**GROWING TOGETHER:** FOR OLDER CHILDREN

Session 4 of 4

# Worry

### MEETING AIM

To explore worry and think about how following Jesus might help us not to worry.

### BIBLE PASSAGE

Matthew 6:25-34

### BACKGROUND

This session plan is intended for use either in-person or online, depending on how you’re meeting. Adapt the activities to fit your situation.

It’s important to remember that those who Jesus spent most time teaching were incredibly poor. They were very much at the bottom of the pile in an occupied nation where people were taxed by the Romans and by their own religious system. When Jesus talks to the people about money, it’s not just a high concept idea – these people were desperately short of it. Perhaps the people were looking for a Messiah that would overthrow the Romans and make them rich; what they got was a Messiah who said there was more to life than money and that the people shouldn’t worry about any of that stuff because they had a God who would watch over them. That’s either incredibly unsettling or incredibly comforting.

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### STARTING OUT – 5 mins

As the children arrive, sit everyone down in a circle. Chat about anything the children have done this week. Share something that you have done this week too. Ask the children to share what they worry about.

### INTRO ACTIVITY – 10 mins

**You will need:** paper; pencils; felt-tip pens

Give out paper, pencils and felt-tip pens and ask the children to draw a picture of one thing that is necessary for life.

Once everyone has finished, encourage the group to show the pictures they have drawn. Chat together about the ideas that are similar and any the children have drawn that are different from the others. How ‘necessary’ are the ideas that the children have come up with?

### BIBLE STORY – 10 mins

**You will need:** pictures from ‘Intro activity’

Stick up the pictures that the children drew in ‘Intro activity’ so they can be seen by everyone. Ask the group if they would be worried if they didn’t have these things. Remind the children of the topics you’ve been looking at for the last few weeks. Talk about the topsy-turvy nature of Jesus’ teaching: he often says the opposite of what the world does. With that in mind, what do they think Jesus will say about worry?

Read the passage and whenever you come to something that we might worry about not having (food, drink, clothes etc), ask the group to point out which of the pictures they drew would match up with that idea.

Read the passage again and ask the children to stop you whenever they hear you read a promise that Jesus makes about what the Father will do.

### CHATTING TOGETHER – 5 mins

Ask the children these questions, encouraging everyone to take turns to contribute:

* Is it easy not to worry?
* Is it easy to trust God’s promises?
* Does that mean we never bother to make wise decisions?
* How can we move from worrying to trusting?
* What could you decide to trust God with this week?

### CREATIVE TIME – 10 mins

**You will need:** coloured card; string; mini craft pegs; felt tip pens

In the passage, Jesus talks about food, drink and clothes. Ask the children to choose three different coloured pieces of card. On one they should write the word ‘Do’, on the second ‘not’ and on the third ‘worry’.

Chat about the things the children might be worrying about in their lives. For some, there will be real anxiety, depending on what is happening in their lives at this particular moment. Year 6 children might be worried about moving schools; some might have a difficult home life (separated parents, being a ‘looked-after’ child, sickness in the family); others might have had their lives disrupted by a change (such as a newborn sibling, moving to a new house, or a best friend moving away); still others might be affected by illness or death in their family.

Encourage the children to write or draw about their worries on the back of the three cards. These don’t have to be explicit; they could write or draw something that represents their worry.

Give each child a piece of string and three mini craft pegs. Show how they can hang the string up at home and peg their three cards onto the string. Explore how they can pray about the things they have depicted on their cards when they see them hanging up.

### PRAYER – 5 mins

**You will need:** cards from ‘Creative time’

Ask the children to hold the three cards from ‘Creative time’. Encourage them to talk to God on the inside about what they are worried about and how they feel. After a few minutes, ask them to imagine that Jesus is sitting beside them. What does he want to say or do about their worries?

It may be that children talk about some difficult things in this session. Work with parents and carers to ensure that children are supported after the session. It might be worth noting down some of the things the children are worried about (with their permission, of course) so that you can pray for them too. If you need to, make sure you follow your church’s safeguarding policy.

**JENNY CHEUNG**

is a mum, church planter and choir-nut! She pioneers The Voice Project Scotland – a missional expression inviting children and their families to find their voices and enter into community to sing.