



the visual **faith** project

A Visual Faith Experience

Stress and Worry About Doing Everything Right

By Dr. Dick Hardel

Theme: Stress and Worry About Doing Everything Right (Luke 12:22-34)

Intended Audience

It is best to do Visual Faith Exercises within small groups of four or five because it gives more opportunity for all the members of the group to participate. If you have more people for your experience, divide them into two or more small groups. Intergenerational groups are always most helpful because of the variety of experiences.

For this exercise it would be most helpful to have the small group consist of people who are of a variety of ages (70+, 45+, 25+, 14+)

Outcome of Experience

Participants will learn from each other of the major stress factors at different ages in one's life. The images will not only aid the discussion but also help clarify the varieties of stress and cause of stress. The participants will be challenged to trust in the presence and loving care of God in every situation and learn from how a trusting relationship with God is a matter of the heart.

Introduce Experience

Whether in any level of education, competing in sports, our work in our occupations, finding a job, sustaining a family, raising children, keeping a marriage strong, single parenting, relocating, engaging in activities in church or community organizations, building friendships, preparing for retirement, living on a fixed income of retirement, tackling the tough questions of aging—our hearts and minds are filled with stress and worry most often about doing everything just right in our lives. What does that look like and feel like? Where is God? What is it we treasure? Let's learn from and with each other.

Image Selection

Spend two or three minutes reflecting on the stress in your life and the various things you worry about doing just right or for the right approval. Then go to the tables with all the images and find at least one image that depicts a major concern presently in your life and another image that visualizes how the worry and stress affect you.



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Stress and Worry About Doing Everything Right continued...

Facilitators Questions To Guide Group Discussion

1. How does the image you have selected describe your major concern or worry presently in your life?
2. How does the other image you selected demonstrate the power or affect of the worry and stress in your life?
3. What are some emotions, values, goals, or activities that are prevented because of your worry and stress?
4. To whom or to what in your family is this anxiety of doing everything correctly connected?
5. What support do you need to lessen the worry and anxiety and enjoy life more?
6. How do the major worries and concerns of various generations differ?
7. To whom do you turn most often when confronted with the high level of stress and worry?

Scripture (Luke 12:22-34)

22 He said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. 23 For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. 24 Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! 25 And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? 26 If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? 27 Consider the lilies, 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. 28 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! 29 And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. 30 For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. 31 Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. 32 “Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Image Selection

Give each participant a copy of this Scripture text. Ask one person to read this text aloud. Invite the participants to look carefully at this text and in light of their worries and concerns to circle some words or phrases in the text that grab their attention. Then instruct them to go to the image table and find one or more images that exhibit the words or phrase circled.



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Questions to Connect Chosen Image with Scriptures

1. With what words or phrase in this Scripture text does the image(s) you have chosen connect?
2. What are the feelings you have as you look at the image?
3. What are images you have seen from others or words in this text that give you hope of less stress and more joy?
4. Where is God for you?
5. Where is your heart in relationship to God?

Application

- What are three things you treasure? (facilitator could use choosing images again)
- Is there stress connected with these three things? If so, describe the stress. If not, why is there no stress?
- As you look to the future how does God bring you comfort from worries?

Closing Prayer Time

As the facilitator, create a holy space for the individuals and group to engage in prayer. The heart of the gospel is the death and resurrection of Jesus, our Redeemer. Jesus is the image of the innards or heart of God.

Cut out a large heart. Invite the participants to write with crayon or marker their names on the heart. When all have added their names, place the heart on a small table. Place a resurrection cross in the center of the heart. Light a few candles and turn off other lights. Instruct the participants to sit on chairs around the small table. Simply say to the participants, “Jesus told us in this text that where our treasure is there your heart will be also. Your name is in God’s heart. So what is God’s treasure?” Think and pray about it! No worries!”

Give them 4-5 minutes in prayer.

Image Packs

We recommend Assorted Set A (set of 100 printed images) for use with this experience or other images that you may already have. You can find Assorted Set A at: <https://vibrantfaith.org/shop/visualfaithcards>