

This is a study guide for small groups, to be used alongside *Dave Says, "Don't Worry!"* by David Albans.

It is not necessary to read the book to engage with the course, although that is helpful. This course has additional materials but uses the book as a foundation.

Week 1: Worry – the stealer of our joy.

Theme: Worry is a burden, but godly concern leads to action.

1. Welcome & Opening Prayer (5-10 mins)

- Introduce the course and its purpose: *For the next eight weeks, we are going to be working through a Biblical and practical guide to overcome worry. We recommend you get hold of a copy of Dave Says, "Don't Worry!" to work through in the weeks, but that isn't necessary to enjoy this course and benefit from the teaching.*
- Ask: *Is worry something you deal with? How does it affect your life?*

2. Bible Reading (10-15 mins)

Ask different group members to read out a scripture. Read each one out a couple of times, maybe using different translations. Take feedback for the group. How easy or difficult is it to do what the scripture is saying?

- **Matthew 6:25-34** (Jesus on not worrying)
- **Philippians 4:6-7** (Pray instead of worry)
- **2 Timothy 1:7** (The opposite of worry)
- Discussion: *Why do you think God is so interested in us not worrying?*

3. Book Reading & Discussion (15-20 mins)

- Read the section in *Dave Says, "Don't Worry!"* called *What is Worry?* It contrasts Concern and Worry, with some very practical examples.
- Discussion questions:
 - *Which one of those examples struck you the most?*
 - *How does worry keep us stuck, while concern moves us forward?*
 - *Can you think of a time when worry took over, or when concern helped you act wisely?*

4. Application & Personal Reflection (10-15 mins)

- Reflect: *What are you currently worried about? Is this worry which you need to let go of, or is it actually concern, which can lead to helpful actions? Use the examples from the book if that helps you.*

CONCERN:

Born out of love

Focused on others

Constructive

Prompts action

Based on what is real

WORRY:

Born out of fear

Focused on ourselves

Destructive

Feels powerless

Based on ifs and maybes.

- Activity: Write down a worry you struggle with. Can you rewrite it as a concern with an action step?

5. Prayer & Closing (10 mins)

- Pray for God's peace and wisdom in handling worries.
- Encourage members to reflect on these important differences this week, and stop themselves when they are slipping into worry and see if they can turn it into concern and action (especially prayer!).

Take-Home Reflection:

- Read **Matthew 6:25-34** again during the week.
- Write down when you notice worry creeping in and pray about it.
- Read from *Dave Says, "Don't Worry!"*: Introduction, What is Worry? And Facts about Worrying.

Week 2: PERSONAL – The Lord is Near

Theme: God is not distant. He is personal, present and walks with us through our struggles.

1. Welcome & Opening Prayer (5-10 mins)

- Briefly recap last week's session on worry vs concern. How has that understanding changed things for you this week?
- Icebreaker: *When have you felt truly 'seen' or 'heard' by someone? How did it impact you?*

2. Bible Reading (10-15 mins)

- **Philippians 4:5-9** (Focus on verse 5: "The Lord is near.")
- **Psalms 34:18** ("The Lord is close to the brokenhearted.")
- **Isaiah 41:10** ("Fear not, for I am with you.")
- Discussion: *What does it mean that "the Lord is near"? How does this truth shape how we face worries?*

3. Book Reading & Discussion (15-20 mins)

- Read the section in *Dave Says, "Don't Worry!"* in the chapter *Personal*, under the subheading 2. *God is powerful*
- Discussion questions:
 - *Do we sometimes believe in God's presence in theory but not in practice?*
 - *How does knowing that God is near and powerful change the way we process worry?*
 - *What holds us back from fully trusting that God is present in our personal struggles?*

4. Application & Personal Reflection (10-15 mins)

- Reflect: *In what area of your life do you most need to remember that God is near?*
- Activity: Write down a current struggle. Next to it, write how knowing "The Lord is near" changes how you respond.

5. Prayer & Closing (10 mins)

- Group prayer, inviting God into specific struggles.
- Encourage members to meditate on Philippians 4:5-9 throughout the week.

Take-Home Reflection:

- Read Philippians 4:5-9 each day this week.
- Whenever worry creeps in, pause and say aloud: *"The Lord is near."*
- Read from *Dave Says, "Don't Worry!"*, *A Six-Point Strategy*, and *Personal*.

Week 3: The People God Has Given Us

Theme: God provides relationships to support and strengthen us in times of worry.

1. Welcome & Opening Prayer (5-10 mins)

- Brief recap of last week (The Lord is Near). How has this understanding changed things for you this week?
- Icebreaker: *Who is someone in your life who has helped you through a difficult time? What made their support meaningful?*

2. Bible Reading (10-15 mins)

- **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12** ("Two are better than one.")
- **Galatians 6:2** ("Carry each other's burdens.")
- **1 Samuel 18:1-4; 23:16-18** (Jonathan's friendship with David)
- Discussion: *What do these passages reveal about the role of friendship in times of worry?*

3. Book Reading & Discussion (15-20 mins)

- Read the section in *Dave Says, "Don't Worry!"* in the chapter *People*, that starts "Worry can isolate us" and ends "they could be profoundly affecting our lives"
- Discussion questions:
 - *Do you find it easy or difficult to lean on others? Why?*
 - *What holds people back from sharing their worries with trusted friends?*
 - *How can we be better friends to others who are struggling?*

4. Application & Personal Reflection (10-15 mins)

- Reflect: *Who in your life is a 'God-given friend'? How can you strengthen that relationship?*
- Activity: Write down one way you can offer support to a friend this week.

5. Prayer & Closing (10 mins)

- Group prayer for friendships and community support.
- Encourage members to reach out to a friend this week for encouragement.

Take-Home Reflection:

- Read **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12** daily and reflect on how you can lean into relationships more.
- Intentionally check in with a friend and offer support.
- Read from *Dave Says, "Don't Worry!"*, the section called *People*

Week 4: Praise as an Antidote to Worry

Theme: Turning to praise shifts our focus from anxiety to God's goodness.

Welcome & Opening Prayer (5-10 mins)

- Recap last week (Leaning into Friendships). How has this understanding changed things for you this week?
- Icebreaker: *What is one thing you are thankful for today?*

2. Bible Reading (10-15 mins)

- **Philippians 4:6** ("Do not be anxious... but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.")
- **Psalms 103:1-5** ("Bless the Lord, O my soul... and forget not all His benefits.")
- **2 Chronicles 20:21-22** (Jehoshaphat sends worshippers ahead into battle, and God brings victory)
- Discussion: *How does praise change our perspective in times of worry? Can you share a personal story?*

3. Book Reading & Discussion (15-20 mins)

- Read the story of Dave's fishing trip from the Praise section of *Dave Says, "Don't Worry!"*
- Discussion questions:
 - *How does changing our perspective, changing what we look at, help us when we are in worrying circumstances?*
 - *What makes it hard to praise God when we are worried?*
 - *Have you experienced a time when praise changed your outlook on a situation?*

4. Application & Personal Reflection (10-15 mins)

- Reflect: *What is one area of life where you can replace worry with thanksgiving?*
- Activity: Write a "Praise List"—three things about God to praise Him for and three things you're thankful for.

5. Prayer & Closing (10 mins)

- Group prayer focused on praising God for who He is and thanking Him for His faithfulness.
- Encourage members to start each day this week with a short prayer of thanksgiving.

Take-Home Reflection:

- Read **Psalm 103:1-5** daily and write down one thing to praise God for each day.
- When feeling anxious, pause and say, *"Lord, I choose to praise You in this moment."*
- Read from *Dave Says, "Don't Worry!"*, the section called *Praise*.

Week 5: Paying Attention to Our Thoughts

Theme: Our thoughts shape our emotions and actions – focusing on truth leads to peace.

1. Welcome & Opening Prayer (5-10 mins)

- Recap last week (The Power of Praise). How has this understanding changed things for you this week?
- Icebreaker: *Have you ever believed something that turned out not to be true? How did it affect your actions?*

2. Bible Reading (10-15 mins)

- **Philippians 4:8-9** ("Whatever is true, noble, right, pure... think about such things.")
- **Romans 12:2** ("Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.")
- **2 Corinthians 10:5** ("Take captive every thought and make it obedient to Christ.")
- Discussion: *How do our thoughts influence our emotions and decisions?*

3. Book Reading & Discussion (15-20 mins)

- Read the first two pages of the section called Pay Attention (up to the John 8:32 quote) in *Dave Says, "Don't Worry!"*
- Discussion questions:
 - *How does worry often start in our thought life?*
 - *What are some common "untrue" thoughts that lead to anxiety?*
 - *How can we practically "take thoughts captive" and replace them with God's truth?*

4. Application & Personal Reflection (10-15 mins)

- Reflect: *What thoughts do you often dwell on that increase worry?*
- Activity:
 -

- Draw two columns—label one "Worrying Thought" and the other "Biblical Truth."
- Write down a recent worrying thought and then ask God for a truth from Scripture to replace it.
- Share one example with the group (if comfortable).

5. Prayer & Closing (10 mins)

- Group prayer, asking God to renew minds and replace worry with truth.
- Encourage members to be intentional about their thoughts this week.

Take-Home Reflection:

- Memorize **Philippians 4:8** and use it as a filter for thoughts this week.
- Each day, when a worry arises, replace it with a truth from Scripture.
- Read from *Dave Says, "Don't Worry!"* the section called *Pay Attention*.

Week 6: Talking to God – The Power of Prayer

Theme: Prayer is not just a last resort—it is how we bring our worries to God.

1. Welcome & Opening Prayer (5-10 mins)

- Recap last week (Paying Attention to Our Thoughts). How has this understanding changed things for you this week?
- Icebreaker: *When was the last time you had an honest conversation with a friend? How did it help?*

2. Bible Reading (10-15 mins)

- **Philippians 4:6** ("Do not be anxious... but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.")
- **1 Peter 5:7** ("Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.")
- **Matthew 6:9-13** (The Lord's Prayer as a model)
- Discussion: *Why do we sometimes treat prayer as a last resort rather than our first response?*

3. Book Reading & Discussion (15-20 mins)

- Read the first two and a half pages of the section called Pray (up to the Philippians 4:5-6 quote) in *Dave Says "Don't Worry!"*

- Discussion questions:
 - *How much would you say prayer is part of your life at the moment?*
 - *When Dave speaks about God requiring a response and commitment to his instruction, like you would adhere to a doctor's advice, how do you feel about that?*
 - *How do you feel about the paragraph about the mountain and the molehill? Have you had experiences like Dave is describing?*

4. Application & Personal Reflection (10-15 mins)

- Reflect: *What is one worry you haven't fully handed over to God?*
- Activity: Write a short personal prayer about a current worry.
- If comfortable, pray in pairs or small groups.

5. Prayer & Closing (10 mins)

- Group prayer, bringing specific worries to God.
- Encourage members to spend intentional time in prayer each day this week.

Take-Home Reflection:

- Begin each day with a short prayer of trust.
- Keep a prayer journal, writing down worries and how God answers over time.
- Read from *Dave Says*, "Don't Worry!", the section called *Pray*.

Week 7: Practice – Developing Habits of Trust

Theme: Trusting God is not just a one-time decision – it's a habit we cultivate daily.

1. Welcome & Opening Prayer (5-10 mins)

- Recap last week (Talking to God in Prayer). How has this understanding changed things for you this week?
- Icebreaker: *What is a habit (good or bad) that has shaped your daily life?*

2. Bible Reading (10-15 mins)

- **Philippians 4:9** ("Whatever you have learned or received... put it into practice.")
- **James 1:22-25** ("Do not merely listen to the word... do what it says.")
- **Psalms 1:2-3** (The one who meditates on God's Word is like a tree planted by water.)
- Discussion: *Why is it important to develop consistent spiritual habits?*

3. Book Reading & Discussion (15-20 mins)

- Read the first two pages of the section called *Practice* (stop at the marathon runner part) in *Dave Says, "Don't Worry!"*
- Discussion questions:
 - *Why is it an effort to apply what we have learned?*
 - *Dave uses the example of swapping worrying thoughts with good thoughts. What other things can we practise?*
 - *What is one thing you could begin practising this week to trust God more?*

4. Application & Personal Reflection (10-15 mins)

- Reflect: *What habit could you start that would help you trust God daily?*
- Activity: Write down one small, practical step to take this week (e.g. setting aside time for prayer, memorising a verse, journaling worries).
- Encourage accountability by checking in with one another next week.

5. Prayer & Closing (10 mins)

- Group prayer, asking God to help develop strong habits of trust.
- Encourage members to put one practice into action this week.

Take-Home Reflection:

- Choose a small faith-building habit to practise daily.
- Reflect on Philippians 4:9: *What do I need to put into practice?*
- Read from *Dave Says, "Don't Worry!"*, the section called *Practice*

Week 8: The Peace That Comes from Trusting God

Theme: As we apply these principles – prayer, praise, godly thinking, and trust – we experience the peace of God.

1. Welcome & Opening Prayer (5-10 mins)

- Recap key lessons from the past seven weeks. Does anyone want to share any changes in their lives, so we can celebrate together?
- Icebreaker: *Can you recall a time when you felt deep peace despite your circumstances?*

2. Bible Reading (10-15 mins)

- **Philippians 4:7** ("And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.")
- **Isaiah 26:3** ("You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in You.")
- **John 14:27** ("Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.")
- Discussion: *What do these verses teach us about the nature of God's peace?*

3. Book Reading & Discussion (15-20 mins)

- Read the section from *Dave Says, "Don't Worry!"* starting "Peace is a gift of God" through to the quote by Woodrow Kroll.
- Discussion questions:
 - *How do we get this peace?*
 - *What does this peace do? Can you give examples from your life?*
 - *Which of the principles we've studied has made the biggest difference in your life?*

4. Application & Personal Reflection (10-15 mins)

- Reflect: *In what area of life do you most need to embrace God's peace?*
- Activity: Write a personal commitment statement—one thing you will continue practising to walk in peace.
- Encourage group members to share what they've learned from the course.

5. Prayer & Closing (10-15 mins)

- Group prayer, thanking God for His presence and peace.
- If appropriate, invite testimonies of how God has worked through this study.
- Encourage members to continue supporting one another beyond the course.

Take-Home Reflection:

- Memorise **Philippians 4:5-9** and meditate on it when worry arises.
- Continue practising what has been learned. Peace is a journey, not a one-time event.
- Read the remainder of *Dave Says, "Don't Worry!"*
- Do you know a friend who needs to hear this message? Why not send them a copy of the book?