

LEGACY

OF GRACE DEVOTIONAL
FIRST THINGS FIRST

OCTOBER 18, 2020

GRACE
FELLOWSHIP

Discussion Starter #1: What might create worry in the hearts of God's people today?

Key Passage: *"And he said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. ²³ For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. ²⁴ Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! ²⁵ And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? ²⁶ If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest? ²⁷ Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ²⁸ But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! ²⁹ And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. ³⁰ For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them. ³¹ Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you." (Luke 12:22-31)*

In this passage, Jesus warns us of the deceptiveness of worry. Many people believe that life consists only of food and clothing (v.22), so they fret over having these things. But Jesus tells us to open our eyes and observe the way God takes care of His creation, such as the birds: If God takes care of the birds, He will certainly take care of us who are much more valuable to Him than birds (v.23-24). Jesus says that worry cannot add any time to our lives (v.25). (In fact, worry can shorten our lives by leading us to the hospital or even the grave with stress-induced physical ailments!) Jesus then draws our attention to the lilies that are more glorious than Solomon in his splendor. Take notice, Jesus says, of how God provides for these flowers and the grass, which are temporary (v.26-27). God will certainly clothe His own people (v.28). God knows what we need, and He will take responsibility for providing for us, so don't worry (v.29-30). Jesus then ends this section by telling us to seek the things of God first, and then we'll find that everything else will fall into place.

Putting God first is like buttoning up a shirt that you wear. If you start buttoning in the middle of the shirt, the buttons may not line up with the holes, and your shirt will be unbalanced and uncomfortable! But if you start buttoning with the first button at the top or at the bottom, all the remaining holes and buttons will automatically line up! Put God first in your life, and everything else in your life will automatically "line up."

Discuss: Why is worry such a powerful force in a human life?

Discuss: What is it about worry that makes it so damaging and unproductive?

Discuss: How would you advise a new Christian to overcome worry in their life?

How can we know if we are seeking God's kingdom first? Let's use the acronym **F.I.R.S.T.** to help us examine our priorities:

F – Finances

- **Discuss:** What would a Christian's life look like if he/she put God's kingdom first in his/her finances?

I – Interests

- **Discuss:** What would a Christian's life look like if he/she put God's kingdom first in his/her interests?

R – Relationships

- **Discuss:** What would a Christian's life look like if he/she put God's kingdom first in his/her relationships?

S – Schedule

- **Discuss:** What would a Christian's life look like if he/she put God's kingdom first in his/her schedule?

T – Talent

- **Discuss:** What would a Christian's life look like if he/she put God's kingdom first in his/her schedule?

Discuss: What are some other areas in addition to those mentioned in the acronym F.I.R.S.T. that a Christian should examine to make sure he/she is prioritizing seeking God's kingdom?

Discuss: How would you explain to a new Christian what it means to "seek God's kingdom first"?

For Further Study

Our Unmet Needs by Charles Stanley

Cure for the Common Life by Max Lucado

www.crosswalk.com – "5 Ways to Put God First in Your Life" article