



*“And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 6 But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you “ (Matthew 6:5-6)*

Why did Jesus say to make a show of praying in front of others? How do we prevent this when we pray together in a group?

Why does God want us to pray? How does prayer impact us?

*“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Matthew 6:16-18)*

Have you ever fasted? What was your reason for fasting and how did it go?

Is intermittent fasting the same as the fasting that Jesus is talking about and are they interchangeable? Why or why not?

*What does God want us to hear?* Based on the passage and the questions above, what “takeaways” do you think God has revealed to you?

## **WHAT DOES GOD WANT US TO DO?**

How should we give, and why?

How should we pray, and why?

How should we fast, and why?

What has been especially meaningful for you when you pray? What do you hope to get out of prayer?

*What does God want us to do?* Flowing out of our reading and interpretation, what action does this passage or the Spirit’s leading, call us to?

## **WHAT DOES GOD WANT ME TO DO?**

Do a heart check and ask yourself: Why do I pray? Why do I give? What is your motivation behind these practices (or disciplines). What would happen if your motivations shifted one way or another?

*What does God want ME to do?* What is the personal application and action step God is calling you, personally, toward?