

ONE

Week of 8/31/25



Icebreaker



- If you could spend a day "off the grid" anywhere, where would you go and why?
- What's one thing you loved doing as a kid that you never make time for anymore



Discussion Questions



- The sermon compared living for people's approval vs. God's approval. Where do you feel the biggest tension between those two?
- Jesus calls us to stop "performing" in our faith. What does "performing" for others look like in your life right now?
- Jesus said, "Go into your room, close the door, and pray to your Father." Do you currently have a consistent "secret place" for prayer?
- If not, what obstacles keep you from spending time alone with God? What could help you create that space?
- The sermon compared prayer preparation to athletes practicing in an empty gym. How does this change the way you view private prayer?
- Why do you think Jesus warned against "babbling" when we pray?
- How does knowing that God already knows what you need before you ask change your approach to prayer?
- In what ways have you treated prayer more like a performance or a checklist instead of a conversation?
- How does seeing God as "Father" affect the way you relate to Him in prayer?
- For those who had complicated relationships with their earthly fathers, how does that impact how you see God? How can the group pray with you in that?



Thought for the Group



We live in a world that constantly pushes us to seek approval. from friends, family, coworkers and others. But Jesus calls us to something deeper. In Matthew 6, He reminds us that our faith isn't meant to be a performance; it's an invitation into intimacy with God. When Jesus talks about prayer, He flips the script. The religious leaders of His day prayed loudly in public, hoping people would be impressed. But Jesus says the most powerful moments don't happen on the stage, they happen in the secret place. He calls us to "go into your room, close the door, and pray to your Father."

This isn't about having the right words or putting on a spiritual show. God already knows what you need before you ask. Prayer isn't about impressing Him, it's about involving Him. It's not a formula, it's a relationship.

And that's the heart of this teaching: God isn't a distant deity or an audience of many, He's your Father. The more we see Him that way, the more natural prayer becomes. When we know who we're talking to, everything changes. The peace, wisdom, and strength you've been searching for are waiting in His presence.

True strength in public comes from time spent with God in private. Live for His approval, not the applause of people.



Next Steps



- Identify one area of your life where you've been "performing for the crowd" maybe at work, on social media, or even in your spiritual life. This week, intentionally choose God's approval over people's applause by making one decision privately that no one else sees but Him.
- Since Jesus highlights God as Father, spend intentional time getting to know His character this week. Read Matthew 6 slowly and highlight what it reveals about who God is. Then, write down three truths about His nature that you want to carry into your daily life.