



Introduction/Icebreaker:

- What's the silliest thing you've ever worried about?

Sermon Discussion:

Was there anything in today's sermon or service that stuck out to you, challenged you, or really spoke to you?

Scripture Discussion:

- **Read Matthew 6:25-34**
 - Why do we worry?
 - What does worry accomplish for us?
- Look at verse 30.
 - How does Jesus describe his hearers?
 - When have you fallen into this category?
- Look again at the entire passage (Mt. 6:25-34)
 - What reasons does Jesus give in this passage to keep us from worrying?
 - What remedy does Jesus offer to those who are bound by worry?
 - What is the positive counterpart to "don't worry" (look at Proverbs 3:5)
- **Read Matthew 7:1-6 as a group.**
- Look at verses 1 & 2.
 - What warning does Jesus issue here?
 - When have you been guilty of judging someone harshly?

- Look at verses 3-5.
 - What does Jesus teach is the remedy for the hypocrisy he identifies here?
 - Does Jesus teach that we should never judge someone else's behavior?

- Look at verse 6.
 - It's helpful to understand here that dogs and swine were considered unclean animals, and dealing with one could make a person ceremonially unclean. The "sacred" things was most likely a reference to meat sacrificed in the temple. The pearls of that culture would have resembled peas that swine would feed on, thus being a waste of something valuable and a deception to the swine. In light of this, what do you think Jesus is getting at here?

Application:

- How might it be damaging to the Kingdom of God for Christ followers to maintain a low standard of personal holiness but to expect non believers to adhere to a high standard of holiness?
- When have you experienced this?
- Do you have any regrets from this kind of hypocritical attitude in your own life? Share about it, if you feel comfortable.

- People are hungry for acceptance, but grace requires that we not only accept them where they are, but help them grow in holiness, which requires a transformation of the soul and all of one's life. How does our culture make it difficult to challenge people to a higher standard of holiness?

- Without being judgmental, what could be done to help someone who is shipwrecking their life?
- How might you approach someone if you saw them engaging in destructive behavior and you had insight into how they could change?
- What might negate our effectiveness in confronting someone in their sin?
- What precautions would you take to avoid coming across as being judgmental?
- Why might people still not respond well to our well-intentioned confrontations, even if we do everything in a spirit of humility and grace?
- Look at Matthew 7:12. How does this verse speak into this situation?
(We commit ourselves not to judge others from a high and lofty position, but to serve them in love, desiring what's best for them.)

- What area of life do you need to address to avoid hypocrisy as a Christ-follower?

Prayer Direction:

Spend time praying as a group for discernment in helping others deal with sin, for openness for receiving feedback from God and others about our own sinfulness, and for humility as we seek to grow in the likeness of Christ.