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# Bible Study: Authentic Devotion to God's Kingdom (Matthew 6:1-18)

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## Objective

Jesus teaches us to practice righteousness—giving, praying, and fasting—in secret, not for human praise but to align our hearts with God's Kingdom. Like an athlete training diligently behind the scenes, these disciplines shape us to live for God alone, and His Kingdom is open to everyone who seeks Him.

## Bible Reading and Discussion

### Read Matthew 6:1–18

Have a volunteer read the passage aloud, or split it into three sections (verses 1–4, 5–15, 16–18) with different readers. Encourage the group to listen for Jesus' emphasis on secret devotion.

### Discussion Questions

1. **General (Matt. 6:1)**
  - Jesus warns against practicing righteousness “to be seen by others.” What are some modern examples of doing good deeds for attention or approval? How does living for an “audience of One” (God) change our motives?
2. **Giving in Secret (Matt. 6:2–4)**
  - Why do you think Jesus emphasizes giving without fanfare? How does secret giving reflect the generosity of God's Kingdom, which is open to all?
  - Share a time you gave or served without recognition. How did it shape your heart or faith?
3. **Praying in Secret (Matt. 6:5–15)**
  - Jesus critiques hypocritical prayers meant for show. What does it mean to pray with sincerity, as if in a “closed room”? How does the Lord's Prayer (verses 9–13) help us focus on God's Kingdom rather than our own agendas?
  - The sermon describes the Lord's Prayer as a “Kingdom prayer” for everyone. How does praying “Your kingdom come” invite God's presence into our lives and the world?
4. **Fasting in Secret (Matt. 6:16–18)**

- Fasting is less common today. Why might Jesus include it as a key discipline? How can fasting (from food, media, or habits) help us hunger for God over worldly comforts?
- What's one thing you could fast from to focus on God this week?

## Practical Challenges

Encourage the group to choose one or more of these disciplines to practice this week, drawing from the sermon's applications:

- **Giving:** Perform an anonymous act of generosity, like paying for someone's meal or helping a neighbor without telling anyone. Reflect on how it feels to seek only God's reward.
- **Praying:** Pray the Lord's Prayer daily, pausing after each line to reflect on its meaning, especially "Your kingdom come." Journal how it shapes your focus on God's Kingdom.
- **Fasting:** Try a simple fast—skip a meal, avoid social media for a day, or refrain from negative talk. Use the time to pray and seek God's presence.

## Reflection

Jesus invites everyone into His Kingdom through authentic devotion. These disciplines aren't about earning God's love but about training our hearts to seek Him first, just as He welcomes all—broken, ordinary, or seeking—into His presence. Closing Prayer:

## Closing Prayer

Close with reflection on the Lord's Prayer. Pray each line and pause to think about the meaning.

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. *(Pause)***

**Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. *(Pause)***

**Give us today our daily bread. *(Pause)***

**And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. *(Pause)***

**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. *(Pause)* Amen.**