

The Gospel of **Matthew**

Session 3



These notes have been put together to be used in Life Groups alongside the Sunday teaching at Wavertree. This week we are looking at Matthew 6 and how we put our trust in God and seek His Kingdom first.

You could begin by sharing what stood out from Jenny's talk.

Trust in the Lord
with all your heart
and lean not on
your own
understanding;

Prov 3:5

***For where your
treasure is, there your
heart will be also.***

Matt 6:21

READ: **Matthew 6:19 - 34** through together, maybe go round taking 1 verse each.

Reflect for a few minutes, what is God saying to you? You could sit, draw, write or walk around - whatever suits you.

- you could think about what jumps out, what is encouraging, where it feels challenging for you and why.

Share and discuss with one another.

Jenny mentioned 3 ways you can help teach yourself to put God first and trust in His ways - Prayer, Fasting and Confession.

Choose one of the following pages to work through as a group this week.

1: PRAYER

The Lord's Prayer is a great template to help build a healthy prayer life, speaking truth everyday and surrendering your will to God's.

Discuss: How easy do you find it to pray? Where does prayer bring life for you? Where is there resistance?

PRAY: Take time together now to pray your way through the Lord's prayer.

- spend a few minutes on each section
- you may want to take time in silence when you come to forgiveness to allow you some time to reflect, repent and forgive.

<i>Our Father in heaven</i>	Intimate caring Father Universal power and presence,
<i>Hallowed be your name</i>	Giving God the praise and worship only He deserves – putting Him on the throne in your life
<i>Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.</i>	Trusting in the goodness of God's kingdom and Surrendering our desires to God's agenda now and for eternity.
<i>Give us today our daily bread,</i>	Whatever you need, take your request to Him
<i>And forgive us our sins, As we forgive those who sin against us.</i>	Forgiveness – essential to God's kingdom Release the right to get even Forgive as we first receive it from Jesus
<i>Lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one.</i>	Being aware we are in a battle for our hearts. Enemy is the father of lies, we want to walk in God's truth

Discuss how you found that as a prayer tool

Consider - if you struggle to pray regularly, could you challenge yourselves to use this framework to help you pray everyday for the next week?

Be intentional - plan the best time in your day to pray.

See if it makes any difference to your prayer life.

Feedback next time.

2: FASTING

Fasting is an ancient habit that was common amongst Christians for most of the last 2000 years but is less popular these days.

“in those days they will fast.” Luke 5:35

In his teaching Practicing the Way, John Mark Comer emphasizes 4 benefits to fasting:

1. That fasting is one of the best ways to offer our whole selves to God – practicing sacrifice on a physical level.
2. Fasting helps us grow in holiness – your body matters, our walk of faith is not just a spiritual walk.
3. Fasting seems to amplify our prayers – we consistently see in scripture people fast as part of seeking and seeing breakthrough.
4. Fasting helps us to stand with the poor. As we fast, we remember to be grateful for the simple things and to have compassion for those in need.

DISCUSS:

- What are your own experiences of fasting?
- Do you have a regular rhythm of fasting in your life at the moment?
- Why / why not?

Consider: Would you take the challenge to try fasting as a group? Pick a day that works for everyone and commit to fast and pray. You could share prayer points throughout the day.

For more info on fasting see
John Mark Comer: [Fasting Practice](#)
Frontline Guidelines: [Fasting](#)

Remember - if you have any health conditions be careful and only do what you are able to - ***‘fast as you can, not as you can’t’***

3: CONFESSION

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. Jam 5:16

The Lord's Prayer encourages us to accept forgiveness and to pray protection over ourselves from temptation.

Temptation and sin come in many shapes and sizes.

Confession is a powerful practice:

1. It brings sin into the light where God can forgive and heal.
2. It breaks the hold of the sin and the power of secrecy and shame.
3. It keeps us humble and soft hearted.
4. It means we can then be accountable to one another.

REFLECTION: What do you need to confess to God and to your group today?

SHARE: Be vulnerable and honest with one another about what you are struggling with.

PRAY: Pray God's forgiveness, healing, freedom and grace over each other.

ACCOUNTABLE: Where appropriate, set a question for the rest of the group to ask you next time you meet.