

Talk it Over

Discussion Guide

August 30 – 2.0

MATTHEW 6:16-34

Welcome: Get ready. Jesus is taking it even deeper than he has done before! He is literally going to the 'heart' of the matter here. He is going to teach us that leading with our heart is absolutely critical. And, he will teach us how to have a 'heart breakthrough' like none other. And this is the essential ingredient in achieving the dream of 'doing it better than before.'

Theme: The adventure begins when you are free to truly live into the big dream.

All people have dreams. So many people fantasize. But, so few people ever take the steps toward accomplishing the dreams that God has put on their hearts. That's because those people are not free. they are bound. But, when they are finally released, their adventure finally begins.

Talk It Over: How do you take your new freedoms and truly live into the big dream?

Background: When Jesus first spoke to the people from the mountain, he took people on a radical journey to the core of their soul. He walked them through every aspect of their life and faith. And, at the climax of his message he taught them about forgiveness. For some, this would have been the first time that they had ever experienced freedom. Jesus wanted them to move forward and avoid becoming enslaved all over again by the unhelpful patterns of the past.

Read: Matthew 6:16-18

Idea: God goes with you. Oneness with God is a deep well that can always provide incomparable joy. One of the wonderful things about fasting is that it rings deep God-reflection. It is essentially a way of carrying prayerful oneness with God into daily life. It's not supposed to be a tortuous experience. It's supposed to be joyful. It's means to help us find a source of joy beyond the material things. It's meant to teach us to shine in the world no matter what.

Talk it over: Why do you think it is so important for us to keep our God-focused fast private?

Read: Matthew 6:19-21

Idea: Redirect your focus. Aim for the eternal. Put your heart in heaven.

When you are freed spiritually to engage the world, it is essential that you align your purposes with those of God. It is easy, as soon as you experience the freedom of God, to take the freedom God gives you and to return to the old behaviors. Instead, when you discover who you were created to be, use your power for a heart break-through.

Talk it over: How have your past goals been more earth-bound than heaven-bound?

#signsofhope

Read: Matthew 6:22-24

Idea: Focusing on the light of God will free you from the darkness of slavery to wealth.

There is an ever-present emptiness in every human being. And, that emptiness drives us to be filled. It drives us to obtain whatever we can to avoid our own demise. But, Jesus brings fulfillment. He shows us that fulfillment is found and never lost in God.

Talk it over: Why do you think that Jesus drew a contrast between the darkness and light then God and wealth?

Idea: You are designed to be a vessel of light. You are made by God your creator to focus on

God and only God. Now, you may say "but how will I provide for my family if I follow only God?" Or you may say, "what about the 'real' world?" But, Jesus knows that our immediate assumption is that God will not provide for us or that God will allow us to wither. But, Jesus wants to clear this up right away.

Talk it over: Think about your life-goals going forward. What could some heaven-bound goals be?

Read: Matthew 6:25-34

Idea: Go forward with courage. God has you covered. God will provide all you need.

There is never a moment in your life that you will ever be in need. There is never a moment in your life that God will not provide for you or care for you or carry you through the hardest times. God will protect you. God will be good to you. God will serve you better than any material thing that you could pursue ever in your life. Nothing will ever take care of you better than God will.

Talk it over: How has God provided for you in the past?

How has God brought you what you needed before?

Pray: Share prayer requests & Share praise reports.

NEXT WEEK: Matthew 7:1-14 STAYING FREE: finally doing it better!