

Informal Bible Study

Discussion Guide for the Gospel of Matthew

Chapter 6

Overview

Chapter 6 of the Gospel of Matthew continues to present the Sermon on the Mount preached by Jesus to His disciples.

The main theme of chapter 6 concerns practical daily living (“practicing our righteousness”) as disciples of Christ (and we are because we are Spirit-indwelt believers in Christ). Romans 8:4

Jesus gives three main exhortations in Matthew chapter 6:

1. **Practice your righteousness before God not before men.** He gives three illustrations: giving to the poor, praying, and fasting. (6:1-18)
2. **Store up treasure in heaven rather than on earth** by serving God instead of serving money. (6:19-24)
3. **Don’t worry about your material needs.** Seek first the business of the Father’s kingdom and righteousness, and all the other things that you need will be given to you as well. (6:25-34)

Big Picture Questions

1. Does the Sermon on the Mount show men and women the way of salvation? Explain. If you don’t think so, then describe what it does do.

2. What are the two major sins that Jesus preaches against in chapter 6?

Questions, section by section

Verses 1-18

1. In verses 2-18, Jesus gives three examples of how His main exhortation in verse 1 should work out in three areas of practical worship. What are those three areas?
2. What two elements do Jesus's instructions in each of these three areas have in common?
3. Do adherents of false religions practice any of these things before men? Give an example or two.
4. In 6:3, What does the phrase "Do not let your left hand know what your right is doing?" mean? Is Jesus speaking literally or figuratively? How can you tell?
5. What are some popular church fundraising techniques that violate the principle Jesus teaches in 6:1?
6. How does Jesus' teaching on giving to the needy confront you and your attitudes toward the needy? Toward giving?
7. In 6:5-6, Jesus gives a negative command ("do not...") and a positive command ("But when you pray..."). What are those two commands?
8. In 6:7-8, Jesus again issues a positive and a negative command. What are they?
9. If, as 6:8 states, God knows what you need before you ask Him, why should you ask Him at all?
10. Does Jesus intend the prayer in verses 9-13 to be a prayer that we repeat word for word when it's time to pray? Or did He give it as a model prayer that serves as a pattern for our prayers? Support your position from the New Testament.

11. What is the significance of Jesus teaching us to pray to God as **our Father**? Why does He mention “who is in heaven”?
12. What does Jesus say in verse 10 should be our attitude whenever we pray?
13. What lesson from today’s reading and study of The Disciples’ Prayer hit home to most to you?
14. An unforgiving disciple is a contraction in terms. In what area(s) have you had the most trouble forgiving? What helps you to move towards having a more forgiving heart?

Verses 19-24

1. In verses 19-24, list 8 to 10 key words. Look for words that describe the theme or are repeated.
2. What theme that runs through verses 1-15 continues in verses 19-21? What ties the two sections together?
3. Jesus says, “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth...”. Is He speaking figuratively or literally? Is He exaggerating for effect?
4. How does one store up treasures in heaven? What advantage does this have over accumulating earthly possessions?
5. How can you tell what your heart treasures the most?
6. How can what we spend our time “storing up” be an indicator of where our heart is?
7. Where would you say your treasure is?

Verses 25-34

1. How many times in this passage are we told not to worry or be anxious?
2. In verses 25-30, Jesus talks about food and clothing? What is the point that He is making?
3. Jesus compares worry to “little faith”. What are some ways that worry undermines faith, specifically in the area of making a living and paying the bills?
4. In verse 32, Jesus tells us that our heavenly Father knows that we need these things. How does hearing these words effect how you see your life?
5. What things do you worry about?
6. The things a person worries about reveal something about that person. What?
7. What has been your biggest struggle when it comes to worrying about material things? How has God been working in your life to help you trust Him more?
8. Verse 33 contains an exhortation and a promise. Describe what each part might look like when in full bloom in your life.