Small Group Discussion Guide: Week 3: Do Not be Anxious

Introduction: We are in week 3 of our sermon series called “Fearless”. This is a battle most of us face daily; FEAR of failure, FEAR of regret, FEAR of rejection. FEAR is an enemy that knows and leverages your weakness to render you powerless. It wages war on your heart and mind. It is a formidable opponent.

Do you worry? Are you anxious about something? Did you know that there is an actual term called “FOMO” or the Fear of Missing Out. This can cause us to become anxious and allows worry to set in about stuff. We can be anxious over money, relationships, material possessions, or even our daily needs like food. Often, we worry and become fearful of not having something we need, our worries turn into panic, which leads to anxiety. Anxiety can have a real negative affect on our bodies and minds.

Jesus knew that when we worry about things, we do not live with a kingdom mindset, and we do not live with our full faith in our heavenly father. He addressed this topic when he was teaching to a group of people on the sermon on the mount. Jesus challenged the way we think about worry and fear, calling
us to a deeper faith in our heavenly father. The best life for us is not found in fear and anxiety, but fully relying on God to supply our needs. Fearless living is finding courage from God to face those things in life that keep us from walking in all that we are called to be.

This week we will focus on Matthew 6:19-34, and 1 Kings 17:2-16

Read: Matthew 6:19-34

We will apply the H.E.A.R method of Bible study for this series.

- **Highlight:** Read and observe everything in the passage(s).
- **Explain:** Based on your reading, discover what the passage means in its context.
- **Apply:** Understand how the meaning of the passage affects your life.
- **Respond in Prayer:** Pray God’s word back to him, asking to believe, share, and put the Bible into practice in your life and relationships.

**Discussion Questions**

**Highlight**

Question 1: What do you notice from Matthew 6:19-34? Why do you think the two parts (of this passage fit together? (Matthew 6:19-24 & Matt 6:25-34) How do they fit?

Question 2: Jesus introduced this section of his sermon with the image of “treasures in heaven” (verse 20). What is heavenly treasure? (See also 2 Corinthians 4:18 and 2 Peter 3:10-14.)

Question 3: How does the image of darkened eyes in verses 22-23 support Jesus’ message in the verses immediately before and after it?

Question 4: Many of us are able to faithfully serve multiple “masters” at a time, including our jobs, families, school, and other responsibilities. Why, then, did Jesus say in verse 24 that it is impossible to serve two masters?

Question 5: Verses 25-34 are likely familiar to everyone who has spent time in Christian settings. How has our discussion of heavenly treasure and darkened eyes given you a new understanding of this “do not worry” passage?
Question 6: Verse 32 says “the pagans run after all these things.” What are “all these things,” and how do we as believers still “run after” them despite Jesus’ promise in verse 33?

Question 7: How does worry reveal a lack of faith?

**Explain**

Question 8: Why does verse 25 start out with therefore? What is he referring the “therefore” too?

In verses 25-27, Why does Jesus tell the listeners “NOT” to worry about our lives? Why does he use the illustration of birds and flowers to drive home this point?

Question 9: Verse 30 is a mind shift for us, and should pierce our hearts. Was Jesus being mean spirited here or was he asking us to focus on different way of living?

(Leader Insight) God is our provider. Faith requires action and a belief in something we cannot always see is not easy. Trusting in God to provide even the little things like food and water, clothing, and a place to live is not always easy, because we cannot see God. We tend to trust in what we can see. Money for example is something we can see and touch. Jesus is telling us that if we only trust in these things, then worry and anxiety are quick to follow. By putting our faith in God should help us to live with a different mindset. The Christian life should not be overwhelmed by worry and stress, but should reflect an inner peace that everything is going to be okay, that we have God on our side. Jesus says, “the pagans run after these things”, but we should be marked by a different lifestyle. Our lives should be noticeably different than the way pagans live. Often, we get too caught up in worrying over how we gain more, and causes stress and worry to show up, which in turn causes us to miss what God is doing. We compare our lives with people that have more, and this causes us to live as pagans do stressed out, worried and anxious.

**Read 1 Kings 17:2-16 on How God provides** *(this is another passage that helps drive home this point)*

Question 10: How did God provide for Elijah in these verses? Did Elijah know how God was going to provide for him when he left?

Question 11: In verses 7-11, how does God continue to provide for Elijah after the brook dried up?

Question 12: How did the widow have to get over her fear and allow the Lord to meet her needs. Did she know how it was going to end up?

Question 13: In verses 13-16, what do you notice about “faith” and “fear”? 
(Leader Insight) God is our provider. This story in 1 Kings should help us gain confidence that we can trust God. While this seems like a “miracle”, think about how God has provided for you in your own life. Both Elijah and the widow had to display a certain trust and faith in God even when they didn’t know all the details. We get a glimpse of 2 individuals (Elijah & the widow) and how God provided for them both. Elijah represents the person of faith who still had to trust that God was in control, and the widow who represents a person of fear and worry. She had to also put her faith in God because she knew that she only had enough flower and oil for one last meal. She didn't know where her next meal was going to come from literally, and was asked to share her last little bit of flower to make something for a complete stranger. I am sure she was worried and stressed out, but she had a faith anyway. This is the type of living, this fearless, living that God is asking us to partake in. The stronger our faith is in God, the less we have to worry about things like food and water. Both Jesus and Elijah had this inner peace that God was in control.

Apply

Question 14: Based on evidence from your lifestyle, do you think your eyes are dark in the areas of money, divine provision, and trust?

Question 15: Do these verses comfort your anxieties about being financially and spiritually provided for? If these verses don’t alleviate your worries, why do you think that’s the case?

Question 16: How can you walk in confidence that God will provide for you? Has he done so in the past? Give some examples.

Philippians 4:19:
“And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 4:6-7
“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus

Question 17: How do these two verses help alleviate your fear and anxiety?

Question 18: What is God showing you through this week’s discussion? Where do you need to trust him more? How are you going to do that?

Question 19: What are some specific areas of your life do you need to trust that God is in control?
Respond in Prayer

Next Steps-

First, praise God for all that he has blessed and provided for you.

• Next, confess ways in which you are not trusting God.

• Then, ask God for the faith and resolve to begin trusting God in these areas.

• Finally, thank God for his trustworthiness in all things.

Pray & Dismiss