

The Power of Privacy

Small Group Lesson

Matthew 6:6 - "But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you."

INTRO

Have you ever heard of the phrase "practice makes perfect". Why is that such a powerful phrase? Maybe it's because we know that all of the skills shown publicly cannot be possible without private practice. Your favorite athlete, musician, or artist are only as good as their willingness to devote themselves to private discipline. This is not too different from what Jesus tries to teach His disciples. If we want to be public about our faith we will need to be private with our devotion. This week we're going to be challenged to not make our faith a show, but rather show our faith is real by committing what we do when no one is looking to God and trusting that when people see, pray and serve that they will long for the Jesus we know more than admire how well we live.

Jesus knew the power of privacy

Throughout the Gospels Jesus would often go off by himself to pray. He would then come back from prayer and do all sorts of miraculous signs, and teach deeply profound truths. His devotion to prayer was so strong that one of the few questions the disciples ever ask is "teach us how to pray."

Jesus says this, "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does." John 5:19

God wants a relationship with you

Sometimes we forget that God is not only concerned with the state of the world, but He's also concerned with the state of the individual. Your private life with God is the place where God wants to speak to YOU. This is where you go from being a Sunday morning Christian, to someone who has a relationship with Christ everyday. The reality is that God is more concerned with who you are than what you do.

CONCLUSION

At the end of the day God is not against you giving in public, or praying loud in a prayer gathering, but He is more concerned with the place your public demonstration of your love for Him comes from. It's one thing to

announce to the world you're in love with someone, but what would happen if you never spent time with them? Your words would become empty and your relationship would eventually mean nothing. This is how we treat our relationship with God sometimes. God is wanting to have a relationship that is rooted in time spent with him when no one is looking. That's the power of privacy. Where God turns a private devotion into the launch pad public displays of His power.

Group Questions

1. What are some things that keep us out of having a private life with God?
2. Why do you believe it's so difficult to dedicate time to having a private time with God?
3. What are some private practices you are wanting to develop with God? (It could be prayer, fasting, reading the Word)

TAKE ACTION: This week establishes moments where you can be alone with God. Maybe this looks like 5 minutes of reading your Bible or being alone in silence with God for a couple of minutes in silence. Share your plans with your small group leader and a friend.

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