

Lesson Four Discussion Guide

When we worry, our focus is on our situation and on the “what-ifs” of the future. Worry is never based on truth; it’s based on our overactive imaginations.

Worry is a sin, because we’re commanded in Scripture not to worry. Worry is a direct attack on the character of God, calling into question His goodness, His power, His sovereignty, His love.

According to Philippians 4:6-7, prayer is one way to combat worry.

When we pray, we often focus on physical or material things. However, our prayers need to go deeper than that.

Alistair Begg says, “All that matters may be brought before God, but what we bring before God is not always what matters most.” What does he mean by that?

*Physical things matter, and it’s ok to pray about them. But there are things that matter more.

Scripture tells us what really matters when it comes to praying:

1) Jesus’ Instructions on Prayer

-God already knows our physical needs, and He has promised to meet them.

-According to Matthew 6:25-34, what should we be focusing on?

*Jesus is telling His disciples to stop worrying so much about physical needs. God has that covered. Instead, we should focus on seeking God’s kingdom and God’s righteousness. Our focus should be on spiritual matters, on having our spiritual needs met.

-Jesus' example of prayer puts much more emphasis on spiritual matters than physical.

2) Paul's Example of Prayer

-According to Ephesians 1:16-21, what does Paul pray for the Ephesians?

*He prays that the Holy Spirit would help them to grow in wisdom and knowledge of God, and that the eyes of their hearts would be opened to the spiritual blessings that were theirs in Christ. These blessings include hope of eternal life, a glorious inheritance, and access to God's power.

-According to Colossians 1:9-14, what does Paul pray for the Colossians?

*Paul prays that they would be filled with the knowledge of God's will so that they could walk in a manner pleasing to God. He prays that they would be strengthened by God's power so that they could joyfully endure their situation. He thanks God for their inheritance, which includes being delivered from darkness into light and being forgiven of sins.

-How do Paul's prayers differ from prayers that you often hear of that you pray yourself?

Recommended Resources:

- *Pray Big: Learn to Pray Like an Apostle* by Alistair Begg
- *Alone with God* by John MacArthur
- *Prayers of the Bible: Equipping Women to Call on God in Truth* by Susan Hunt

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Lesson Four: Putting it into Practice

Consider how you can pray spiritually for yourself and others by praying for the following things:

- 1) Maturity (Ephesians 1:17)
- 2) Clarity (Ephesians 1:18)
- 3) Hope (Ephesians 1:18)
- 4) Fruitfulness (Colossians 1:10)
- 5) Knowledge (Colossians 1:10)
- 6) Power (Colossians 1:11)
- 7) Endurance (Colossians 1:11)
- 8) Patience (Colossians 1:11)
- 9) Joy (Colossians 1:11)
- 10) Humility (Ephesians 4:2-3)
- 11) Purity (Romans 13:13)
- 12) Contentment (1 Corinthians 7:17)
- 13) Faith (2 Corinthians 5:7)
- 14) Righteousness (Ephesians 2:10)
- 15) Unity (Philippians 1:27)
- 16) Gentleness (Ephesians 4:2)
- 17) Love (Ephesians 5:2)
- 18) Thankfulness (Colossians 1:3)
- 19) Wisdom (Ephesians 5:15-16)
- 20) Truth (3 John verses 3-4)

“All that matters may be brought before God, but we must always bring before God those things that matter most.”

Alistair Begg