

Matthew 6:1-18

Enemies, Essence and Ending

Warm Up

Everyone likes a pat on the back, acknowledgment for a job well done. What is it like when no one notices our work? What is it like when we get a reward that perhaps we weren't expecting?

Background and context

In this section Jesus deals with three things that are overtly "religious" and give opportunity for others to praise us for our efforts. Once again, Jesus highlights our motives for our actions. Are we doing things in order to receive credit and praise from others or are we doing it to honour God? The challenge Jesus gives us is to be the same person in private as we are in public and not to be hypocrites.

Thinking it through: Main discussion/activity

READ Matthew 6: 1-18. What are the surprising things in the passage? What is new? What don't you really understand?

1. In these three examples, who or what is the **ENEMY** of the Christian life? Who are we not meant to be like?
2. What is the opposite of hypocrisy? How can we achieve it in our Christian life?
3. According to these three passages what would you consider to be the **ESSENCE** of Christian living?
4. **Read v4, v6, v18.** What does this practically look like today in our lives? Is Jesus really outlawing public acts of generosity, prayer and worship?
5. If you can, listen to/watch the following song. "audience of one"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jx9gpGIANNQ>
6. Why is it sometimes difficult to serve an audience of one?
7. In all three examples what is the **ENDING** that those who obey the teaching will receive? What will it look like?
8. Why is this reward greater than human praise?

Discipleship and Application

9. What are the situations where you find yourself craving human applause or praise?
10. What can you do to overcome that craving and still be content to serve God?

Try to leave 15-20 mins to talk about prayer needs of the group and to pray.

There are many creative ways of praying together: writing prayers, using candles as a focus, reading prayers or praying for each other in pairs.