

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 22, 2025

Message Title: *Watch This!*

Main Passage: Matthew 6:1-4

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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 5-7 has become what is probably the best-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, with plans to finish the series with Matthew 7 next summer.

Connect

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

- What has God been drawing your attention to lately?
- When do you unplug from the chaos of the world for uninterrupted time with God?

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 6:1-4 (NIV)

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. ³But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*

1. The righteous acts Jesus refers to are giving, praying and fasting (continued in vs. 5-18). Why are people often tempted to seek approval from others?
2. *Hypocrites turn a religious practice into what it was never meant to be—a theatrical display in front of an audience. It is all done for applause* (John Stott, *Reading the Sermon on the Mount*, p. 65). When have you wanted others to know how good of a person you are?
3. How is practicing righteousness before others different from Jesus' earlier command to *let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds* (see Matthew 5:14-16)?
4. What did Jesus mean when He said *do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing*?

5. Rooted in the Old Testament was a strong concern for charity (see Proverbs 19:17; 29:7). Jesus doesn't say *if* you give, but *when* you give. He is expecting His followers to continue caring for those in need as the Jews had done for generations. Why is giving often seen as optional?
6. Jesus is always concerned with motivation and the hidden thoughts of the heart. How is this related to doing things *in secret*?
7. What does it mean to be rewarded by God?
8. Probably the only reward genuine love wants when giving to the needy is to see the need relieved. Describe a time you saw an act of kindness (financial or otherwise) truly make a difference in someone else's life.

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 in 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.

Obviously, I'm not trying to win the approval of people, but of God. If pleasing people were my goal, I would not be Christ's servant.

Galatians 1:10 (NLT)