

HE TEACHES ON WORRY

CORE PASSAGE: LUKE 12:22-34

CONTEXT

After teaching His disciples about prayer, which included a request to God for daily bread, Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for their pride, hypocrisy, persecution, and greed. He then was drawn into a conversation on money by a man who had an issue with his brother over their family inheritance. In response, Jesus taught a parable that warned against storing up treasure for yourself here on earth and not being “rich toward God” (12:21). He then added to this conclusion for His disciples, cautioning them not to worry about their needs in life but to entrust them to God while seeking His kingdom.

KEY CONCEPT

We need not worry because God takes care of us and provides for our needs.

As you examine Luke 12:22-34:

- Identify the reasons Jesus commanded us not to worry about our daily needs.
- Reflect on the fact that as kingdom people, we invest in eternal treasures.



TIMELINE

Jesus Teaches About and Heals
on the Sabbath (Luke 6:1-11)

Jesus Teaches and Explains the
Parable of the Sower (Luke 8:4-15)

SESSION STUDY: Jesus Teaches
About Worry (Luke 12:12-34)

Jesus Delivers His Sermon
on the Plain (Luke 6:17-49)

Jesus Teaches About Prayer
(Luke 11:1-13)

Daily Readings

☐ **Day 1:** Luke 11:14-28

☐ **Day 2:** Luke 11:29-54

☐ **Day 3:** Luke 12:1-12

☐ **Day 4:** Luke 12:13-34

☐ **Day 5:** Luke 12:35-59

☐ **Day 6:** Psalm 23



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Scripture passages.

PERSONAL PREPARATION

LUKE 12:22-28

GOD IS SOVEREIGN OVER ALL AND PROVIDES FOR HIS CREATION.

Circle what God can do, and underline what worry cannot do.

22 Then he said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, don’t worry about your life, what you will eat; or about the body, what you will wear. **23** For life is more than food and the body more than clothing. **24** Consider the ravens: They don’t sow or reap; they don’t have a storeroom or a barn; yet God feeds them. Aren’t you worth much more than the birds? **25** Can any of you add one moment to his life span by worrying? **26** If then you’re not able to do even a little thing, why worry about the rest? **27** Consider how the wildflowers grow: They don’t labor or spin thread. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was adorned like one of these. **28** If that’s how God clothes the grass, which is in the field today and is thrown into the furnace tomorrow, how much more will he do for you—you of little faith?”

THEOLOGY CONNECTION

GOD’S PROVIDENCE: Providence refers to God’s continuing work and involvement in His creation. This includes, in various degrees, God’s preservation of the created order, His governance, and His care for His people (Genesis 8:21-22; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3). Christians believe the world, and even the cosmos itself, is contingent upon God, incapable of existing apart from Him. Christians also believe in God’s personal and direct intervention in the world—as opposed to a hands-off approach to creation—that affects not only the natural order but also the individuals and events within human history.

Key Concept: We need not worry because God takes care of us and provides for our needs.

After speaking to the thousands who gathered to hear Him, warning them against the practice of storing up earthly wealth (vv. 13-21), Jesus turned to speak directly to the disciples, the ones He had chosen and invested in the most. He took His warning to the crowd one step further and warned the disciples about their heart posture as well—followers of Jesus must be “rich toward God” (v. 21) and also guard their hearts against worry.

VOICES FROM CHURCH HISTORY

“Nothing is more common than an anxious and troubled spirit, and nothing mars a believer’s usefulness and attacks his inner peace so much. The person who can say boldly, ‘The Lord is my shepherd’ is the person who will be able to add, ‘I shall not want’ (Psalm 23:1).”¹

–J. C. Ryle (1816–1900)

Jesus rooted His command for His disciples not to worry in God’s care for His creation. Birds do not put seeds into the ground or harvest crops, yet God feeds them. Lilies do not weave fabric and adorn themselves, yet God clothes them. Jesus did not say food and clothing are not needed; rather, He stated that worrying about how to get these needs does not accomplish anything. To emphasize His point, Jesus declared that His disciples were worth far more to God than grass that perishes, so they could trust Him to provide for them.

Worry does nothing to benefit life. In fact, it makes life less enjoyable. The Christian life is full of difficulty and hardship, but worry cannot change that or make it better. What makes life possible to endure is faith and trust in God, who knows more about our needs than we do. This does not imply we ought to sit around and do nothing. Jesus did not advocate for a passive and lazy life but a life grounded in faith. It is a certainty that God will supply our needs, so we can live faithfully while resting assured that God will do what He says.

How are greed and worry connected?

Where in creation do you see reminders of God’s daily provision?



PERSONAL PREPARATION

LUKE 12:29-34

WE MUST SEEK GOD'S KINGDOM FIRST AND STORE TREASURES IN HEAVEN.

Underline every instance of "don't," and circle what Jesus tells us to do.

29 "Don't strive for what you should eat and what you should drink, and don't be anxious.

30 For the Gentile world eagerly seeks all these things, and your Father knows that you

need them. **31** But seek his kingdom, and these things will be provided for you. **32** Don't

be afraid, little flock, because your Father delights to give you the kingdom. **33** Sell your

possessions and give to the poor. Make money-bags for yourselves that won't grow old, an

inexhaustible treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. **34** For

where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Jesus is the great provider. He takes care of all our needs, especially our need to be rescued from sin, guilt, and death. Through His sacrifice on the cross, we are forgiven and have new life through Him.

Key Concept: We need not worry because God takes care of us and provides for our needs.



Jesus continued His teaching on worry by stating that the daily needs of life were not something the disciples should strive to gain. In this, they were to be different from the world. The Gentiles, worldly people who did not know and love God, sought such things, thinking their provision was all on their shoulders. But God knows exactly what we need. Worry, at its core, is misplaced trust. Material possessions, status, and security are what the world desires, but those who know God seek God's kingdom first. The spiritual needs of disciples surpass their physical needs.

VOICES FROM CHURCH HISTORY

“Two conflicting forces cannot exist in one human heart. . . . When worry is present, trust cannot crowd its way in.”²

—Billy Graham (1918–2018)

Jesus emphasized the connection between treasure and the heart. Whatever a person values most will shape their attention and effort. Jesus instructed His followers to lay up treasure in heaven rather than on earth. To be “rich toward God” (v. 21) means to invest in God's kingdom instead of worldly gain.

What are some areas of your life where worry is taking the place of faith?

Jesus shared that investing in eternal goods requires sacrifice and generosity. In the same way that God is generous to His children and provides what they need, they also should prioritize caring for and providing for others for the treasure promised by God. True treasure is not like food, drink, or earthly trinkets, which spoil, decay, and are at risk of theft. Kingdom treasure is imperishable and impossible to be taken away.

How does generosity combat worry and cultivate trust in God's provision?

As the heart desires various treasures, disciples of Jesus are challenged to cultivate a heart set on God instead of a heart set on possessions. Anxiety arises when we prioritize perishable things above the imperishable. By focusing on the eternal, God's children can experience freedom from worry. God will always care for His children, so they can step out in faith and serve God with their whole hearts.

WHERE IS YOUR TREASURE?

*Read Luke 12:22-34. Consider what it means to have treasure on earth or in heaven.
Then identify barriers and means to storing treasure in heaven.*

IN HEAVEN

BARRIERS TO STORING
YOUR TREASURE IN HEAVEN

WAYS YOU CAN STORE
YOUR TREASURE IN HEAVEN

ON EARTH

How do the promises and character of God help us battle against worry and focus our hearts on what matters in eternity?

Key Concept: We need not worry because God takes care of us and provides for our needs.



HEAD

How can you reorient your thoughts to be more kingdom-focused?

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

✕ ————— ✕

Read and pray through Psalm 23. Thank God for all of the good gifts and guidance He gives and all the ways He provides for your needs. Pray that God would give you a kingdom mind-set all the days of your life.



HEART

What does your pursuit of treasures, whether on earth or in heaven, reveal about the focus of your heart?

PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



HANDS

What are some habits or practices you can develop to serve others and so store treasure in heaven?



6 WAYS TO MAKE THE MOST OF SUNDAY SCHOOL THIS SUMMER

By Ken Braddy



Summer—it comes around every year! How will you and your Bible study group spend your summer? Chances are your group's attendance will become more erratic as summer vacations take place and people get away to the mountains or the beach. Perhaps your group doesn't meet during summer months. Don't maintain the status quo. Instead, do one or more of the following things to squeeze the most out of summer and avoid those summer slumps.

1. REACH OUT TO ABSENTEES.

Set a goal of contacting all your absentee group members during June and July. Some may have joined other churches. Others may have gotten out of the habit of attending your group. Still more may have experienced a crisis and didn't want people to know. As you discover the ministry needs of your absentees, mobilize your group and meet those needs.

2. ENCOURAGE GROUP MEMBERS TO LEAVE YOUR GROUP.

What? Leave your group? Summer is when church staff are searching for new group leaders in all age groups. Remember that the goal of your Bible teaching ministry isn't to have the largest group. The real goal is to help your church in its mission of making disciples. The preschool, children, and student ministries of your church will need new group leaders to serve the youngest members of your congregation. Encourage people in your group to leave and serve others as group leaders themselves.

3. TURN THE TEACHING OVER TO YOUR APPRENTICE.

Each adult Sunday School group needs one apprentice leader whose goal is to start a new group. Summer is a great time to give your apprentice the primary responsibility of teaching the group. Let them practice, and then coach and guide them to become more confident leading a group. With many people away on vacation, summer is a perfect time for people to spread their wings and teach during a time when it may feel safer—attendance is lower in summer months—and for the average person, a smaller group is a less intimidating group to teach.

4. RAMP UP YOUR GROUP'S FELLOWSHIPS.

Summer movies, barbecues, baseball games, golf outings, a day at the lake, and local day trips can be fun occasions to gather your members and prospects.

Summer has a fun, relaxed feel and it is the perfect time to get creative—and busy. Don't wait for a single occasion when everyone can get together. Instead, schedule multiple events. Having multiple opportunities for fellowship will ensure that at least one of the events fits the schedules of your group members.

5. SCHEDULE AN EXTRA BIBLE STUDY.

Why not use the summer months to explore a topic your group is interested in? There are plenty of Bible study options that come in 4, 6, 8, or 10-week sessions. Rotate the study by allowing a different member of the group to host it each week.

6. SERVE TOGETHER.

Summer presents plenty of opportunities for entire Bible study groups to serve together. Sharing an experience like Vacation Bible School or another community-centered ministry activity (soccer camp, day camp, etc.) is a great way to build the bond between your group members. Consider asking your group members to invest a week of vacation in serving kids from your community, knowing that they will grow in their relationships with one another too!

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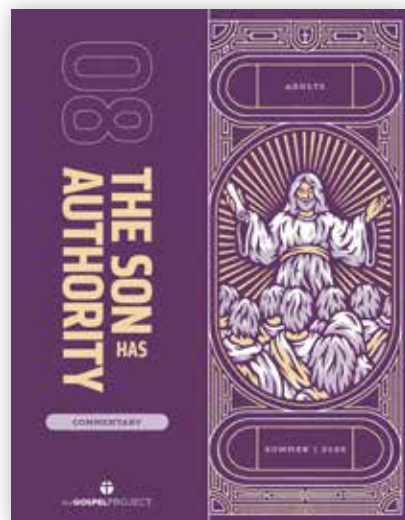
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UNIT 23 • SESSION 1

FAITH AND FORGIVENESS

CORE PASSAGE: MARK 2:1-12

Context: In his account of the life of Jesus, Mark wasted no time getting to the action. Jesus came on the scene proclaiming that the kingdom of God had come near to God's people through Him, and it was time for people to respond. Jesus immediately began backing up His claim with power, performing miracles. In today's passage, Jesus revealed something deeper about who He is and what He came to do. Even greater than miraculous healings, Jesus came to do something about humanity's greatest problem—sin.

Key Concept: Jesus has the power to forgive, especially when He sees committed faith.

DAILY READINGS

☐ Day 1: Mark 2:1-12	☐ Day 4: Matthew 9:1-8
☐ Day 2: Mark 2:13-17	☐ Day 5: Matthew 9:9-17
☐ Day 3: Mark 2:18-22	☐ Day 6: Psalm 121

Committed faith leads to forgiveness
(Mark 2:1-5)

¹ When he entered Capernaum again after some days, it was reported that he was at home. ² So many people gathered together that there was no more room, not even in the doorway, and he was speaking the word to them. ³ They came to him bringing a paralytic, carried by four of them. ⁴ Since they were not able to bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and after digging through it, they lowered the mat on which the paralytic was lying. ⁵ Seeing their faith, Jesus told the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

On the Move in Galilee

After Jesus's forerunner, John the Baptist, was arrested, Jesus headed north to Galilee (Mark 1:14). At the lakeshore, He called His first four disciples to leave their fishing and to follow Him (vv. 16-20). In Capernaum, He entered the synagogue and healed a man possessed by an unclean spirit (vv. 21-27). Jesus also privately healed Peter's mother-in-law in their home. Jesus's miracle in the synagogue brought such fame in Galilee that people came from all over and "brought to him all those who were sick and demon possessed" (v. 32). After that, Jesus departed from Capernaum and traveled throughout Galilee, preaching, healing, and casting out demons (vv. 38-44). He did this for "some days" (2:1), an indeterminate period of time. Jesus's actions brought even more popularity to Him, "with the result that Jesus could no longer enter a town openly" because people "came to him from everywhere" (1:45). Because of that, Jesus quietly snuck back into Capernaum.



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Notes



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THE SON HAS AUTHORITY

Jesus entered our world with a mission to serve, yet He did so with power, resulting in a myriad of responses. Some were in awe of Him, and others worshiped Him. Some proclaimed His name to whoever would hear; others criticized Him for what seemed like blasphemy. Yet His teachings and works had authority. No one could deny that Jesus was unique, unlike any other man or prophet. He fulfilled prophecies from Scripture and could heal diseases and cast out demons. When encountering Jesus, people were left with only two choices: believe and trust in Him or reject Him. The Gospels give us proof that Jesus is the Messiah. He is the Savior of the world, and we must worship and obey Him in faith.

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