

WHY ARE YOU ANXIOUS?

Matthew 6:25-34

Why are you anxious?" This might seem like a silly question, since the stresses and strain of this life invite anxiety—so much so that it can feel as though there is no choice but to succumb. Jesus invites us to consider this question, but he also offers us solutions. He understood that there would be times of anxiety.

When my friend Joan feels anxious, she tries to identify the cause. She recognizes that anxiety affects her ability to think. So she practices deep breathing, which helps calm her enough to think more clearly. Even when she can't identify the exact cause for the anxiety, she knows when to press pause, examine her feelings, and then respond according to her need. This has become helpful for her.

Group Discussion. What are ways anxiety manifests itself? What are positive and negative ways you've seen anxiety handled?

Personal Reflection. When was your most recent time of anxiety? How did it affect you, and what did you do about it?

Our anxieties challenge what we believe about God's faithfulness. This passage of Scripture asks the question "Why worry?" and then reminds us of all the ways that God will provide. But not worrying is much easier said than done. Nevertheless, we do not *have* to worry—we have a choice, as difficult as that may seem. In this passage of Scripture, Jesus teaches about worry, prayer, and treasure investment. *Read Matthew 6:25-34.*

1. How could prayer and storing up treasures in heaven help in times of anxiety?
2. What are the reasons we are given not to worry about the basics of life (Matthew 6:25-26)?
3. What is the point that Jesus makes by asking if we can add an hour to our life by worrying (Matthew 6:27)?
4. Look again at the analogy of clothes and the flowers of the field (Matthew 6:28-29). How does this apply to your life?

5. Jesus reminds us that our heavenly Father knows what we need (Matthew 6:32). Why do we struggle to believe this truth?

6. The first part of Matthew 6:33 is a command. How can we seek God's kingdom and his righteousness?

7. How could seeking God's kingdom and righteousness avert worry and anxiety?

8. How can we let tomorrow "worry about itself" (Matthew 6:34)?

9. What sources of anxiety are you facing these days?

10. How can you allow God to handle any troubles you may have today?



Ask the Holy Spirit to remind you that you do not have to worry because God will provide.

NOW OR LATER

We tend to worry or become anxious when we lose sight of God's perspective. He tells us not to worry—that we don't *need* to worry. Write a prayer to God acknowledging him as your provider.