# Sunday 13th July – Connect Group Notes

## Read Matthew 7:24-29

1. **Goals and Growth**  
   Do you have personal goals, dreams or ambitions? Have you ever set yourself any *spiritual* goals—such as reading the Bible in a year, committing to regular prayer, or observing a Sabbath rest?

* How can these kinds of spiritual practices help shape our lives?
* What has helped you stick with them—or made it difficult?

1. **Hearing and Doing**  
   Jesus says the wise builder is the one who *hears his words and puts them into practice*.

* What do you think Jesus is referring to here?
* Are there particular teachings of Jesus you tend to associate with this? Why?

1. **Putting It into Practice**  
   Some of Jesus’ teaching—like *“do not worry”*—can feel out of our control. But as you look through the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7), what are some teachings that we *can* intentionally choose to live out?

* What stands out as something you could begin to practise more deliberately?

1. **A ‘Rule of Life’**  
   Ruth Haley Barton defines a Rule of Life as *“a way of ordering our life around the values, practices and relationships that keep us open and available to God for the work of spiritual transformation that only God can bring about.”*

* How might a shared pattern or rhythm of life help you personally—or help you as a group?

1. **Potential Pitfalls**  
   Jesus warns in Matthew 6:1 and 6:5 about practising your righteousness in front of others to be seen.

* What are the dangers or subtle traps we might fall into as we seek to live out his teaching more intentionally?
* How do we keep our hearts in the right place?

1. **Next Steps – Practising the Way**  
   What might be one practical next step for you personally—or as a group—to develop in *“practising the way”* of Jesus?

* Is there something you could encourage or hold one another accountable for?
* Would you consider exploring the *Practising the Way* course together as a tool for further growth?