LIFE Group Discussion Guide

October 25, 2026

Matthew 6:1-4

CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?
- What Scripture has been shaping you recently?
- Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?
- What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?
- What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?
- What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?
- What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

OPENING

Why do people like getting recognized, complimented, or thanked for something they have done?

It feels good when someone notices what we do. But Jesus challenges us to think deeper: Who are we ultimately trying to impress—people or God?

Today we will look at how followers of Jesus should serve and give from a heart that seeks God's approval rather than human recognition.

SCRIPTURE

Read **Matthew 6:1–4** together.

Ask the group to listen for:

- What does Jesus warn His followers about?
- What does He say about doing good things to be seen by others?
- What does He say about giving?
- Who does Jesus say sees what happens in secret?

PASSAGE SUMMARY

Matthew 6 begins a section where Jesus addresses the motives behind our religious actions. Jesus talks about things like giving, praying, and fasting.

The issue isn't whether we should do good things. The issue is why we do them. Jesus warns His followers not to practice righteousness simply so other people will notice them. When we serve, give, or help others mainly because we want attention, compliments, likes, or recognition, our focus has shifted from God to people.

Jesus says that our heavenly Father sees what happens even when nobody else does.

Main Point:
God cares not only about what we do but also about why we do it**.**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Why do you think people enjoy being recognized or complimented?
Everyone likes encouragement, and there is nothing wrong with being thankful when someone notices something good. The danger comes when recognition becomes the reason we serve, give, or do what is right.

What is the difference between doing something good and doing something good for the wrong reason?
The action may look exactly the same from the outside. The difference is what is happening in our hearts. We can serve someone because we genuinely want to honor God, or we can serve because we want people to think highly of us.

Why does Jesus care about our motives?
God sees our hearts. Jesus wants our obedience to come from genuine love for God rather than a desire to impress people.

What are some ways students might be tempted to seek recognition for doing good?
Posting about what we did online, making sure people know when we helped someone, wanting praise from teachers or friends, talking about our accomplishments, or becoming frustrated when nobody notices our efforts.

Does Jesus mean that we should never let anyone know when we do something good?
No. Jesus is not saying that good works must always be hidden. The focus is on our motivation. We shouldn't do good primarily so people will praise us.

Why can serving when nobody notices be a good test of our motives?
If we are willing to serve even when nobody knows about it, that can show that our desire is to honor God rather than receive attention.

How should knowing that God sees what happens in secret encourage you?
We don't have to depend on people noticing us. God sees our faithfulness, even when our friends, parents, teachers, or church leaders don't see everything we do.

What might change if you started asking, "Am I doing this for God or for people?"
We might become less concerned about getting credit and more concerned about faithfully following Jesus. Our attitudes toward serving, giving, helping, and obeying could change.

APPLICATION

When you do something good and nobody notices, how do you usually respond?

Where are you most tempted to seek recognition from other people—school, sports, friends, social media, church, family, or somewhere else?

What is one thing you could do this week to serve or encourage someone without needing anyone else to know about it?

DIG DEEPER

Read Matthew 6:5–6 How does Jesus apply the same principle to prayer?

Read Colossians 3:23–24 What does it mean to work "wholeheartedly" for the Lord?

Think About Social Media How can social media make it easier to seek recognition for things we do?

Is it possible to do something good and still secretly hope people notice? What can we do when we recognize that happening in our hearts?

How could our LIFE Group create a culture where people serve and care for others without needing recognition?

CLOSING THOUGHT

Jesus isn't simply telling us to do more good things**.** He's challenging us to examine why we do the things we do.

It is easy to live for the approval of friends, classmates, coaches, teachers, parents, or followers online. But Jesus reminds us that the approval that matters most comes from our heavenly Father.

This week, look for an opportunity to do something kind, generous, or helpful when you know you probably won't receive any recognition for it.

Remember, we should **l**ive for God's approval, not people's applause.

LOOKING AHEAD

Next week we will discuss **Matthew 6:5-8** as we continue the series, *The Greatest Sermon Ever Preached: The Sermon on the Mount.*

PRAYER FOCUS

Pray that we would:

- Desire God's approval more than people's recognition.
- Have hearts that genuinely want to honor Jesus.
- Be willing to serve even when nobody notices.
- Recognize and surrender our desire for attention and praise.
- Become a LIFE Group that serves others with humility and genuine love.
- Pray for our worship services—that hearts will be open, the Spirit will move powerfully, and people will respond in obedience to Christ.

COMMENTARY

Matthew 6:1-4

Jesus warns His disciples not to practice their righteousness in front of others just to be seen. When people do good deeds to get applause, human praise becomes their only reward.

Key Themes

- True Motives: Giving to the poor should stem from genuine love for God and others, not a desire for public status.

- Hypocrisy: Jesus uses the word "hypocrites" to describe people who put on a show of piety, comparing them to those who blow trumpets to draw attention to their charity.

- Secret Giving: Telling the left hand not to know what the right hand does is a vivid way to say giving should be intensely private and free from self-congratulation.

- The Father's Reward: God sees what is done in secret and rewards His followers openly.