

# **Inside Out [A Righteous Lifestyle] Discussion Guide**

## **Summary**

In this sermon from the Sermon on the Mount series, Jonathan walks through Matthew chapter 6 and the beginning of chapter 7, focusing on what practical righteousness actually looks like in everyday life. Jesus addresses giving, prayer, fasting, worry, and how we treat others, consistently drawing a contrast between outward performance and inward transformation. The core message is that true righteousness is not about doing the right things to be seen or to earn God's favor, but about allowing a transformed heart to naturally produce righteous living.

## **Intro Prayer**

Heavenly Father, we come to you today as a group of people who want more than just surface-level faith. We confess that we sometimes perform for others rather than living authentically before you. As we open your Word together, we ask that you quiet our need for approval and replace it with a deep desire to know you more. Holy Spirit, move in our lives today. Open our hearts to what you want each of us to receive, not just what we think we already know. Transform us from the inside out, Lord, and let this time together draw us closer to you and to one another. In Jesus' name, amen.

## **Ice Breaker**

What is one thing you are genuinely good at that most people in your life do not know about?

## **Key Verses**

- Matthew 6:1-34
- Matthew 7:1-12
- Proverbs 21:3
- 2 Corinthians 5:21
- 1 John 1:8-9

## **Questions**

- Jesus opens Matthew 6 with the warning, 'Watch out! Don't do your good deeds publicly to be admired by others' (Matthew 6:1). Can you think of a time when you did something good but secretly hoped someone would notice? What did that reveal about your motivations?
- Jonathan described the Pharisees as people who had 'clean hands but filthy hearts.' In what areas of your own life do you think it is easiest to look righteous on the outside while something different is happening on the inside?
- Jesus teaches that prayer is not about performance but about relationship and alignment with God. How would you describe the current state of your prayer life? Is it more of a conversation or more of a checklist?
- Jonathan made the point that 'you cannot receive grace that you are not willing to give.' Is there someone in your life right now that you are finding it difficult to forgive? What is making it hard to extend grace to that person?
- Jesus compares God's care for wildflowers to his care for us, noting that even Solomon in all His glory could not match what God clothes a simple flower in (Matthew

6:29). How does this image challenge the way you think about worry and God's provision in your own life?

- Jonathan said, 'God is a better provider than you are a worrier.' What is one area of your life where worry has a strong grip on you, and what would it look like to practically trust God with that this week?

- Matthew 6:33 says, 'Seek the Kingdom of God above all else and live righteously, and He will give you everything you need.' What does seeking God's kingdom above all else actually look like in your daily routine, your finances, or your relationships?

- Jonathan closed by saying that transformation is not about willpower reshaping behavior until the heart follows, but about the Holy Spirit reshaping the heart so that right behavior flows naturally. What is one area of your life where you sense the Holy Spirit is working to reshape your heart right now?

## **Life Application**

This week, choose one area from the sermon, whether it is giving, prayer, worry, or how you treat others, and intentionally practice it without letting anyone know. Give quietly, pray privately, or extend grace to someone without expecting recognition. At the end of the week, reflect on what that experience revealed about your motivations and your trust in God. Come back ready to share what you discovered.

## **Key Takeaways**

- True righteousness flows from a transformed heart, not from outward performance or the desire to be seen by others.

- Prayer is not about informing or impressing God. It is about relationship, alignment, and honest dependence on him.
- Worry is a form of performance because it reveals a lack of trust that God will provide. Jesus points to wildflowers and birds as evidence that God is a far better provider than we are worriers.
- Forgiveness is not optional for the follower of Jesus. Clinging to bitterness cuts us off from the transforming power of grace that God freely offers us.
- We do not practice righteousness to become righteous. Because of Christ, we are already righteous, and our actions are simply the natural response of a heart that has been changed by grace.

## **Ending Prayer**

Father, thank you for this time together and for the truth of your Word. We confess that we have spent too much time performing for others and not enough time simply being with you. Remind us this week that we do not have to earn your love, because in Christ, we already have it. Help us to give freely, pray honestly, release worry, extend forgiveness, and treat others with the same grace you have shown us. Let the work you are doing inside each of us show up in how we live, how we love, and how we trust you. We surrender the need to look good and choose instead to seek your kingdom above everything else. In the precious name of Jesus, amen.