

Ice Breaker

What's the most awkward moment you've ever had in front of a crowd?

Sermon Main Passage for Group to Read

Matthew 6:5–6

Main Point 1: Prayer is Not a Performance

Jesus warns against praying to be seen by others—it's not about showmanship.

Discussion Questions: 1. Why do you think Jesus compares public religious acts to a stage performance? 2. In what ways can our culture, or even church culture, encourage performance over authenticity? 3. How do you know when your spiritual life is drifting into performance rather than relationship?

Call to Action:

Spend 5 minutes this week praying alone without posting or sharing it—just you and the Father.

Main Point 2: False Righteousness Leads to Exhaustion and Hiding

Religion without relationship exhausts the soul and keeps sin hidden.

Discussion Questions: 1. Why does false righteousness often lead to burnout or spiritual weariness? 2. What keeps people from being honest about their struggles—even in small group? 3. How can your group foster a culture of authenticity rather than image?

Call to Action:

Confess one personal struggle to a trusted believer this week—not to impress, but to seek healing.

Main Point 3: Get Off the Stage and Into the Secret Place

Jesus invites us to the quiet place where God listens—not to impress Him, but to know Him.

Discussion Questions: 1. What practical steps can you take to prioritize secret prayer over public image? 2. Why do you think intimacy with God grows more in private than in public? 3. How has your prayer life been shaped more by habit or heart recently?

Call to Action:

Create a "secret place" this week—your car, your closet, a corner of your home—and commit 10 minutes daily to meet God there in silence and honesty.

Theology for the Leader

Help your group understand these two foundational truths from the sermon:

1. **God Sees the Heart, Not the Stage.** He desires prayer that is sincere, not staged. Religious performance earns human applause but misses divine intimacy.
2. **God Rewards the Secret Place.** True reward in prayer comes from meeting God personally. Public approval fades; divine presence sustains.