry and anxiety.
- Read Philippians 4:4-9 aloud. As you read, identify at least four responses on our part that can become pathways to the peace we desire. (Answers: we are to 1) rejoice in God regardless of circumstances, 2) be gracious and patient with all, 3) pray and present your needs to God and 4) receive God’s peace and respond to it with obedience.)
- Can you recall a time when you experienced God’s peace through prayer? If so, share with the group.



LEADER TIP: Stress confidentiality regarding anything that is shared in group!

LEADER TIP: You should begin to think about what is next for your group. We have one more week in the Disturbing the Peace series. Will your group continue to meet (even occasionally) through the holidays? Begin discussing this with group members (one-on-one preferably) before addressing it with the whole group. Be certain to speak with Pastor Dwayne about your plans as a leader and your group plans!

- Briefly review the David & Goliath narrative with your group (or have several people read it aloud): 1 Samuel 17:12-50.

Why do you suppose Goliath chose early morning and evening to come out and taunt the Israelites? *(This tactic robbed them of sleep by causing them to worry at the beginning of each new day as well as being the last thing on their minds before trying to sleep; He successfully drained their courage.)*

How does worry negatively impact you typically? *(Ex. Health, relationships, decision-making, loss of confidence, etc.)*

- Contrast the responses to Goliath's threats by Saul and David. Where do you suppose that David's confidence came from?
- Did it surprise you on Sunday when Pastor Matt said that we are most often more like Saul than David? What did he mean by this? *(Ex. We sometimes fear that Jesus isn't enough, so like Saul, we add our own armor – our own control, formulas, etc. – in an attempt to ensure success.)*

Start responding. Encourage everyone to be bold and pray with power.

- “Worry is a cage that we step into willingly” because we want to be in control. What is the Holy Spirit speaking to you tonight about your *worriedness*? Where is he asking you to release control to God?
- In which area of your life would you most like to experience God's peace?
- Before splitting the group into triads, tell them this truth: “You can worry or you can pray, but you can't do both at the same time.”

Have triad members share anything that causes them worry and pray for one another.

Start doing/serving. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Write a short, encouraging statement of truth you can tell yourself the next time you feel worried or overwhelmed.
- This week, determine to transform every worried thought into a prayer to God. Note how this practice impacts your week.