

GESTURES

FOLLOWING JESUS IN SIMPLE WAYS

Gestures—Week One: Hang Loose

Connect: What does the most relaxed version of yourself look like? Share with your group what you do, say, wear, eat, etc. when your guard is down and the pressure is off.

Grow

1. **Read Matthew 6:25.** Jesus told us not to worry about things like these: Food, drink, clothing. Worry is an inordinate, unproductive, overly obsessive, disruptive amount of thought being given to something you cannot control. Is the thing that brings the most anxiety in your life on Jesus' list in this verse—or is it something else? What is it for you?
2. **Read Matthew 6:26.** How does paying attention to the way God cares for creation help us to more clearly see His power and desire to care for us?
3. Dwelling on **What ifs?** can cause us to sacrifice our peace, joy, and contentment. What are your **What ifs?** aimed at in this season of your life? Do you sense a lack of peace, joy, contentment, or any other good gift of the Father as a result? Share more about what that looks like for you.
4. **Read Matthew 6:27.** The answer to Jesus' question is "no"... worry can't add days to our lives. But how does it *steal* days from our life?
5. If Jesus were telling you to let go, relax, and release something to Him, what would it be? What care or concern would you want to get rid of? What do you think *He* wants you to release? Are they the same thing? Why or why not?
6. **Read Matthew 6:28-30.** It all comes down to this question: *Who or what do you trust will take care of you?* If you were to answer in all transparency... is it money, food, people, possessions... or Jesus? We know we want to say *Jesus*. Or we think we ought to say *Jesus*. But, wherever we are with the question, how can we all move closer to *Jesus* being our default answer to the question?

Pray: Sometimes we can let others know what we're thinking and how we're feeling without saying a word. In **Romans 8:26-27** we are told the Holy Spirit prays for us when we don't have any idea how to pray for ourselves. It seems reasonable to trust that our Creator, the God of the universe, knows our needs better than we do. Take a moment to let go of your ideas about what you're worried about, what you think (or know) you need right now and simply ask the Holy Spirit to pray for you. Then set a timer and just be quietly grateful that God knows your needs and the Holy Spirit is lifting them up in prayer on your behalf as you sit thankfully for a few minutes.

Next: Read (and even *memorize*) **Philippians 4:6-7**. And then, take time to actually DO what it says: First, push pause on the thing you're worrying about. Spend some time in prayer, talking with God to share what you need. Then prioritize a few minutes to make a list and thank God for all He has already done. Before you're finished, the level of peace in your heart and mind should be on the rise.