

## **I'M WORRIED**

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### **STUFF YOU WILL NEED**

- copies of Matthew 6:25–34
- dress-up clothes
- large sheets of paper
- markers

### **CHECKING IN**

Before you meet together, take a few minutes to be still and to pray. Open the session by talking together about these questions:

**What has been going on with you this week?**

**Which of the following would you rather do:**

- eat cold pizza or drink warm milk?
- empty the trash or wash the dog?
- take a math test or run a mile?
- sing a solo or change a tire?
- ride a jet ski or ride a horse?
- do your homework today or leave it until tomorrow?

### **EXPLORING THE WORD**

**Scripture: Matthew 6:25–34**

Give each person a copy of Matthew 6:25–34 printed on a sheet of paper. Ask people to form small groups. Invite each group to present the message of the scripture in a short skit—either an opera, a western, a TV hospital drama, or a nature documentary. Have dress-up clothes available. When the groups are ready, read aloud Matthew 6:25–34; then ask people to present their skits.

Ask each group to make a list of the top ten things young people worry about. Combine their answers into one list.

“Don’t worry about tomorrow’s exam; stay up late and have fun.” “Don’t worry about what other people think; they’re a bunch of losers.” “Don’t worry about problems in the world; poor people need to learn to rely on themselves.”

Is that what Jesus meant when he said, “Don’t worry”? Not at all!

Jesus' teaching is about possessions and priorities. He begins by telling people not to collect riches on earth, but to save up riches in heaven. He says that we shouldn't be consumed by work in order to make more money to buy more possessions. He might tell a group of students today that life is more than getting good grades to get a well-paid job to get rich.

Have you spent time with people who are poor? Then you know that many of the possessions we have are not necessary for happiness.

Jesus is bothered by the kind of worry that focuses all of our attention on ourselves—what we earn, what we do, what we look like. The more we focus on ourselves, the less we notice others and the less we see life from God's perspective.

Tomorrow matters to God just as today does. But if we are too worried about tomorrow, we may miss today's miracles.

**To which of the worries on our list does the scripture apply?**

**Which of these worries are high on your personal list of concerns?**

**What would Jesus say to you about your worries?**

**When has God helped you to deal with worry?**

**Are there times when we should be more concerned about tomorrow?**

**What can you do this week to ease your worries or to help ease another person's worries?**

## **SHARING IN PRAYER**

Read this responsive litany together:

**Leader:** *Worship the Lord your God.*

**All:** **Tomorrow.**

**Leader:** *Love your neighbor.*

**All:** **Tomorrow.**

**Leader:** *Study God's Word.*

**All:** **Tomorrow.**

**Leader:** *Feed the hungry.*

**All:** **Tomorrow.**

**Leader:** *Pray at all times.*

**All:** **Tomorrow.**

**Leader:** *Forgive one another.*

**All:** **Tomorrow.**

**Leader:** *Seek God's way first.*

**All:** **Tomorrow?**

**Leader:** *Forgive us, Lord.*

**All:** **Today.**

**Leader:** *Feed us, Lord.*

**All:** **Today.**

**Leader:** *Guide us, Lord.*

**All:** **Today.**

**Leader:** *Love us, Lord.*

**All:** **Today.**

**Leader:** *Teach us to love others.*

**All:** **Today.**

**Leader:** *Help us to serve others.*

**All:** **Today.**

**Leader:** *We hear your call—and follow.*

**All:** **Today. Amen.**

### **TAKING IT FURTHER**

If you are not meeting regularly with other small group leaders, this might be a good week to start. Talk with someone about your small group experience and offer your support and prayers.

—**devozine** In the Habit (November/December 2003) Copyrighted © 2003 by The Upper Room®. All rights reserved.