

JESUS AT THE CENTER OF THE KINGDOM

GROUP GUIDE

This guide is designed to help you experience deeper intimacy with Jesus and build meaningful, lasting relationships with others. Get together with friends, or to find a group, visit brookwoodchurch.org/groups.

Let's grow stronger together!

June 29, 2025

Message Title: *The Secret Place*

Main Passage: Matthew 6:5-8

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Introduction to the Series

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to Him, and He began to teach them.

Matthew 5:1-2 (NIV)

What follows this verse in Matthew chapters 5-7 has become what is probably the most well-known teaching of Jesus, often referred to as *The Sermon on the Mount*. We studied Matthew 5 last summer. We'll continue with Matthew 6 this summer, and plan to finish the series with Matthew 7 next summer.

Connect

Feel free to respond to any or all of these to get the conversation rolling:

- What has God been drawing your attention to lately?
- Why is prayer important?
- Does prayer come naturally for you or do you experience difficulties and challenges when praying? Explain.

Pray

Lord, the noise of this world is deafening. I often find it difficult to hear Your voice. I pray You'd break through the chaos and help me experience stillness as I seek to be fully present with You. Teach me. Lead me. Change me. May I experience more of You today than I did yesterday.

Add to these words your own praises and prayers to God.

Explore and Discuss

Don't rush through this. It's OK if you don't get to all the questions. Sometimes it'll make sense to go on to the next question. Other times, you might slow down and process a bit longer. Allow God to guide the pace of your discussion.

Matthew 6:5-8 (NIV)

⁵ "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷ And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him."

1. The word hypocrite was used to describe an actor, someone who puts on a show. Why would someone want their prayers be like a performance?
2. When it comes to prayer, Jesus highlights some do's and don'ts. What are they (make a list) and why are these distinctions important?
3. Does Jesus' teaching about prayer mean we're never to pray in public out of concern that we might have the wrong motive? Explain.
4. What false thinking would cause someone to babble on in their prayers?

We should never utter one syllable of prayer, either in public or in private, until we are definitely conscious that we have come into the presence of God and are actually praying to him.

Reuben A. Torrey, *The Power of Prayer*.

5. Can you think of examples in which Christians babble in prayer or think they might be heard through speaking many words?
6. When God talks about being rewarded, what does He have in mind?
7. What do these passages teach you about prayer?
 - a. Exodus 2:23-25
 - b. 1 Kings 8:58-60
 - c. Psalm 145:17-19
 - d. Philippians 4:6-7
 - e. Colossians 4:2
 - f. 1 Thessalonians 5:17
 - g. James 5:16

The One Thing

What's one thing you'll take away from this week's lesson? Pause quietly for a few minutes and ask God what He wants you to know. Allow time for Him to put thoughts in your mind and stir your heart. Share briefly what you sense God is saying to you, then pray for each other.

Scripture Memory

Memorizing Scripture will help you carry the life-shaping words of God with you at all times and in all places. These words anchor our lives in truth, deepen our intimacy with God, and guide us on the path that leads to life. May we be like the Psalmist who ...*hid the words of God in his heart* (from Psalm 119:11).

Here's a passage to memorize based on this week's teaching. Consider writing this on a note card and carrying it with you this week.

*Those who live in the shelter of the Most High
will find rest in the shadow of the Almighty.*

Psalm 91:1 (NLT)