

LEADERTREKS **SERMON SERIES**

MARK OF A DISCIPLE

Disciples of Christ look to God for provision.

SCRIPTURE

MATTHEW 6:25–34

SERMON OVERVIEW

Today we are starting the first lesson in our Priority Shift series and looking at the care that God has for his children. Because of his care, we do not need to be anxious! Instead of being anxious and seeking our every-day needs, we can depend on God to provide for our needs. We should seek his Kingdom and righteousness—eternal things—while acknowledging God as our King.

OPENING

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

-
-

GAME AND ICE BREAKER QUESTION

- We recommend **You Don't Say** or another screen game from **Deep Discipleship Games**.
- What's something you were scared of when you were younger but you're not afraid of anymore?

MESSAGE

Use the following teaching points and suggested illustrations as a starting point to build your message.

READ MATTHEW 6:31–32

POINT 1: God knows our needs

For most of us, worry, stress, and anxiety come from dwelling on things we can't control. It's those issues that we are incapable of influencing or changing that make us uneasy.

ILLUSTRATION: Tell a **personal story** about a time you were worried about something that was beyond your control. (Example: getting accepted into a college, landing a job interview, winning a contest.)

We may have limitations on what we can control, but nothing is beyond God's control. The God we serve is all-knowing. He is well aware of who we are and every need we have. He has a perfect record for always coming through.

READ MATTHEW 6:25-30

POINT 2: God provides

God is a good and loving God. Every aspect of his creation, even the small stuff like birds and grass, has their needs met through his provision. Because we, humans, are the prize of his creation (Gen. 1:26-27), we can rest from stress in the truth that God will take much better care of us than he does the rest of his creation.

While this certainly sounds easier to say than to put into practice, it's true. God gives us what we need because he loves us. Over and over again, the Bible describes God as a good Father, a loving Father, and as all good fathers do, God provides for his children. If we move over one chapter in Matthew, we see Jesus reinforce this truth that God is a better Father than we've experienced (Matt. 7:9-11). God is good and loves us. Because we can trust those two truths, we can trust him to provide for us.

READ MATTHEW 6:33-34

POINT 3: Pursuing God helps alleviate worry

When our focus shifts away from God and toward the circumstances around us, it's easy to feel uneasy or anxious. Things may not be going the way we want them to, and we immediately begin to assume the worst. But if we move our attention away from us and pin it to Christ, the struggles around us seem smaller.

ILLUSTRATION: Tell a **personal story** about taking a flight. While you're on the ground waiting to take off, everything—the airport, other planes, the city—looks so big. But as the plane lifts off and climbs higher and higher, everything that once seemed so big now looks so small.

Chasing after God, focusing on him and setting our minds on the things above (Col. 3:2), will make the problems we face in this life seem small by comparison.

CLOSING REFLECTION

Use this prompt to wrap up your message and leave your students with a challenge to apply.

- What areas of your life bring you the most stress and anxiety?
- What would it look like to hand those worries over to God? What could he do with them?

GROUP DISCUSSION

Pick a few questions from below to discuss. Close with prayer.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What do you tend to be anxious or worried about?
- When has God provided for a specific need of yours?
- When have you mistrusted God's care for you?
- What temporary (or non-eternal) things do you pursue?
- Do your worries tend to be need-based or want-based?
- What evidence in your life proves that God does care for you?
- How do you honor God with your choices in life?
- On a scale of 1–5 (1=not at all, 5=very well), how well do you trust God to provide for you?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- How are you practically seeking God's Kingdom?
- How can you grow in giving your worries to God and trusting him to provide?

PRAYER

Close by praying or invite someone to pray for your group.

Use this space to keep track of any prayer requests.

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright ©2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. May not copy or download more than 500 consecutive verses of the ESV Bible or more than one half of any book of the ESV Bible.

Any reference within this piece to Internet addresses of websites not under the administration of LeaderTreks is not to be taken as an endorsement of these websites by LeaderTreks; neither does LeaderTreks vouch for their content.