**1. Motivate**

When have you worried about something that turned out to be no big deal?

* a strange ache or pain
* the car made a funny noise
* some new neighbors moved in and at first looked to be a rowdy bunch
* the new furnace went off during the night – it was a power outage, not a bad furnace
* the weather man predicted 15 inches of snow … only got 3 inches
* your teacher announced an exam for tomorrow, but it was much easier than you expected
* you thought you lost your phone (it was down in the cushions of the sofa)
* the best player on your team was reported sick … it was a false rumor

**2. Transition**

In today’s Bible passage, Jesus tells us *not* to worry.

* Faith displaces worry

A video introduction to the lesson is available. View it at <http://tinyurl.com/yeykrbv7> If you have no wi-fi where you teach, it is best to download the video file to your computer from <http://tinyurl.com/4yrmw2vd>

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Worry Does Not Help

Listen for why not to worry.

Luke 12:22-26 (NIV) Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. 23 Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. 24 Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! 25 Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? 26 Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?

Jesus says,

* “Don’t worry about life”
* “Don’t worry about stuff like food, health, clothes”

Why don’t the *birds* worry?

* they don’t “work” to get food
* they’ve got no storeroom or barn
* God feeds them with what is in nature around them

Why do you think *people* tend to worry?

* imagination running wild
* lack of understanding of God’s love for them
* don’t realize God’s power and authority to accomplish what He desires to do for them
* lack of faith

How might we justify worrying?

* you think worrying can prevent bad stuff happening
* there’s a fine line between legitimate concern and worrying …
* too easy to cross over into worry
* worry to avoid disappointment
* worry can provide distraction from thinking about things that are even worse
* worry helps us find better ways of doing things

Why do we worry about food and clothes?

* wonder what’s for supper … tomorrow
* wonder about what’s on the menu at the school cafeteria
* worry about what to serve guests … will they like it, hate it?
* worry what people will think about what we wear
* it might look too formal or not formal enough
* someone might laugh at what you are wearing
* your choice might make you too warm or too cold

What situations bring out the worrier in you?

* health issues (a strange pain, a sudden headache, is the ankle just strained or broken)
* is it a only runny nose or Covid
* the yard is turning brown
* the swimming pool just turned a cloudy shade of green
* what if there’s a traffic backup on our way to the airport?
* there’s a tall tree in the woods behind our house that has a dangerous looking lean
* that new raise is great, but it might put us in the next higher tax bracket
* the washing machine (dryer, car, dishwasher, child) is making a weird noise all of a sudden

3.2 God Knows what We Need

Listen for God’s awareness.

Luke 12:27-30 (NIV) "Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 28 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! 29 And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. 30 For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need

What do flowers teach us?

* we note they don’t work, they don’t make fancy clothes
* but they still look beautiful
* that is how God decorates the landscape
* God makes them beautiful as temporary as they are …
* He can and will provide for your “decoration” and wellbeing for your whole life

What conclusion did Jesus draw from the illustration?

* unbelievers pursue material things
* they use up much of their resources to look good, drive fancy cars, have the newest phones
* God knows you need those things
* He can provide, He wants to bless you

What kinds of things are we prone to classify as a need that is really a want?

* we have lots of wants (car, clothes, tools, friends, house, toys)
* it is easy to think up reasons why any one of these things is a legitimate need
* with a larger car, we could take neighbor kids to AWANA
* with nicer clothes we could look more capable
* with new power tools we could do a better job
* the right friends could help us improve our position at work
* a new house in the right neighborhood could help us meet those right friends
* a bigger house could make it possible to entertain and have a Bible study in the home

Why do you think Jesus might also say to us, “Oh ye of little faith”?

* we tend to get in a dither about lots of things
* instead of trusting Him, we hurry-scurry around trying to deal with many complex issues on our own
* we so easily lose sleep about some of these issues
* unaware of just how much God loves us
* unconvinced of God’s ability and God’s inclination to bless
* doubt God’s claims in Scripture
* accept God’s offer of salvation, but still think we have to manage life all on our own

Consider these truths about how we can increase our faith …

* Anyone’s faith is only as good as the *object* of that faith
* We must become convinced that the Object of our faith (Jesus) is capable
* We do that by getting to know Jesus better … reading, studying, applying His word
* We also do that by talking to Him in prayer … telling Him not only your needs, but confessing your worries, your lack of faith

When have you experienced God knowing exactly what you needed?

* provided a need before I even knew I needed it
* prayer about what to do, what direction to take answered the very next day
* sent help along just when I needed it
* protected me from being in a wreck or some other accident by delaying my departure
* protected me when I had made a foolish choice

3.3 Seek the Kingdom, Trust the Father

Listen for how faith displaces worry.

Luke 12:31-34 (NIV) But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. 32 "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The Kingdom of God is the realm where God rules. How can a person *seek* God’s kingdom?

* so you take steps to seek God’s rule in your life
* you read God’s Word daily
* you learn what God is like, what He has done for you, what He wants you to be doing
* you become involved in furthering His Kingdom
* you are active in the Body of Christ – the Church

What are some ways in which we can make God’s kingdom our first priority with our resources?

* *always* tithe your income (before bills, even before taxes)
* be generous with your finances to other needs of people around you
* give to missionary outreach
* when you do give, do so without any expectation to be repaid (with money or with being owed a favor)
* don’t limit your giving to just money … give of time and skills to minister to others

How can we store up treasure in heaven?

* giving of our treasure (finances) to God’s work
* giving of our time and talents to serving the Lord
* that would include intercessory prayer for ministries – local and world wide
* involvement in Kingdom ministries
* godly parenting of our children (training, modeling godly living, investing time and effort in their spiritual upbringing)

What do you think Jesus meant by “Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out”?

* means more than higher quality leather or design
* means spend your time, treasure, talents on eternally lasting results
* serving others
* involved in spreading the Gospel – locally, worldwide

Giving of yourself to God’s work is like investing money and receiving compounded interest.

* God receives your investment of time, talent, treasure
* God multiplies that investment
* You end up getting more back than what you put in
* The returns are *eternal* … contrasted with a bank’s returns

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

Application

Inventory.

* List the things that you’ve been worrying about during this season of life.
* What are some specific actions you can take to let go of those worrisome thoughts?

Give.

* What do you have in your storage space that would be valued more by someone else?
* Make some room by giving those things away and enjoy the extra space created by their absence.

Pray.



Double Puzzle

Spiros the Spy is on a dangerous assignment in Guadutusoraq. He is struggling with worry. He has received this encoded message from one of the local pastors. As you see, it is a quote from Billy Graham. Can you help him out? The key will be found in the unscrambling of the clue words (which are from your Bible passage today). Then use the numbers to fill in the message blanks. When you finish the decryption, we will return the message to the embassy there in the secure diplomatic courier bag. Technical assistance (and the color page) are found at <http://tinyurl.com/4yrmw2vd>

* Ask God to show you how you can be more connected to what he’s doing in your church.
* Ask God to lead you to your call and passion, whether it’s going overseas to serve in disaster relief or perhaps just mentoring a fatherless third grader.