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# SENIOR SCHOLAR SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY

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# THE ORDER OF SERVICE

- I. Bell tap or organ voluntary as a signal for silence
- II. Singing
- III. The Apostles' Creed
- IV. Prayer, closing with the Lord's Prayer in concert
- V. Singing
- VI. Calling roll of officers and teachers
- VII. Responsive reading of the lesson text by school
- VIII. The Decalogue

## THE LESSON

- I. Organ interlude while the classes are being arranged
- II. Class study of the lesson
- III. Warning bell — 5 minutes
- IV. Closing bell — silence

## THE CLOSING

- I. Singing
- II. Review and application of the lesson
- III. Secretary's report
- IV. The Church School Creed
- V. Singing
- VI. Benediction

## EDITORIAL STAFF

**Rev. Dr. Roderick Belin**, Publisher  
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**A.L. Stanfield**, Copy Editor  
**M.E. Russell**, Layout Design

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day He arose from the dead, He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Church Universal, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

## THE CHURCH SCHOOL CREED

I believe my A.M.E. Church School must grow and grow; and that I must make it a top priority to make it so. Every member a Christian, every Christian a worker, every worker trained so that a worker need not be ashamed. This we ask in Jesus' name.

*A.M.E. Discipline*



LESSON 1

JUNE 6, 2021

# Why Do You Worry?

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Matthew 6:19-34

FOCUS SCRIPTURE: Matthew 6:25-34

**KEY VERSE:** *“So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”*  
*Matthew 6:34*

## WORDS TO KNOW

*WORRY* – overly concerned

*STRIVE* – investigate, research

*SOW* – spread or scatter

*KINGDOM* – authority or power

*REAP* – gather

*RIGHTEOUSNESS* – justice, what is deemed right

*LITTLE FAITH* – failing to hear god’s voice

*WILL BE GIVEN* – reach your goal

***FOCUS SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 6:25-34***

- 25** “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?”
- 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?”
- 27** And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?”
- 28** And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin,
- 29** yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.
- 30** But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?”
- 31** Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’
- 32** For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.
- 33** But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
- 34** So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.”

## INTRODUCTION

Every day, we are faced with many questions. Some are slightly superficial like what we will wear, what shoes we will put on, how we will style our hair, what we will eat, etc. But there are other questions that weigh heavily on us: When will schools reopen? Will we ever be able to hang out with our friends outside of Zoom or Google Classroom? When will the pandemic end? Will things get better with Joe Biden as president? Will black lives, young lives, women's lives, queer lives ever matter? It is difficult not to worry when there is so much going on. But Jesus' words remind us that God will take care of all our needs. We only have to work towards things that are right and just; all else will be given to us.

## BIBLE STORY

**25** “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?”

The sixth chapter of Matthew is filled with instructions that Jesus is sharing with the people. In verse twenty-five, Jesus realizes they spend a lot of time worrying about things that are not important. He reminds them that there is more to life than eating, drinking, and clothes.

**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?

Jesus uses the example of the birds to help make his point. The birds do not spend the day planting seeds or storing up food, yet they have food every day. If God provides food for the birds, then surely God will do the same for people.

**27** And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?

Jesus goes on to explain to the crowd that worrying does not help them. He says that it does not matter how concerned they are; worrying will not add any time to their lives. In other words, the only time they have is now. They do not get extra hours.

**28-29** And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.

He continues his point by talking about the lilies and how beautiful they are. King Solomon was extremely wealthy and extravagant, yet not even he could compare to the lilies.

**30** But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

If God will take the time to adorn a flower, whose lifespan is extremely short, with such beauty, won't God do the same for the people? Then Jesus asks, "Where is your faith?"

**31** Therefore do not worry, saying, "What will we eat?" or "What will we drink?" or "What will we wear?"

**Do not worry. Do not question how you will get food, drink, or clothes.**

**32** For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

Nonbelievers worry about food, drink, and clothes. But God knows what we need. God knows you need to eat. God knows you need to drink. God knows you can't walk around naked. God is fully aware.

**33** But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Turn your focus to God's power. Search for things that are right. Let justice and fairness be your guide. As you focus your attention on the things God is concerned about, you will be given what you need.

**34** So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today."

Focus on today and let tomorrow worry about tomorrow. Don't spend time thinking about what may happen the next day or in the days to come; just focus on what is in front of you. Let God take care of the rest.

## **SANKOFA**

Bobby McFerrin was a pretty laid-back guy who had an ear and hunger for music. Being the son of an opera singer, he discovered his musical talents pretty early on. He worked really hard on his craft and stayed away from listening to other musicians, so he could develop his own singing voice. Though his career started late, he was deemed a musical genius.

One day while visiting family, he saw a poster with the words of Meher Baba, “Don’t worry, be happy.” He felt like these four words summed up American life and provided the inspiration and hope needed to navigate it. Inspired, he sat down to pen the words. The song opens up with the words:

*“Here’s a little song I wrote  
You might want to sing it note for note  
Don’t worry, be happy  
In every life we have some trouble  
But when you worry you make it double  
Don’t worry, be happy  
Don’t worry, be happy now.”*

Simplistic in nature, the song calls out some of the hardships people are facing but encourages them not to worry and just be happy. Due to the realness of its message and the simplicity of the tune, the song was a major hit and earned McFerrin several Grammys and other accolades. “Don’t worry, be happy” reminds people that life will have trials, and there will be obstacles to overcome, but there is no need to worry about them. Enjoy the day, the moment, the time for what it is. Shift your perspective because your down spirit can bring other people’s down. Worrying causes more problems, so focus on the joys in life. No matter what the problem. No matter what you face. “Don’t worry, be happy.”

## **REAL TALK-FAITH WALK**

Every day is a challenge to keep our eyes focused on kingdom issues. But if we are honest, it isn’t easy. It’s hard to have faith that everything will be okay when the world around us feels so crazy. How do we know our needs will be met?

Having faith is even more of a challenge when it seems like no one else cares about your worries. When the world seems more consumed with other priorities, how can we be sure that God will take care of us? Where can we look to see God’s provisions?

**SUMMARY**

1. Look back at the list of worries. What is something you can remove from the list, knowing God will provide?
2. How can you practice trusting in God when life does not go your way?
3. How can you use faith to help avoid anxiety?

**CLOSING DEVOTION**

God knows what you need. When you strive to do right and promote justice, God will provide you with everything else. Let the words and smooth sound of Bob Marley's "Three Little Birds" serve as a reminder: Don't worry about a thing because "everything is gonna be alright."

LESSON 2

JUNE 13, 2021

# Why Are You Afraid?

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Matthew 8:23-27;  
Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25

FOCUS SCRIPTURE: Matthew 8:23-27

**KEY VERSE:** *He said to them, “Why are you afraid, you of little faith?” Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a dead calm. Matthew 8:26*

## WORDS TO KNOW

*DISCIPLES* – learner, pupil

*PERISHING* – being destroyed

*FOLLOW* – accompany, conform to one’s example

*REBUKED* – corrected

*SWAMPED* – cover, conceal, hide

*DEAD* – a great stillness

***FOCUS SCRIPTURE: MATTHEW 8:23-27***

- 23** And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him.
- 24** A windstorm arose on the sea, so great that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep.
- 25** And they went and woke him up, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!"
- 26** And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a dead calm.
- 27** They were amazed, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

## INTRODUCTION

The word “fear” is often described as this acronym: False Evidence Appearing Real. This acronym means that sometimes what we are afraid of isn’t actually real; it only appears to be real. This saying helps people overcome the things they’re afraid of and makes them more comfortable. Unfortunately, it doesn’t always work. Some dangers and hardships are very real and present. What are some things you are afraid of?

## BIBLE STORY

**23** And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him.

After healing people, Jesus got on a boat to escape the crowds. His disciples went with him.

**24** A windstorm arose on the sea, so great that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep.

While Jesus was asleep, they encountered a storm so big that the waves covered the boat.

**25** And they went and woke him up, saying, “Lord, save us! We are perishing!”

The disciples panicked and were very afraid. They were in danger and did not know what to do. Knowing that Jesus had helped others, they woke him up and demanded his help.

**26** And he said to them, “Why are you afraid, you of little faith?” Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a dead calm.

Slightly annoyed by their lack of faith, Jesus called them out the same way he called out those who were worrying earlier: “You of little faith.” In other words, Jesus asked, “Why are you so worried?” He got up from where he was sleeping and calmed the storm.

**27** They were amazed, saying, “What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?”

Even though the disciples went to Jesus for help, they were still surprised at his power to control the elements of the earth. This miracle gave them all the more reason to have faith in him and not to worry about anything.

## SANKOFA

On March 7, 1965, a group of peaceful protestors attempted to cross the

Edmund Pettus Bridge in hopes of gaining access to the state capitol of Alabama in order to combat discriminatory voting practices. The march happened in three stages, the first was met with violence and bloodshed. The day became known as “Bloody Sunday.” The people found themselves stuck on the bridge running from the police and other local authorities who refused to allow them to cross. Because of the presence of the media, the event was captured on film and instilled fear in the hearts of the people.

Bloody Sunday was followed by another march where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. marched with protestors; however, when he came near the end of the bridge he turned around. The exact reason as to why is still unclear, but he decided that was not the right time for them to cross. It would not be until a couple of weeks later that they would return to Edmund Pettus Bridge and peacefully cross, continuing their march to the capitol.

What would have happened if the people allowed the storm of violence to turn them away?

How did Dr. King’s presence help to ensure a peaceful passing across the bridge?

## **REAL TALK-FAITH WALK**

Fear is a natural emotion. Fear is our body alerting us to a possible danger. Sometimes we are afraid of the unknown when we do not know what will happen. Other times we are afraid when we cannot see in front or around us. We may also be afraid when our lives are in danger. It is okay to be afraid; but it is not okay to be so afraid that you start to worry or panic. Next time you’re scared asked yourself: *Why am I afraid? Do I really need to be afraid, or do I need to amp up my trust in God?*

When we look at the reasons for our fear, we can determine if we are in real danger or if it is a situation to leave in God’s hands.

## **SUMMARY**

1. How does Jesus’ calming of the sea relate to his instructions to not worry?
2. What can you do to combat fearful situations?
3. How can you encourage others to choose faith over fear?

## **CLOSING DEVOTION**

“No Reason to Fear” by J. J. Hairston

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