

Vineyard Cincinnati: Questions Jesus Asked E-Group Study

8 week series - 4 week study group
VCC, 2020

Purpose of the group: To dig deeper into the weekend teaching, Apply God's word to our lives, Enjoy the community of God's church.

Process of the group: the group guidelines

People of the group: Introductions: Name, How long you've been part of Vineyard, one of your unusual quarantine coping skills.

Week 1: May 17th, 2020

Speaker: Beth Guckenberger

[Link to Video of Service](#)

Text: Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

(Matt 6:27, Luke 12:25) Addressing: Anxiety, uncertainty... spiritual confidence

Summary of the teaching:

Matthew 6:25-35

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."

Group facilitator provides a brief summary of the weekend message, highlighting key Scriptures and main points

Do news outlets seek to inform or incite worry? Give examples

Often stories focus on things that might or might not happen, that we have little influence over anyway, but threaten great disaster.

To the degree that news agencies do seek to incite worry, for what reason might they do that?

It grabs attention and gathers an audience, elevates the importance of the ones giving the news that is supposedly crucial. Creates a following. Not because it is the most productive thing to do.

On the following scale:

1-concern

2-time limited, topic specific worry

3-extended state of general anxiety

4-excessive rumination about possible impending catastrophe

Where do you live most often?

Where do you spike under high stress?

Some people may attempt to manage their worry by convincing themselves that what they are worrying about doesn't really matter after all. Is that what Jesus is advocating in Matthew 6?

Jesus is not saying that our material needs aren't important. He is saying that God will take care of them when we keep them in proper priority. When we seek God's kingdom first it keeps us well occupied so we can release the other things into God's care.

In the Old testament the nation of Israel was commanded to practice certain remembrances in the way of celebrations and memorials:

passover how the death angel caused Pharaoh to release the Hebrews - Exodus 12, Sabbath How the Lord brought them out of Egypt - Deut 5:12-14, monument of 12 stones from Middle of the Jordan river bed, their escape from Egypt's army - Joshua 4.

For what reason and to what end did God command Israel to have these celebrations?

To remember God's record of taking care of them in the past so they could have confidence in his care for the future; to increase their faith in his faithfulness.

Psalm 139:15-16 says, "My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them" (ESV).

The MSG version reads, "Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth; all the stages of my life were spread out before you, The days of my life all prepared before I'd even lived one day."

Scripture tells us that God has ordained the length of our days here on earth; we can trust that He will complete them.

How is this related to Matt. 6:27?

We can be encouraged by how intimately God knows each one of us and how carefully He has purposed our days here on earth. There is absolutely nothing, whether worry or anything else, that can add time to our lives. We have as much time as He has given us. How can we glorify Him with our lives? might be a more productive question than How can I live as long as possible?

When renewing the mind a practice that is taught is called mental rehearsal. This is the discipline of practicing a certain type of self-talk and the visualization of a specific outcome.

What does worrying mentally rehearse?

What does Jesus coach the disciples to mentally rehearse in Matthew 6?

Worry is the mental rehearsal of the devil being victorious, and faith is the mental rehearsal of God being victorious.

Much of our worry stems from imagining worst-case scenarios and then playing those out in our minds. We focus on “If” questions... What if I lose my job? What if my child gets sick?

In Barb Roose’s Bible study on Joshua, *Winning the Worry Battle*, she invites us to turn those “If” questions into faith-building statements that start with “God, if”...

God, if I lose my job, I know that You will continue providing for me and my family.

What “If” question is plaguing you right now, and would you be willing to turn it into a “God, if” statement?

Though you can’t control life events, you can control where you let your mind’s focus rest. In times of crisis we typically can’t think clearly enough to choose well. Instead we react with the most practiced response. And so soldiers repeatedly go through intense training to prepare them for combat.

What preparation might you do to increase the likelihood that you will respond with faith and not worry under the stress of spiritual warfare?

Remembering instances where you have seen God work in your life. Express gratitude for those times. Remind yourself of God’s character and nature. Make the mental decision to trust God and tell him frequently.

It’s fairly easy to identify sources of anxiety and uncertainty. When it comes to confidence - what is the source of our confidence? What is “spiritual confidence”?

Proverbs 3:26 instructs, “for the LORD will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being caught...” He is our confidence. He is unchanging and unshakeable; therefore, He is worthy of our trust. Our confidence cannot be in ourselves, our

resources, our loved ones, our circumstances, our efforts. All of those will fall short. But our God, who is mighty to save, is our confidence.