

LIFEGROUP NOTES: MATTHEW 6:5-15

As ever, please use (or discard!) these ideas as is most suitable for your group. Don't feel you have to use everything.

Preparing for God's Word

1. How would you describe your prayer life?

Read Mt 6:5-15

2. The hypocrite loves the praise of the audience because he is unsure if God's approval will really be enough to satisfy his heart (v.5). The pagan fears his god is indifferent and needs to be cajoled with many words (v.7). But what does Jesus reveal as the truth about God's love and care for us (v.8)?
3. Jesus teaches us to begin our praying by remembering who God is: our heavenly Father (v.9). What difference does this make to how we pray?
4. Immediately Jesus focuses our attention on the honour due to God's name (v.9). Obviously we cannot pray this sincerely without living it out. So whose name are you living for: God's, or your own? Where would your life be affected today if you prayed from the heart, "Father, may the way I live be driven by Your Name, not mine"?
5. See v.10. Consider these prayers:
 - "Father, may I be a person who spends my time building Your kingdom, not mine."
 - "Father, do anything You will with me and mine. I rest in Your will."

Is this how you pray? Why – or why not?

6. How does knowing God as our loving heavenly Father –
 - enable us to be content with our daily bread (v.11)?
 - lead us to seek God's forgiveness, and to forgive others (v.12)?
 - make us serious about the sin that's inside us, so that we long for our Father's protection against temptation (v.13)?
7. Which part of the Lord's prayer do you find hardest to pray with integrity? What does that suggest about the way you really think of God? How can you come to a deeper assurance of His Fatherly love and care for you?

Responding in Prayer

- Thank God for His Fatherly love and care for us. Use the Lord's prayer as a pattern for praying together as a group.

Eddie Larkman, April 2017