

Community Groups are used extensively as the primary vehicle for discipleship at The Gathering and run on a quarter system. There is one in the fall, one in the winter and one in the spring. During the summer weeks we don't meet in Community Groups but we still offer the Growth Guides as a tool to help you grow personally. The Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family and are available each week along with the note sheets at church as well as online.

COMMUNITY GROUPS ARE BETTER WHEN MEMBERS COME PREPARED. THIS GUIDE HAS BEEN PROVIDED AS A TOOL FOR THAT.

Consider...

Use the summary and discussion below to review and apply this week's message:

Message Summary

In Luke 12:22-34, Jesus begins to address fear and anxiety, 2 subjects that most of us can identify as having too much of a grip in our lives. From the low-grade worry that many of us would call acceptable all the way to full blown depression that can render us powerless to the simplest tasks, fear and anxiety have a hold on us, and Jesus shares some guardrails with His disciples that would keep them (and us) away from the wreckage of anxiety.

1. **Guardrail one: trying to think our way out.** One of the ways we try to deal with anxiety is by coming up with a better plan. We try to improve ourselves, only think about positive things, watch comedies, etc. But if you've ever tried to NOT think about being anxious, then you already know that the result is often even more anxiety! Jesus talked about birds and flowers and how God takes care of them, and that we can trust our Father even more because we are infinitely more valuable than flowers and birds. Instead of thinking our way out of anxiety, Jesus says we need to trust our way out.
2. **Guardrail two: trying to buy our way out.** Then Jesus turns to money, possessions, and treasure. He talks about the stuff of life (things like clothes and food) and then talks about the stuff we buy in life! The connection may seem strange at first, but we often throw our finances at our fears, don't we? We try to buy our way out of anxiety, and often just end up more anxious and less wealthy. Jesus said we should build our way out by storing up treasures in heaven. He suggests that we do this through generously focusing on how we can help others instead of desperately focusing on how we can fix ourselves.

Discuss

Use the following questions to review and apply the points learned in the message.

- Before this teaching, Jesus had taught about greed and the rich fool who wanted to keep everything he had for himself. How is greed related to anxiety?
- In the first century, food and clothing would have been 2 of the biggest worries people faced. What are the big worries today?
- This week's Big Idea states that **anxiety comes from wondering HOW GOD WILL instead of trusting WHO GOD IS**. Discuss how you've experienced this in your own life. Think about the things that cause you to worry in light of WHO GOD IS as a tender, loving Father. How does that change/does it change your level of anxiety about details in your future that you may not know?
- Is there something you need to give away that would demonstrate trust, refocus your heart and help you to see God's provision? What is it?
- What does Jesus mean with the statement in verse 34: "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."
- Close the time out by applying 1 Peter 5:7 in prayer for one another.