

Jesus: No Spin

Matthew Chapter Six: The Pros and the Joes

personal / group study for use with the message of October 25th and 26th, 2008

Jesus' core teachings continue in Chapter 6 of Matthew. He taught the people not to measure themselves righteous by the law, but to go the "second mile;" don't just love your neighbor but love your enemy. He said that even though you look like you are doing "good" on the outside God sees the inside. After teaching several Old Testament Laws and explaining how He wants them lived out, Jesus went on to teach three representative ways that discipleship to Him goes beyond the legalistic, pious, hypocritical life of the "religious pros."

Introduction.

Jesus wants to change us from the inside out. He expects that we will practice "acts of righteousness" out of a heart of gratitude to God, not out of duty or self-promotion.

Jesus had three audiences listening to the sermon: His disciples, (those who have placed their faith in Him), the religious leaders (the scribes and Pharisees) and the crowd (they have yet to commit to Jesus).

Read.

Matthew 6: *1"Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.*

2"So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 3But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Prayer

5"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 6But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. 7And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. 8Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

9"This, then, is how you should pray:

**" 'Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,**

**10your kingdom come,
your will be done**

on earth as it is in heaven.

11Give us today our daily bread.

12Forgive us our debts,

as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from the evil one.' 14For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Fasting

16"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 17But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, 18so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Treasures in Heaven

19"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

22"The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. 23But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

24"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

Do Not Worry

25"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? 26Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

28"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

*All scripture taken from the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted.

Questions.

Dear Lord Jesus, please help us to understand how to live our lives for you that we may reflect your glory. Please transform us by your grace into instruments for your service. Give us your heart for people around us who need You. Love others through us. Give us your generous Spirit. In your name, Amen

ThinkAboutIt...

1. Did you grow up in an openly "religious" home? Was it a "religious" show or the real thing?
2. If your Father in Heaven knows what we need before we ask why should we pray?

ReflectOnIt...

3. What are your grateful for? Does being grateful motivate you to care for others?
4. Do you show off so that people can see how good you are? What does Jesus teach about fasting? Why does your appearance matter, if we are suppose to "show off"?
5. Why do you think Jesus' teaching about money and worry follow His teaching about giving to the needy, prayer and fasting?
6. Read Philippians 4:12, 13 and 1 Timothy 6:6-10. What do you learn about being content?

7. Here again, Jesus taught His disciples how to live in God's peace and rest. In 2 Corinthians 12:9, God taught Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you". How could resting in God's grace help you not to put your trust in money?

Respond To It...

8. Write down Matthew 6:33 and memorize it. Thank God for caring for your needs, spiritual, emotional, mental and physical.
9. What do you need right now? Ask a friend to join you in praying for that need.

Love God. Trust in His love for you. You don't need to manipulate Him to get what you need. You fan depend on Him, you can relax in His love.

Extra.

"...When you stop to think about it, how could one actually trust Him for forgiveness of sins while not trusting Him for much more than that? You can't trust Him without believing that he was right about everything, and that he alone has the key to every aspect of our lives here on earth. But if you believe that, you will naturally want to stay just as close to him as you can, in every aspect of your life." The Great Omission, Dallas Willard

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