

LIFEGROUP NOTES: MATTHEW 6:1-18

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 do you react to hypocrisy in other people? Why? How do you react if you are accused of hypocrisy? Why?

Read Mt 6:1-18

2. See v.1. What does Jesus say about doing the right thing for the wrong reason? When you do things like giving, praying and fasting, what wrong motives do you find yourself struggling with? Why? Have you been able honestly to acknowledge this to God ... to yourself ... to others?
3. Describe some of the subtle ways by which we seek the praise of people for what we do.
4. Does Jesus condemn any and all acts of giving, prayer or fasting that are public? Is it right, for example, to have an open time of prayer in a Lifegroup meeting? Explain.
5. Compare Jesus' teaching in Mt 5:14-16 with what He says in Mt 6:1. What is the difference between "faith aglow" and "faith for show"?
6. Do you really believe that God is a loving and generous Father who "will reward you" for your acts of secret service (vv.4, 6,18)? How is this conviction – or lack of it – impacting the way you live? How would truly believing in the God revealed here by Jesus free us from our addiction to "being seen by others"?
7. What can we do to strengthen our belief that God's settled disposition towards His children is one of love, kindness and generosity?

Responding in Prayer

- Thank God for His generous love for us, not least in redeeming hypocrites through the death of His Son. Pray that we may be deeply satisfied in His love, so that we will not seek our satisfaction elsewhere.

Eddie Larkman, April 2017