

Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia Children's Ministry

2017 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

God cares

about the



things

Tuesday

1st-5th grade

God Cares About Our Needs

The Objective is the key concept for this weeks lesson. It should be the main focus of the study

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verse support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word

Objective This lesson will use Matthew 6 and 2 Kings 4 to demonstrate that God cares about our daily needs.

Key Verses

2 Kings 4:1-7; Matthew 6:25-34—Main Teaching Passage

Memory Verse - Matthew 6:26

"Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"

Hook

Make two columns on the board. In the first column write "Must have," in the second column write, "Want to have." Ask the students to make two lists. Put all the things that NEED in order to make it through the day in the first column, and in the second column write all the things they would like to have or do before the end of the day. If the students don't give God as answer make sure you write it in at the end in the NEED column.

Show the students that God cares about our needs and promises to provide for them, but sometimes we get our NEEDS and our WANTS confused.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

In 2 Kings 4, the prophet Elisha encountered a poor widow. Her husband had died and she had no man to pay her debts. She was afraid that her children were going to be taken away from her, so she cried out to God through Elisha the prophet to help her. When asked what she had in the house, she replied that all she owned was a jar of oil. Elisha instructed her to go and borrow as many empty jars as she could from her neighbors, and then to pour the oil from her one jar into the others. Miraculously, the oil did not stop pouring out until all of the jars were completely full. The widow could now go and sell the extra oil to pay off her debts.

In Matthew 6, Jesus taught the people not to be anxious about what they would eat, drink, or wear. He gave examples that showed that God cares for, feeds, and clothes the birds of the air and lilies of the field. He would go on to say that if God cares for birds and plants, how much more must He care about you and me. Jesus told us not to worry about our needs, that our Father in Heaven would help us and care for us.

Jesus finished out Matthew 6 by telling us that there is something far more important that we should be worried about. Instead of worrying about food, drink, and clothes (all things we need), He taught us that our biggest need is God Himself, and that if we chase after God with all our hearts, then the other things will come.

The final verses of Matthew 6 close out the passage powerfully. “Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” When we pray, we are to ask God for our provision today so that we can do the things He seeks from us here and now. Tomorrow can be worried about tomorrow.

LOOK

Yesterday we learned that God knows us, that He sees us, and that He cares about what is happening to us. Today we look at an incredible promise that God gives us: He tells us that He cares about our needs and wants to provide for us. Because God knows us and cares about us, He wants to take care of us and help us when we are in trouble.

In a section of Scripture called “the Sermon on the Mount,” Jesus gave a long teaching to a large group of people. The teaching was about lots of different things, but the one subject that we are going to look at today is about God’s provision. Jesus told the crowd that they were busy running around after all of these things that have very little value. They were so worried about what they were going to eat, drink, and wear, that they couldn’t see the biggest need that they had in their lives. Jesus taught them, “Do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

food.” Jesus was trying to tell the crowd that what they thought was really important was actually not as important as they thought it was. He told them to look at the birds. Birds don’t go to work to make money so that they can buy food. They don’t work on farms and grow crops to eat. Jesus said that God cares about the birds, so He provides for them. Then He said something really wonderful, He told the crowd that God thinks that people (especially you) are more important than the birds. God cares about you more than the birds, and if He provides for the birds, surely He will provide for you as well. The story in 2 Kings 4 about a widow that demonstrates this well. She was poor, scared, alone and in desperate need for help. She cried out to God and He provided for her in a miraculous way.

It is important to note that Jesus didn’t say that God would take away all of your problems. He said He would provide for our needs. The truth is that food, clothing, housing, and even air to breathe aren’t our greatest needs. Our greatest needs is something that only God can provide, and that is God Himself. We need God more than food, water, and air, but we are often so busy worrying about how to get those other things, and even things we don’t need at all that we lose sight of our need for God. Thankfully God cares about us so much that He sent His Son into the world so that we could see Him and see our great need for Him.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Matthew 6:26.

Review the lesson by asking the class to share if God has ever provided for them in a way that they didn’t expect. Share a story from your own life when God provided for you.

Pray: Ask the Lord to help us to look to Him for all of our needs, especially our greatest need, the Lord Himself.

Parent Question: What is it that we need more than food or clothing?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on 2 Kings 4:1-7 by David Guzik

2 KINGS 4 – GOD WORKS MIRACLES THROUGH ELISHA

A. Miracles connected with a widow and a barren woman.

1. (1-7) Provision for a widow.

A certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, saying, “Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the Lord. And the creditor is coming to take my two sons to be his slaves.” So Elisha said to her, “What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?” And she said, “Your maidservant has nothing in the house but a jar of oil.” Then he said, “Go, borrow vessels from everywhere, from all your neighbors; empty vessels; do not gather just a few. And when you have come in, you shall shut the door behind you and your sons; then pour it into all those vessels, and set aside the full ones.” So she went from him and shut the door behind her and her sons, who brought *the vessels* to her; and she poured *it* out. Now it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, “Bring me another vessel.” And he said to her, “*There is not another vessel.*” So the oil ceased. Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, “Go, sell the oil and pay your debt; and you *and* your sons live on the rest.”

a. **The creditor is coming to take my two sons to be his slaves:** This woman, the widowed wife of one of the **sons of the prophets**, had debts and no means to pay them. The legal system in Israel would not allow her to declare bankruptcy; she had to give her sons as indentured servants to her creditor as payment for the debts.

i. “However inhumane this might seem, the creditor was within his rights; for Mosaic Law allowed him to enslave the debtor and his children as far as the Year of Jubilee in order to work off a debt.” (Patterson and Austel)

b. **Your maidservant has nothing in the house but a jar of oil:** There is some evidence that this jar of oil was not a larger supply held for cooking, but a smaller vessel that held only oil for anointing.

i. “A unique word here, possibly for a small anointing flask.” (Wiseman)

c. **Go, borrow vessels from everywhere, from all your neighbors:** Elisha made this woman commit herself in faith to God’s provision. To **borrow vessels** in this manner invited awkward questions, but she did as the word of God through His prophet commanded her.

i. “She did what she was commanded to do: she did it in faith; and the result answered the end. God takes care to deliver his servants in ways that exercise their faith. He would not have them be little in faith, for faith is the wealth of the heavenly life.” (Spurgeon)

ii. “You have God in the measure in which you desire Him. Only remember that the desire that brings God must be more than a feeble, fleeting wish. Wishing is one thing; *willing* is quite another. Lazily wishing and strenuously desiring are two entirely different postures of mind; the former gets nothing and the latter gets everything, gets God, and with God all that God can bring.” (Maclaren)

d. **Pour it into all those vessels, and set aside the full ones:** Elisha told the woman to take what she had – one jar of oil (*all* that she had) – and to pour that out in faith into the borrowed vessels. As she did this the oil miraculously kept pouring from the original vessel until all the borrowed vessels were filled. At the end of it, she had *a lot* of oil.

i. We notice that Elisha made *her* do this. Perhaps Elisha was tempted to gather the vessels and pour the oil himself, but he knew that *she had to trust God herself*.

ii. The original vessel of oil – the one the woman had in her house – was a smaller vessel that held only oil for anointing. This means that the distribution of the oil into the other vessels required constant pouring and allowing the oil to supernaturally fill the small vessel again.

iii. The vessels also had to be *empty* before they could be filled with oil. It did no good to bring the widow full vessels. “A full Christ is for empty sinners, and for empty sinners only, and as long as there is a really empty soul in a congregation so long will a blessing go forth with the word, and no longer. It is not our emptiness, but our fullness which can hinder the outgoings of free grace.” (Spurgeon)

e. **So the oil ceased:** The miracle was given according to the measure of her previous faith in borrowing vessels. She borrowed enough so the excess oil was sold and provided money to pay the debt to the creditor and to provide for the future. Had she borrowed more, more would have been provided; had she gathered less, less would have been provided.

i. “If she borrowed few vessels, she would have but little oil; if she borrowed many vessels they should all be filled, and she should have much oil. She was herself to measure out what she should have; and I believe that you and I, in the matter of spiritual blessings from God, have more to do with the measurement of our mercies than we think. We make our blessings little, because our prayers are little.” (Spurgeon)

ii. The oil did not pour out on the ground or simply flow about. It was intended for a prepared vessel. Each vessel had to be prepared by being *gathered*, by being *assembled*, by being *emptied*, by being *put in the right position* and by *staying in the right position*. When there was no more prepared vessel, the oil stopped.

iii. The principle of this miracle was the same as the principle of the ditches dug in the previous chapter. The amount of man’s work with the miracle determined the amount of blessing and provision actually received. God’s powerful provision *invites* our hard work and never excuses laziness.

iv. “Men must likewise see to it, that their ministers’ widows and children have a comfortable subsistence.” (Trapp)

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Matthew 6:25-34 by David Guzik

C. The place of material things: anxiety over material things.

1. (25) **Therefore: because the Kingdom of God is so greatly superior to earthly pursuits, it deserves our attention.**

“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?”

a. **Do not worry about your life:** We should not get tangled up worrying about the things of this world, because our life is more than those things.

i. “You can be as unfaithful to God through care as well as through covetousness.” (Bruce)

ii. **What you will eat or what you will drink...what you will put on:** “These three inquiries engross the whole attention of those who are living without God in the world. The belly and back of a worldling are his compound god; and these he worships in the lust of the flesh, in the lust of the eye, and in the pride of life.” (Clarke)

iii. Perhaps Adam Clarke would add in our own age, “What you will do to entertain yourself.”

b. **Do not worry:** There is a difference between a godly sense of responsibility and an ungodly, untrusting worry. However, an ungodly, untrusting sense of worry usually masquerades as responsibility.

i. “You cannot say that Jesus Christ ever troubled his head about what he should eat, or what he should drink; his meat and his drink consisted in doing his Father’s will.” (Spurgeon)

ii. We *are* to be concerned with the right things; the ultimate issues of life – and we then leave the management (and the worry) over material things with our heavenly Father.

c. **Is not life more than food:** The worry Jesus spoke of debases man to the level of an animal who is merely concerned with physical needs. Your life is **more**, and you have eternal matters to pursue.

2. (26-30) **Example and arguments against worry.**

“Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like

one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?*"

a. **Look at the birds of the air...your heavenly Father feeds them:** God provides for the birds, and He takes care of them. Therefore, we should expect that God would take care of us.

i. Yet take careful note: the birds don't *worry*, but they do *work*. Birds don't just sit with open mouths, expecting God to fill them.

ii. "This argument presupposed a biblical cosmology without which faith makes no sense. God is so sovereign over the universe that even the feeding of a wren falls within his concern." (Carson)

b. **Are you not of more value than they:** The worry many people have over the material things of life is rooted in a low understanding of their **value** before God. They don't comprehend how much He loves and cares for them.

c. **Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature:** Worry accomplishes nothing; we can **add** nothing to our lives by worrying. There may be greater sins than worry, but there are none more self-defeating and useless.

i. **Can add:** The ancient Greek may mean *adding to life* instead of *adding to height*, but the thought is the same. Indeed, instead of *adding* to our life, we can actually harm ourselves through worry. Stress is one of the great contributors to disease and poor health.

d. **If God so clothes the grass of the field:** God even takes care of the **grass of the field**, so He will certainly take care of you. We are confident of the power and care of a loving heavenly Father.

i. **You of little faith:** " *'Little faith'* is not a little fault; for it greatly wrongs the Lord, and sadly grieves the fretful mind. To think the Lord who clothes the lilies will leave his own children naked is shameful. O little faith, learn better manners!" (Spurgeon)

3. (31-32) You have a heavenly Father that knows your needs.

"Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things."

a. **Therefore do not worry:** We are invited to know a freedom from the worry and anxiety that comes from undue concern about material things. We can reflect the same kind of heart that Matthew Henry showed when he said the following after being robbed:

Lord, I thank You:

That I have never been robbed before.

That although they took my money, they spared my life.

That although they took everything, it wasn't very much.

That it was I who was robbed, not I who robbed.

b. **For after all these things the Gentiles seek:** Jesus contrasted the life of those who do not know God and are separated from Him with those who do know God and receive His loving care. Those who know God should **seek** after other things.

4. (33) Summary: Put God's kingdom first – He will take care of these things!

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

a. **But seek first the kingdom of God:** This must be the rule of our life when ordering our priorities. Yet it is wrong to think that this is just another priority to fit onto our list of priorities – and to put at the top. Instead, in everything we do, we **seek first the kingdom of God**.

i. For example, we rarely have to choose between honoring God and loving our wives or being good workers. We honor God and **seek first the kingdom of God** by being good husbands and good workers.

ii. We should also remember this statement in its immediate context. Jesus reminds us that our physical well-being is not a worthy object to devote our lives unto. If you think it is worthy that your god is mammon, then your life is cursed with worry, and you live life too much like an animal, concerned mostly with physical needs.

iii. Jesus didn't just tell them to stop worrying; He told them to *replace* worry with a concern for the kingdom of God. A habit or a passion can only be given up for a greater habit or passion.

iv. “What this verse demands is, therefore, a commitment to find and to do the will of God, to ally oneself totally with his purpose. And this commitment must come *first*.” (France)

b. **And all these things shall be added to you:** If you put God's kingdom first, and do not think that your physical well-being is a worthy object to live your life for, you then may enjoy **all these things**. He promises heavenly treasure, rest in divine provision, and fulfillment of God's highest purpose for man – fellowship with Him, and being part of His kingdom.

i. This choice – to **seek first the kingdom of God** – is the fundamental choice everyone makes when they first repent and are converted. Yet every day after that, our Christian life will either reinforce that decision or deny it.

5. (34) A conclusion with common sense.

“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”

a. **Do not worry about tomorrow:** If you *must* worry, worry only for the things of today. Most of our worry is over things that we have absolutely no control over anyway, and is therefore foolish as well as harmful.

b. **Sufficient for the day is its own trouble:** Jesus reminds us of the importance of living for the present **day**. It isn't wrong to remember the past or plan for the future; to some degree both of those are good. Yet it is easy to become too focused on either the past or the future and to let **the day** and **its own trouble** be ignored. God wants us to remember the past, plan for the future, but live in the present.