



Gospel Community Notes & Questions

Title: The Inside-Out Kingdom

Text: Matthew 6:1-8, 16-18

Theme: True righteousness comes from sincere hearts that seek to please God rather than others.

Teaching Notes: In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches us that there is a right and a wrong way to live in his kingdom. The right way - a life transformed from the inside-out - leads to righteousness, reward, and satisfaction in the Father. The wrong way leaves us enslaved to a never-ending hunger for outside approval. Jesus challenges us to examine our motives and to satiate our souls with God's goodness.

Outline:

1. A strong caution against hypocrisy.

- Jesus warns us about doing good deeds only to be seen.
- Jesus warns us about self-seeking motives.

2. The consequence of outside-in living.

- "Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward in full."

3. The call to inside-out living.

- Let your practice be discrete and without pretense.
- Take comfort in a God who sees you.
- Rejoice that Jesus has become our righteousness.
- A healthy tree bears good fruit.



Questions to explore individually and with your group:

1. What did you know about Jesus' teaching on Giving, Praying, and Fasting before this message? Of what you learned in this sermon, what stood out to you?
2. How would society or culture describe righteousness? How does this compare to God's view of righteousness?
3. Jesus uses giving, fasting, and praying as illustrations for people of his time. What examples do you think he would use for your specific context? (e.g. church attendance, volunteering, missions, etc.)
4. What areas of your life do you see yourself seeking the approval of others most?
5. What are some reasons you desire the approval of others more than the approval of God?
6. What are some examples in your life where well-intentioned actions became more self-seeking, whether unconsciously or consciously?
7. Go back and read the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:2-12). How does seeking the approval of others affect the way that you are able to live these characteristics out?
8. While Jesus uses some hyperbole in his command to practice good works "in secret," how might certain aspects of your life look different if you actually made that a conscious effort?
9. What is something specific in your life that would look different if you desired God and his glory more than the desire to be seen?
10. What one actionable thing will you do this week in response to this Scripture?

Prayer Prompts:

1. Praise Jesus for giving his life to become our righteousness.
2. Acknowledge areas in your life where even the best intentions quickly become self-seeking behaviors. Confess the ways in which you hunger for the approval of others rather than for true righteousness in God.
3. Ask God, by his Spirit, to transform you from the inside out and that you would bear good fruit as an overflow of his love.