

Why Worry?

Key Verse

If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. —James 1:5

The Big Idea

Jesus taught His followers not to worry. Helping your kids learn how to handle worry can be a huge help as they travel the path to adulthood.

Focus

It has been said that there are two days that people worry most about but should actually worry least about: Yesterday and Tomorrow. We worry about yesterday – the mistakes we've made and what we would like to do over or differently. Yet, there is nothing we can do to change yesterday. Our worries are wasted. We also worry about tomorrow – the problems it may bring and the challenges we may face. Yet, we cannot control tomorrow. It is out of our grasp. So again, our worries are wasted.

TIP

You don't have to ask every question or look up every scripture. Adapt this to fit your children's ages and your time. You can do 10 minutes on the way to school and 10 minutes later. Be creative. Have fun.

Want some other tips? Look at www.HomesDevoted.com & search Topics/Resources for Family Devo Tips.

ASK:

1. What common issues today do parents worry about?
2. What are issues that today's kids worry about?
3. (For the parents) Of the issues that were mentioned, what do you worry most about?
4. (For the kids) Of the issues that were mentioned, what do you worry most about?
5. Regarding the issues that were mentioned (both parents and kids), which ones do you feel are pointless to worry about? Why?
6. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Worrying about an issue makes a difference in the outcome of the issue.

In the Word

Get into the Word together, and discuss the following questions:

1. Read Matthew 6:25-33. Why does God want us to seek Him first instead of worrying?
2. What does God promise to do if we seek Him first?
3. Which circumstances in life do you feel are not covered by God's promise?
3. Read Matthew 6:34. According to this verse, why should we not worry about tomorrow?
4. In what ways do you have control of the future? In what ways do you not have control of the future?
5. Read Philippians 4:6-7. According to these verses, what are we not supposed to do? What are we supposed to do?

6. In what ways do you feel prayer is a helpful alternative to worrying?

Reflect and Apply

Say: When we do not waste our worries on yesterday or tomorrow, it frees us to live in the present – today. Today, we are able to make decisions about our life.

Today, we can set our course, set off in a direction, or alter our course, if necessary. Sure, we will still make our share of mistakes. But, each day brings enough to be concerned about. Still, seldom of life's concerns are unbearable today.

Our worries become unbearable when we add the wasted worries of yesterday and tomorrow.

1. How does worrying about the past and/or the future prevent you from living fully today?

2. Read the following potential problems, and discuss as a family how instead of worrying, a person might take action to prevent a negative outcome.

- An upcoming test at school next week
- Body odor
- The family car sounds like it's not running right
- A big storm is in the weather forecast
- A serious disease is common within your family history
- You are having conflict with your best friend
- You are running late to get to an appointment or meeting

3. How might serving others help you to worry less about your problems?

4. What's one problem or mistake from your past that you still worry about today? What do you need to do to let the past go and stop worrying about this issue? How can your family members help you?

Say: Jesus instructs us to live one day at a time. He knew that so much of what we worry about is out of our control. He wanted us to understand that God gives us today. And, as we live our lives seeking Him, we are in a safe place. Jesus promises that our heavenly Father will provide us with everything we need.

Edited by Jonathan Cronkhite; original written by Jim Liebelt, Senior Writer, Editor and Researcher for the HomeWord Center for Youth and Family