

ENGAGE

Like Jesus

GROWTH GROUPS
WEEK 6
WEEK OF OCTOBER 21ST

GROWTH GROUP FALL 2018

WEEK 6 – OCTOBER 21, 2018 - MATTHEW 6:1-4

GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

1) What has been your favorite and/or most memorable gift that you have been given? Why?

SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR MATTHEW 6:1-4

In Matthew chapters 5-7 Jesus shares with his disciples some of the key components of how his followers are to live. The sort of things that should shape or inform their faith. These three chapters are often called The Sermon on the Mount. Jesus assumes the teaching position by sitting down and begins to address his disciples.

In Matthew 6:1-18 Jesus talks about personal righteousness. He uses three different examples (giving, praying and fasting) of the ways in which people sometimes seek personal honor or recognition from others, rather than focusing on the things that God is really concerned about.

Voluntary charity was an important part of Jewish life. God had made it clear down through the generations that Israel was to care for the poor, the widows, and the orphans. If you were going to live a righteous life, you needed to give to the needy.

However, Jesus warned against giving in such a way that it would draw attention. Alms or gifts were thrown into metal receptacles so people could hear when money was being given. Jesus makes it clear that people are not to make a spectacle of their generosity.

Jesus says you need to give in such a way so that God gets the glory. The glory does not belong to us, but to the God who has blessed us. Jesus used an extreme example (don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing) to make his point. He is not saying we should be irresponsible in how we handle our finances, but instead addressing the issue of motive. What motivates our giving or our generosity?

Jesus reminded his disciples that what really mattered was giving in a way that honored God. Our personal recognition should not play a role in our generosity. Instead, we need to consider if we are using our resources in a way that blesses others and honors God.



EXPLORING THE TEXT

Read Matthew 6:1-4

¹ “Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. ² “So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ³ But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

2) 1 Timothy 6:10 says, “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs”.

This is often a misquoted passage of scripture. In what ways do you think this passage could be used incorrectly? Correctly?

3) Matthew 6:19-21 reads “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

What are your thoughts about what Jesus means when he says this?

4) Acts 20:35 quotes the apostle Paul in his farewell address to the Ephesians. “In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ ”.

Do you think this passage is true? Why or why not? Is there a difference in how you think about giving to the church or mission projects and giving gifts for birthdays or Christmas?

5) Share about a time you helped someone in need. How did that make you feel?

6) Should Christians give money to the church? Why or why not? Should we have some sort of plan about how we give and how much we give?

7) In Matthew 6:4 Jesus says that God will reward us when we give in a way that honors God. What do you think Jesus meant by that? What does that reward look like?

BRINGING IT HOME

8) Have someone read Luke 9:10-17. What can this story of feeding the 5000 teach us about our own stewardship in the upcoming weeks?