

Message Guide

This Message Guide may be a little different from those that you have used before.

The purpose of these Notes is not an in-depth study of the scriptures used, but rather to assist you or your Study Group as you reflect on the messages given by Charles Price.

We present questions in order to stimulate thought and discussion. Sometimes we will give you the answer ... sometimes not. At other times a statement or a theme is presented for your consideration.

As you allow the Holy Spirit to guide the direction of your study and discussions we pray the flexibility of this Message Guide will help you as you delve more deeply into Charles' message, and that you will unearth more lessons from the Lord than may not have been immediately obvious.

Message Guide & Questions

Living From The Inner Core Part 1 – The Unrighteous Acts Of Righteousness Matthew 6 v.1

1. Read and consider briefly Matthew 6 verse 1
2. What are the 4 areas that are classified as 'Acts Of Righteousness'?
G _ _ _ _ _ P _ _ _ _ _ F _ _ _ _ _ & P _ _ _ _ _
3. Charles has titled this series "Living From The Inner Core"
What do you suppose is the intent behind that title?
And how does that relate to the four areas mentioned above?

4. Whether these things are done to be seen by men, or done in secret before the Lord; they both have their unique reward. What are those respective rewards?

5. Righteousness is first and foremost **an attribute of God**, and that means –
All that God S _ _ _ _ ; all that God D _ _ _ _ ; all that God T _ _ _ _ _ ;
all that God P _ _ _ _ ; and all that God I _ , is R _ _ _ _ !
6. What was God's intention for humanity, and what now is the problem?

7. We are agreed then that human beings are not righteous and we know it; so what do we do to try to compensate for that?

8. When God exposes our lack of righteousness to us, what is He NOT trying to do?
He is not trying to H _ _ _ _ _ us.
He is not trying to E _ _ _ _ _ us.

He is not trying to R __ O __ N _ _ _ _ I _ T _ _ D _ _ _

9. So what is it that God wants to reveal to us by this?

10. Is there a contradiction here?
Read and compare Matthew 5:16 with Matthew 6:1

11. Referring back to the above verses, contrast the motives, the effect, and who it is for.

12. What about hypocrisy? Read and consider Matthew 6:2; verse 5; and verse 16

13. It is all too easy to look at the negative side of this problem, and we have to do that to have a full and correct understanding of it; but let's look at the positive scriptures that tell us how we should conduct ourselves in these situations.
Read and consider Matthew 6 v. 3 & 4; verse 6 and verse 17.

Final Thoughts

As is so often the case, there are no options presented to us here.
If we truly love the Lord, want to obey Him,
and enjoy whatever blessings He has for us;
we need to do as His Word says.
Otherwise our superficial acts of unrighteousness
will not have any reward in the place where it really matters
– in heaven.

Are you open to changing according to the teaching of the Lord?
Remember: God will never do **through** us what has not first been done **in** us.

Message Guide & Questions

Living From The Inner Core Part 2 – The Grace of Giving Matthew 6 v.1 - 4

1. After reading Matthew 6 v.1 - 4 what would you say is the thrust of this message?

2. The title is taken from 2 Corinthians 8 v.7. Read and consider these verses.

3. In our key verses, Matthew 6 v.1 – 4, there are four things that are either implicit or explicit. Can you name them?

- a. The N _____ of giving.
- b. The M _____ of giving
- c. The N _____ of giving.
- d. The R _____ of giving.

4. Is giving normal? Discuss this in the light of the society in which we live.

5. Read Leviticus 27 verses 30 – 33 and consider just what that is saying.

6. Who was to receive the gifts, called tithes, and on what was it to be spent?

7. Did anything happen if anyone held back from giving these tithes?

8. Are we under any biblical obligation to give 10% today?

9. What about our 'Motive for Giving'. There really is only one valid motive for giving. What is that? What are some invalid motives for giving?

10. When dealing with the Nature of Giving, there are 4 key words –

- a. We should give S _ _ _ _ _
- b. We should give R _ _ _ _ _
- c. We should give G _ _ _ _ _
- d. We should give C _ _ _ _ _

11. What are the rewards of giving unto the Lord?

Final Thoughts

A big question to ask here is,
'Is it right to expect rewards from our giving?'
The best way to answer that is to always ask,
'Why am I giving?'

If your motive is right,
then you are not seeking any reward
beyond the pleasure of expressing your love to God through giving;
secretly, regularly, generously and cheerfully.

And when you trust the Lord,
who sees what you do in secret
out of your pure motivation of love for Him,
He will reward you in those areas of your life
where He knows you need it.

Isn't that wonderful?!

Message Guide & Questions

Living From The Inner Core Part 3 – Effective Praying Matthew 6 v.5 - 8

1. To start please read Matthew 6 verses 5 - 8
2. In his sermon Charles breaks down this subject into 3 questions. Can you remember what they are?
 1. W __ Pray?
 2. Why Pray P _____?
 3. Why Pray C _____?

3. Consider and discuss the first question, “Why Pray?”

4. Meaningful relationships do not exist without communication.
Consider some situations in our society that suffer from poor communication.

5. Prayer is not just about time on your knees bringing requests.
Paul ends his first letter to the Thessalonians by listing 8 bullet points (5:16-22).
What are they?

6. When praying you must allow God to speak to you. In the book of Acts there are several instances when God spoke to people when they were praying. Can you list some of these?

7. Daniel 11 v.32 tells us that people who **know their God** will be strong and do exploits.
But you have to **know** Him, not just know **about** Him. Explain the difference.

8. The second question is “Why Pray Privately?”
To consider first of all what He is NOT saying please read the following scriptures.
Matthew 19 verses 19 & 20; Acts 1 verse 14; Acts 4 verse 24

9. So just what is being said here?

10. And the third question: Why Pray Confidently. Read again Matthew 6 verse 7 & 8
Does this bring any questions to your mind?

Final Thoughts

Effective prayer is not getting God to do what I would like,
but rather a means of doing what He wants,
out of union with the mind and will of Christ.

Prayer is not an isolated item in the Christian life
that you switch on when you need it.

But effective prayer flows out of –

Intimacy **with Him**

Love **for Him**

Trust **in Him**

Dependence **on Him**

Obedience **to Him**

When all of these things are in place
then, and only then, does John 15: 7 become a reality in your life

**If you remain in me, and my words remain in you,
ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you**

Message Guide & Questions

Living From The Inner Core Part 4 – The Disciples Prayer Matthew 6 v.9 - 13

1. Start by reading Matthew 6 verses 9 – 13
2. This model of effective prayer can be divided into two sections; can you identify them?

3. The first part of this prayer mentions only God; nothing about us.
What does that indicate to us?

4. This first section starts with 'The Worship of God' by referring to God as 'Our Father'.
When is the first time in the scriptures that God is referred to as 'Father'?

5. How does Jesus being the only Son of God affect our relationship with God?

6. What about those people outside of Christ?

7. The next part of this prayer deals with 'The Work of God' – "Thy Kingdom Come."
What should be the fundamental theme behind our prayers?

8. If we engage in the worship of God; concerned with the work of God, in submission to
the will of God, what will we discover?

9. What are the 3 areas of need that this prayer exposes?

Final Thoughts

‘The Lord’s Prayer’ or ‘The Disciples Prayer’
has been given to us by Jesus as a ‘template’
of how we should always pray.

If we follow that template we will see our prayers becoming more effective
– as they line up more with God’s will.

Are you ‘babbling’ but not listening?
Are you praying in your own way, or in God’s way?
The choice is yours, and the results [or lack thereof] will reflect your choice.

Message Guide & Questions

Living From The Inner Core Part 5 – Forgiving Others Matthew 6 v.13 - 15

1. Read and consider Matthew 6 verses 13 - 15
2. What are the two aspects covered here?

3. What are the 3 questions that will form the basis of this study?
 - a. W _ _ should we forgive?
 - b. W _ _ _ should we forgive?
 - c. H _ _ should we forgive?

4. Consider what are the 2 extremes that could be taken.

5. So the question is; which comes first; Being Forgiven or Being Forgiving?
For the answer read Matthew 6 verse 14 & 15

6. Read now the story in Matthew 18 verses 23 – 35. How does it make you feel as you read it?

7. So – why should we forgive?
Go to Matthew 18 verse 35 and read what Jesus says at the end of the story about the unmerciful servant.

8. If we do not forgive, who suffers?

9. OK – so how do you forgive? How does God forgive?

Final Thoughts

How do you know when you have forgiven?
You will notice changes in your heart such as –

No desire for revenge	Romans 12 v.19
No desire for mischief	1 Thessalonians 5 v.15
No desire to gloat	Proverbs 24 v.17
You will want to bless them	Luke 6 v.28
You will want to pray for them	Matthew 5 v.44
You will want to do good to them	Exodus 23 v.4 – 5

A good book to read on this important subject is “Total Forgiveness” by RT Kendall.

Message Guide & Questions

Living From The Inner Core Part 6 – Fasting & Self Denial Matthew 6 v.16-18

1. Read Matthew 6 v.16 – 18. In Jesus’ statement “Be careful not to do your ‘acts of righteousness’ before men...” what are these acts and what are they focused towards?
2. What are some modern day attitudes towards fasting?

3. Can you list some key examples of people who fasted in the Old Testament?

In the New Testament?

4. We need to consider then; what are the benefits of fasting? Charles lists four. Read Isaiah 58 verses 3 – 7.

i Fasting is an aide to H _____

ii Fasting is an aide to P _____

iii Fasting is an aide to I _____ W _____ O _____

iv Fasting is an aide to D _____

5. As well as in Isaiah, the association of fasting and humility comes out elsewhere. Read and consider –
David in Psalm 34 verse 13 and Moses in Deuteronomy 8 verses 2 – 3.
Consider also the warning from God to Israel in Deuteronomy 8 verses 10 - 14

6. There is obviously a ‘prayer expectation’ in fasting.
Read and consider Isaiah 58 verse 4.

7. Let’s look at some other incidents of fasting that are positive.
Read and consider the following : Ezra 8:23; Daniel 9:3; Jonah 3:5 & 10
Now ask yourself, why does fasting aid prayer.

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8. To understand how fasting can be an aid to Identifying with Others, read Isaiah 58 verses 6 & 7 and then list those in need that are being identified here.
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9. Teaching our bodies to be servants and not masters is what is important here. Fasting can be one way to do that. Charles said “When we think about the lust of the flesh, we probably tend to think that the sexual appetite is the big one to fight with, but you know, in Scripture, the biggest issue with the lust of the flesh – maybe surprisingly – but it’s food.” List some examples from scripture where food was the temptation.
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Final Thoughts

Although fasting can have a beneficial impact on the body,
our reason for fasting should not be those benefits.
As Paul said so eloquently in 1 Corinthians 9 verse 27,
fasting is about teaching the body to be servant.
It is about self-denial. Read Matthew 16 verse 24

Denying self is not just about food.
What if the Lord impressed upon you to ‘fast’
from watching hockey for an entire season;
spending time with the Lord in its place?
Stop cheering ladies;
He may ask you to stop watching your favorite game show
or soap opera!

Remember; fasting is one way of telling God
that your priority at that time is to be alone with Him,
sorting out whatever is necessary.
And to show Him the sincerity of your intent
you have cancelled one or more of your favorite activities
to fulfill that priority.

Message Guide & Questions

Living From The Inner Core Part 7 – Your Money and Your Life Matthew 6 v.19 - 24

1. Read Matthew 6 verses 19 – 24

Then ask the question: 'What is my vision in life?'

2. There are two spheres that influence us:

i E _____ which concerns the M _____ and is T _____

ii H _____ which concerns the S _____ and is P _____

3. It is important to review the context of these verses, so please read Matthew 6, Verses 1 – 4; verses 5 – 15; verses 16 – 18 and verses 19 - 34

4. What does Jesus say about 'treasures' in verses 19 & 20?

5. Whether we realize it or not we are all investing in something that will affect our future; the double-barreled question is;
What kind of Treasure are we storing up, and Where? Read and consider verse 21.

6. See if you can fill in the blanks on this interesting progression.

What begins as our T _____ S _____ us.

What occupies our H _____ C _____ us.

What becomes our V _____ M _____ us.

And what ends up as our M _____ C _____ us.

7. What is the link between these 4 questions?

What is your treasure?

Where is your heart?

What is your vision?

Who is your master?

8. We are limited then to two choices; our treasure / vision / master is either –

T _____ or E _____

S ___ centered or G ___ centered

E _____ or H _____

Therefore our concerns are either

T _____ issue, or P _____ issues.

9. First Issue.

Read and consider verse 19, and then 1 Timothy verses 6 & 7

10. Read and consider Matthew 19 verses 23 & 24

11. Is it wrong to save for the future?

Final Thoughts

What God wants to see is the **balanced use** of wealth
to serve bigger issues than just ourselves.

Rather than build our lives around the 'here and now',
where reputation and possessions are all important

- and they are only temporary at best;
- the Lord wants us to build our lives around eternal and spiritual things,
 - which are permanent.

To set the seal on this study please read Mark 8 verse 36.

Message Guide & Questions

Living From The Inner Core Part 8 – The Cause and Cure of Worry Matthew 6 v.25 - 34

1. Please carefully read Matthew Chapter 6 verses 25 - 34
2. What are the two main aspects of these verses?

3. Jesus says, five times, “do not worry”. What are the five areas of worry that He identifies?

L ____ F ____ B ____ C _____ F _____

4. It is important to remind ourselves of the context, so please read again chapter 6 verses 19 and 20. Do you remember the sequential chain?

Your T _____ becomes

Your H _____, which becomes

Your V _____, which becomes

Your M _____

5. So what two things have an impact on every other part of your life?

What your T _____ is; and who your M _____ is.

6. Question 5 was a huge question because it determines how we relate to the material things in this world. According to Jesus

Our T _____ is either E _____ or H _____

Our M _____ is either G ____ or M _____

Our lives are either H _____ O _____ or D _____ O _____

7. What are the feature and benefits of Earthly Treasure [Human-centered Living] and to what do they lead? Read Matthew 6 verse 19: Psalm 90 verse 10:
1 Timothy 6 verse 7: Luke 12 verses 16 – 31

8. This is not to say we should make a virtue of poverty, but what does the illusion of wealth often lead to? Read 1 Timothy 6 verses 9 & 10; and the verse 11a.

9. What are the features and benefits of Heavenly Treasure [God-centered Living] and what is the result of these?

- i They are P _____ ii The are P _____

Final Thoughts

**What is your Treasure?
Who is your Master?**

**If Christ is your Master, and His interests are your Treasure,
then you have nothing to worry about.
Absolutely NOTHING!**

**But what is the KEY?
Read Matthew 6 verse 33
- and live it!**

God Bless you!

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

This Leader's Guide is prepared to help the Study Group Leader to keep the discussions moving along. Maybe your people will come up with different answers, or perhaps they will need a little prompting from you.

Remember, you want to encourage your people to fully participate. This is not a 'teaching session' by the Group Leader, but rather a discussion group. This may at first seem like a contradiction, but you will need the Lord to give you wisdom to keep the discussions 'on track' whilst also allowing the Holy Spirit to direct your path.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Living From The Inner Core Part 1 – The Unrighteous Acts Of Righteousness Matthew 6 v.1

1. If doing this study with others it would be good to ask each person for a brief explanation of their understanding of this verse.
2. The 4 areas that are classified as 'Acts Of Righteousness' are **Giving, Praying, Fasting, & Possessing** [i.e. handling material things]
3. The series title is a reference to that which is going on in the inner, secret part of our lives. Are these things done **to be seen by people**, or are they done **in secret before God**.
4. Acts of Righteousness done to be seen by men:
The reward, in full, is here and now, Other people may think highly of you, but that's it as far as any reward is concerned.

Acts of Righteousness done in secret before God:

These are done to please God. In secret **He** will reward you; but don't expect other people to see or know.

5. Righteousness is first and foremost an attribute of God, and that means – All that God **SAYS**: all that God **DOES** ; all that God **THINKS** ; all that God **PLANS** ; and all that God **IS**, is **RIGHT!**
6. God's intention for humanity was that it too would be righteousness.
Read Romans 3 v.10
So we are agreed: God is righteous; human beings are not righteous
7. We try to perform 'righteous' acts; but we do so 'unrighteously'.
Read and consider Isaiah 64 v.6.
8. When God exposes to us our lack of righteousness He is NOT trying to – **Humiliate** us, nor **Embarrass** us, nor '**rub our noses in the dirt**'
9. By revealing to us our unrighteousness, God wants us to see and understand that **righteousness is a gift from God**, and also **our 'position' before God**.
Read and consider Romans 5 v.17 and 2 Corinthians 5 v.21

Our righteousness is all about what we ARE, not what we DO.

10. One scripture says "DO your good deeds before men." while the other says, "DON'T do your good deeds before men?"

The answer lies in our understanding that the difference is not the 'substance of the act, but the source of the act'.

The source of true righteousness is not in **ourselves**, but in **God**.

Read. John 5 v.19; John 3 v.30; John 5 v. 41a & v.44

You can tell the **source** by looking at the **effect**.

11. If the **object** is not God, the **source** is not God.
If the act is to **please people**, the source is **yourself**, your own ego, your own interests.
If the act is to please God, then the source is **God** and **His interests**.
- 12 The word 'hypocrisy' literally means 'play-acting'.
We are not to pretend to be virtuous; pretend to be pious; pretend to be spiritual.
We may be clever enough to fool those around us, but we will never fool God – so ultimately we are only fooling ourselves.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Living From The Inner Core Part 2 – The Grace of Giving Matthew 6 v.1 - 4

1. The thrust of this message is two-fold_

Don't give before people **to be seen by them.**
Do give, in secret **before God.**
2. "The **Grace** of Giving" is a wonderful expression similar in meaning to 'The **Gift** of Giving'. We have to have a heart that understands that giving is not a chore or an obligation; but rather it is a privilege that we should partake in with a genuine joyful attitude.
3. a. The **NORMALITY** of giving – verses 2 + 3
b. The **MOTIVE** of giving – verse 2
c. The **NATURE** of giving – verses 3 – 4a
d. The **REWARD** of giving – verse 4 b
4. In North American giving to charity is very prevalent. On TV we are inundated with many worthy causes to which to give. Consider this.
5. Giving was to be not just money, but assets and indeed everything.
6. a. Their giving was to be given to the Priests; to the Levites.
b. The gifts were to
 - i. Pay the Priests salaries.
 - ii. Pay the expenses of the tabernacle [temple].
 - iii. Provide for the poor
7. Yes – a 20% 'surcharge' was added to any unpaid tithes.
8. No – but it is a good place to start, and we should always consider what the Lord says to us in 2 Corinthians 9 verse 7.
9. The only valid motive for giving, is **to please God.**
 - * It is not to please other people. [not even the pastor]
 - * It is not so that others will hold us in high esteem.
 - * It is not for any tax advantages.
 - * It is not in the hope that you will receive more, or indeed anything at all, back from God.

It should simply be the response of your **heart** to God, **motivated by love** for Him, and **service to Him.**

10. When dealing with the Nature of Giving, there are 4 key words –
 - a. We should give SECRETLY - Matthew 6 verses 3 – 4a
 - b. We should give REGULARLY - 1 Corinthians 16 verse 2
 - c. We should give GENEROUSLY - 2 Corinthians 9 verses 5 & 6
 - d. We should give CHEERFULLY - 2 Corinthians 9 verse 7

11. Well. Matthew 6 v. 4b says God will reward you – but it does not say how. But elsewhere in His Word the Lord says He will meet all your needs Philippians 4 verse 19. You will notice that the promise is that your **needs** will be met – not your **wants**.
Read and consider also – Luke 6 verse 38; 2 Corinthians 9 verse 8; Proverbs 3 verses 9 & 10 and Proverbs 11 verses 24 & 25

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Living From The Inner Core Part 3 – Effective Praying Matthew 6 v.5 - 8

1. A lot is said in these few verse. Consider briefly how what is said might apply in our culture here in North America.
2. In his sermon Charles breaks down this subject into these 3 questions.
 1. WHY Pray? - verses 5 - 7
 2. Why Pray PRIVATELY? - verse 6
 3. Why Pray CONFIDENTLY? - verses 7 & 8

3. Simply put; prayer is the talking part of our relationship with God.
Read John 17.verse 3.
That we know God; we know Jesus; says we have a relationship – we talk.

Talking is the sustaining part of any relationship.

4. Governments lose touch with people - when they stop listening.
Marriages run into trouble - when they stop talking.
Friendships dry up - when there is no communication.
Christian life becomes dull, ineffective, God is distant - when there is no prayer.

There is no big mystery about why the Christian life is dry if we don't spend time with God.

5. I Thessalonians 5 verses 16 – 22
 1. Rejoice always.
 2. Pray continually.
 3. Give thanks in all circumstances [**in** the circumstance not **for** the circumstance]
 4. Do not quench the Spirit.
 5. Do not treat prophecies with contempt.
 6. Test everything.
 7. Hold on to the good.
 8. Avoid every kind of evil.
6. Read the following scriptures for some examples of God talking to people during their prayers.

Ananias	Acts 9 verses 11 & 12
Peter in Joppa	Acts 10 verses 9 – 15
Cornelius	Acts 10 verse 30
Leaders of the Antioch Church	Acts 13 verse 2
Paul	Acts 22 verse 17

If someone says, "God never speaks to me.", perhaps that is because they never pray.

7. It is not enough to just know ABOUT God – doctrine / theology / the Bible. These things are important, but from them we need to actually KNOW God personally.

Sadly it is possible for a person to have been a Christian for years, knowing all about Christianity, but not knowing God Himself in a way that is personal, real and deepening.

8. It is not saying that private, secret prayer is the ONLY way to pray, nor that it is somehow a more effective way of praying.
9. This is an example of why it is so important to know the 'context' of whatever part of the Bible you are studying. In this instance in Matthew 6, Jesus in talking about hypocrisy; about people doing things to show off to other; thinking that their piety makes them special.

This bring us back to something that Charles often speak about - the need for you to have that 'secret place' in your heart to which only you and God hold the key.

All external work that we engage in will be without power unless we have that secret place.

Sitting on church committees, teaching Sunday School, leading a cell group, preaching, engaging in missions, being an elder, being in full-time Christian ministry – all will be barren unless it comes from a place in your heart where you KNOW, EXPERIENCE and COMMUNE WITH, GOD.

10. Here are some questions that will often come up.
 1. If God knows what we need before we ask; why do we need to ask?
 2. If God knows everything: why tell Him anything?
 3. If God has plans for us, and they are good: why should we make any suggestions?

The answer to this is in what may seem like a revolutionary way to look at Prayer. We pray; not to try and get God onto **OUR** agenda, to do what **WE** want Him to do.

We pray, so that as we do so, our desires begin to line up with His will for us [which is perfect for us], so we get ourselves onto **HIS** agenda, working for what He wants

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Living From The Inner Core Part 4 – The Disciples Prayer Matthew 6 v.9 - 13

1. Although this is popularly called “The Lord’s Prayer” it should really be called “The Disciples Prayer”, as here Jesus is instructing the disciples how to pray. It should be noted that a little earlier in verse 7, Jesus had said “And when you pray do not keep on babbling like the pagans”, and then He says, “this is how you should pray.”
2. First part **Concerned with God** Chapter 6 verses 9 & 10
Second part **Concerned with Need** Chapter 6 verses 11 - 13
3. The biggest need of contemporary Christians is to orient our life around God – not around ourselves.
Our consumer mentality is centered on ‘me’ ... what benefit is it to **me**.
But we need to re-orientate our whole thinking to be God-centered, not self-centered.
4. The first time God is actually referred to as ‘Father’ is in the Sermon On The Mount. Certainly in the OT the word ‘father’ was used in a metaphorical sense such as in Psalm 68:5 [read]; or ‘likening God to a father as in Psalm 103:13 [read]. But here Jesus the Son refers to God as ‘Father’ no less than 16 times. Check them out: Matthew 5:16; 5:45; 6:1; 6:8; 6:9; 6:14 – 15; 6:26; 6:32; 7:11; and 7:21.

We can understand the ‘Fatherhood of God’ in a **general sense** as in 1 Cor. 8:6 [read]; but now this is in the **particular sense**. God has only one Son – Jesus Christ.

5. When Christ becomes our Savior, God becomes our Father. Why?
Read Ephesians 1 v.5 and Romans 8 v. 15

The Father of the Lord Jesus Christ becomes our Father because we have all been adopted in Him as sons.

(Now ladies ... Don’t be concerned about being referred to as a ‘son’; remember, at the end we all become ‘the Bride of Christ’.)

6. Read John 8 verse 44 and 1 John 3 verse 10
7. Whatever we are praying for should be –
 - A. In submission to His Kingship.
 - B. To further the aims of His Kingdom.

As a good self test we should always ask ourselves these two questions:

1. How much of my praying is about His interests, and His agenda?
2. How much of my praying is about my interests, and my agenda?

Read Matthew 26 verse 39 – the classic pray of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane!

Our prayers should be not about getting God to do what we want; but rather, about bringing ourselves into conformity with what God wants.

Our prayers need to conform to the will of God.

8. If we engage in the worship of God; concerned with the work of God, in submission to the will of God, we will discover that we do have needs. Many of them.

9. **1. Physical / Material needs.**

To keep this in balance and perspective read Proverb 30 verse 8 – 9

As individuals and families we need to avoid the rat-race of trying to ‘keep-up-with-Jones’s.’ That is when you buy things you don’t need; that you cannot afford; to impress people you don’t like!!!!

2. Spiritual needs

- a. Our need for Forgiveness. Read 1 John 1 v. 8-9
- b. Our need to Forgive Read Matthew 6 v. 12 & 14

3. Moral Needs

Living by this prayer will lead you into conflict and trouble, and you will be exposed to temptation and attacks of the evil one, but be clear about this;
God is never the author of temptation. Read 1 James 13

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Living From The Inner Core Part 5 – Forgiving Others Matthew 6 v.13 - 15

1. What these verses are saying is very clear. Do we take that seriously?
Is it possible that there are Christians whose sins are not being forgiven by God because they are harboring grudges and an unforgiving spirit towards others?
2. a. Forgiveness **from God** for **wrongs against Him**
b. Forgiveness **of others** for **wrongs against us**.
3. The 3 questions that form the basis of this study are
 - a. WHY should we forgive?
 - b. WHEN should we forgive?
 - c. HOW should we forgive?
4. i. 'Roll over and keep taking it" Keep forgiving and the offender keeps on offending. We know there is something wrong with that as the moral order breaks down and there is no justice; only continued abuse with the offender continually getting away with and never being called to account.

ii. On the other hand; insist that justice be done; the offender pays in full for their deed so that wrongs are amended; and then, with proper acknowledgement, there is an apology resulting in forgiveness.
We know there is something wrong with this too. It sounds legally correct; but the person who suffers most is the wronged person who often remains resentful, angry and bitter.
5. We must remember that Jesus is talking to the disciples here whom we can assume have already been forgiven. Jesus is now telling them that in keeping the relationship alive, they now need to forgive others.
6. This is a frightening scenario. But it is very serious.
We can easily resonant with the logic of the story.
If the man had been forgiven, then of course he should forgive!
But do we act in the same way?
Being forgiven is the key to being forgiving. Read Ephesians 4 verse 32

If you don't know what it means to be forgiven, then this whole message will seem unreasonable to you.
7. True forgiveness has to come from the heart; it cannot be rushed; it takes time.
Read Romans 8 verse 28.

Evil can sometimes unwittingly serve the purpose of God, but sometimes we need 'time' to gain that perspective. Wounds can even strengthen us.

8. If we do not forgive, it is we who suffer. Read Ephesians 4 verses 30 – 32. Those verses say it all.

For your own Spiritual Health, Mental Health, Moral Health, and probably even Physical Health – **YOU NEED TO FORGIVE!**

Now read Hebrews 12 verse 15.

You may not be able to forgive in your own strength,
but with the grace of God YOU CAN!

9. For the answer read Ephesians 4 verse 32, and Colossians 3 verse 13.

Read also the following –

Jeremiah 33 v.8 When God forgives He forgives All our sin.

Psalms 103 v.12 When God forgives He removes all our sin.

Hebrews 8 v.12 When God forgives He remembers them no more.

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Living From The Inner Core Part 6 – Fasting & Self Denial Matthew 6 v.16-18

1. '**Giving**' is an activity towards others.
'**Praying**' is an activity towards God.
'**Fasting**' is an activity towards self.
2. In today's society 'fasting' is viewed more as a means of 'cleansing' the body, more specifically the colon; even many Christians look at fasting as an 'optional extra' or even irrelevant – and yet it is right there in scripture, and Jesus Himself obviously did not consider it irrelevant.

Of course, we should stress that fasting does not make a person spiritual – only the presence and activity of God in our lives does that – but fasting can have an important part to play if we approach it correctly.

3. Some key examples of people who fasted in the **Old Testament** are:
Moses in Exodus Chapter 34;
David in 2 Samuel 12 verses 15 – 25;
King Jehosaphat in 2 Chronicles 20 verse 3;
Esther in Esther 4 verse 16;
Joel in Joel 1 verse 14
the People of Nineveh in Jonah 3 verse 7.
Isaiah, in Isaiah 58, chastised the Israelites for their methods and motives of fasting. He clarified the best reasons for fasting, and listed physical and spiritual benefits that would result.

In the **New Testament** there was:

- Anna** in Luke 2 verse 37;
Jesus in Matthew 4 verse 2 and Luke 4 verse 2;
John the Baptist in Matthew 9 verse 17;
The Pharisees in Luke 5 verses 33 – 39;
the **leaders of the church in Antioch** in 13 verses 1 – 3;
and **Paul & Barnabas** in Acts 14 verse 23.
4. The benefits of fasting are: -
 - i Fasting is an aid to HUMILITY
 - ii Fasting is an aid to PRAYER
 - iii Fasting is an aid to IDENTIFYING with OTHERS
 - iv Fasting is an aid to DISCIPLINE

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Living From The Inner Core Part 7 – Your Money and Your Life Matthew 6 v.19 - 24

1. What motivates you?
What gets you out of bed in the morning?
What gives you a sense of satisfaction at the end of the day?
Read Proverbs 29 verse 18
2. The two spheres that influence us are:
 - i EARTHLY - which concerns the MATERIAL and is TEMPORARY
 - ii HEAVENLY - which concerns the SPIRITUAL and is PERMANENT
3. Notice the recurring theme - **Reward**

Verses 1 – 4	Giving.	Reward from God for what is done in secret.
Verses 5 – 15	Praying	Reward from God for what is done in secret.
Verses 16 – 18	Fasting	Reward from God for what is done in secret
Verses 19 – 34	Possessing	Reward from God for what is done in secret
4. We are instructed; **DO NOT** store up treasures on earth, but **DO** store up treasures in heaven.
5. **What is your heart set on?**
What do you love most in life?
What do you do with your spare time?
What do you spend your spare money on?
Where does your mind gravitate to when you have nothing else to do?
Read verses 22 & 23
6. What begins as our TREASUE v.19 SERVES us.
What occupies our HEART v.21 CAPTIVATES us.
What becomes our VISION v.22 MOTIVATES us.
And what ends up as our MASTER v.24 CONTROLS us.
7. They are all asking the same question.
8. TEMPORAL or ETERNAL
SELF centered or GOD centered
EARTHLY or HEAVENLY

Therefore our concerns are either TEMPORARY issues, or PERMANENT issues.

Says Charles:

“We are never more blind than when we are blind to the starkness of this contrast.”

9. Earthly treasures are only good for this life and they are vulnerable to being stolen, corrosion or being devalued. We bring nothing in to this world and when we leave we can take nothing out.

Sadly the goal of too many people is to accumulate possessions in order to enhance their status in society, their sense of importance, their measurement of success, their reputation.

10. To better understand this read: 1 Timothy 6 verses 9 & 10 and 2 Timothy 6 verse 17.

Remember too that it is only the storing up of treasure on earth **for yourselves** that Jesus warns us about. The Lord does enable some people to be successful in business so that they can bless others, and so that through them He can finance His work here on earth.

Money and possessions are not, in themselves, inherently corrupt; but the hoarding of them is.

11. There is nothing wrong with saving for the future.
Read 2 Corinthians 12 verse 14b and 1 Timothy 5 verse 8

Leader's Message Guide & Answers

Living From The Inner Core Part 8 – The Cause and Cure of Worry Matthew 6 v.25 - 34

1. One of the most important words here is that first word, "Therefore". It shows us that everything in this study is based on our understanding of the previous studies in Matthew Chapter 6. If it seems that this study is very much a recap of the previous 7 studies in this series – you are probably right; but they do lead us somewhere. Stay with us to find out where.

2. They lead us to the Cause and the Cure of WORRY.

3. The five areas of worry that Jesus identifies are:-
LIFE FOOD BODY CLOTHING FUTURE

4. Do you remember the sequential chain?

Your TREASURE, which serves you, [v.19 & 20] becomes
Your HEART, which captivates you, [v.21] which becomes
Your VISION, which motivates you, [v.22] which becomes
Your MASTER, which controls you. [v.24]

5. The two things that have an impact on every other part of our lives are

What your TREASURE is; and who your MASTER is.

6. According to Jesus

Our TREASURE is either EARTHLY or HEAVENLY
Our MASTER is either GOD or MAMMON
Our lives are either HUMAN ORIENTED or DIVINE ORIENTED

You cannot have both, and whatever you choose **will have enormous consequences.**

We will look at them under 2 headings:-

- i. The Features of Earthly Treasure
- ii The Features of Heavenly Treasure

7. Such treasures are TEMPORARY and VULNERABLE; subject to corrosion, being devalued and stolen. Is this not a recipe for worry?
Recap the things we are told not to worry about – they are all associated with the illusion of 'materialism'.

Materialism says, The more I get - the more content I will be **BUT**

The more I get – the more I have to look after.
The more I have to look after – the more I can lose.
The more I can lose – the more I WORRY about losing it.

**So the very thing that you think is going to bring you security,
actually brings insecurity.**

8. There are words here that should scare us and serve as a dire warning.
Words such as; temptation, trap, harmful desire, ruin, destruction, evil, wandered from the faith, pierced themselves with many griefs.
Remember: what we think of as our Treasure can become our Master. It drives us, motivates us, controls us; and in this case destroys.

This is why Jesus turned away the rich young ruler.
There is nothing wrong with being rich, but for this young man his possessions had become his master, and as Matthew 6 verse 24 tells us, “You cannot serve two masters.”

9. The Features / Benefits of Heavenly Treasure [God-centered Living] are:-
- i They are PERMANENT – no devaluation, no corrosion, no burglars; it’s yours.
Read Matthew 6 verse 20
 - ii The are PEACEFUL - no cause for worry.
 - a. **Do not be anxious about the body.**
Read Matthew 6 verses 26, 28 – 30
Read 2 Thessalonians 3 verse 10
Read Matthew 6 verse 33
 - b. **Do not be anxious about length of life** – death is not the end!
Read Matthew 6 verses 27 and 34
Matthew 10 verse 29
John 4 verses 2 – 3
1 Corinthians 15 verse 55