

## FAITH SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2012

### Sermon on the Mount Part II

**Focal Passage: Matthew 6 (ESV)**

Cross References: Luke 11:2-4, Matt 12:36, II Pet 3:10-12, Luke 6:45

**Central Idea:** Here Christ expands the thought of Matt 5:20, showing how the Pharisees' righteousness was deficient, by exposing their hypocrisy in the matters of "charitable deeds" (Vs. 1-4): "prayer" (Vs. 5-15); and "fasting" (Vs. 16-18). All of these acts are supposed to be worship rendered to God, never displays of self-righteousness to gain the admiration of others.

**Lesson Idea:** Our motivation behind our service to Christ is crucial to a right relationship with Christ and with others. When we serve out of self love or love for praise and attention, the reward is received now, from man, not from God in Heaven.

**Background:** This chapter, the one before it, and the one that follows it, are a sermon. Matthew Henry's Commentary says this about it  
*"It is the longest and fullest continued discourse of our Savior that we have upon record. It is a practical discourse. The circumstances of the sermon being accounted for (5:1-2), the sermon itself follows, the scope of which is, not to fill our heads with notions, but to guide and regulate our practice...Christ, having in the former chapter, armed his disciples against the corrupt doctrines and opinions of the scribes and Pharisees, comes in this chapter to warn them against hypocrisy and worldly-mindedness, sins which, of all others, the professors of religion need most to guard against. We are here cautioned, I. Against hypocrisy, 1. In the giving of alms, ver. 1-4. 2. In prayer, ver. 5-8. We are here taught what to pray for, and how to pray (ver. 9-13); and to forgive in prayer, ver. 14, 15. 3. In fasting, ver. 16-18. II. Against world-mindedness, 1. In our choice, which is the destroying sin of hypocrites, ver. 19-24. 2. In our cares, which is the disquieting sin of many good Christians, ver. 25-34."*

The Wycliff Bible Commentary says

*"Here, since Matthew had described Christ's activity in proclaiming the arrival of the Kingdom (4:17, 23), it was proper for him to include for his readers a full discussion by Jesus of this subject. Hence the Sermon on the Mount is not primarily a statement of principles for the Christian church (which was yet unrevealed), nor an evangelistic message for the unsaved, but a delineation of the principles that would characterize the Messianic kingdom Christ was announcing. Later, Israel's rejection of her King delayed the coming of his kingdom, but even now Christians, having given their allegiance to the King and having been made spiritually to anticipate some of the blessings of his kingdom (Col 1:13), may see God's ideal in this sublime discourse and will assent to its high standard."*

#### **Matt 6:1-4 Charitable Deeds**

<sup>1</sup> *"Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.*

<sup>2</sup> *"Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. <sup>3</sup> But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, <sup>4</sup> so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*

#### **DISCUSSION:**

- Why is He warning us against touting our good deeds? What rewards will we lose out on?
- What does verse 2 teach us about human nature? What reward have they received?
- Explain Vs. 3. What does this look like? How can this be played out practically?
- How does Vs. 4 change your view of how others respond to your good deeds? What are some ways you have been rewarded by God because of your "secret giving"? (This is not a time to boast, but to encourage others in the value of doing things God's way.)

#### **Matt 6:5-15 Prayer**

**See also Luke 11:2-4**

<sup>5</sup> *"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. <sup>6</sup> 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.*

<sup>7</sup> *"And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. <sup>8</sup> Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. <sup>9</sup> Pray then like this:*

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

<sup>10</sup> *Your kingdom come,  
your will be done,*

*on earth as it is in heaven.*

<sup>11</sup> *Give us this day our daily bread,*

<sup>12</sup> *and forgive us our debts,*

*as we also have forgiven our debtors.*

<sup>13</sup> *And lead us not into temptation,*

*but deliver us from evil.*

<sup>14</sup> *For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, <sup>15</sup> but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

#### **DISCUSSION:**

- What reward have the “hypocrites” of Vs. 5 received? What do those “hypocrites” love? When you are tempted to look for the attention of others because of your service, what do you do?
- What are we told to do with our praying in Vs. 6? Does this mean we don’t pray with other believers? If not, what does it mean?
- Vs. 7 says “do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do.” He is referring to meaningless words, meaningless prayers. When we say things in prayer, or pray simply because we are put on the spot, but don’t mean it, we are praying with “empty phrases”. Look at Matt 12:36.
- Why, according to Vs. 8 are we not to “be like them”? Why should this affect the way we pray?
- What is the process that is given by Christ about the way we should pray? How should this affect our prayer life?
- Read Vs. 14-15 again. What does this mean? Is this a removal of our justification through Christ? If not, explain.
- The MacArthur commentary says this about Vs. 14-15. *“This conditional statement does not mean that God will withdraw justification from those who have already received the free pardon He extends to all believers... Yet Scripture also teaches that God chastens His children who disobey (Heb 12:5-7). Believers are to confess their sins in order to obtain a day-to-day cleansing (1 Jn 1:9). This sort of forgiveness simply washes a person from the worldly defilements of sin but does not repeat the wholesale cleansing from sin’s corruption that comes with justification. It is like a washing of the feet rather than a bath. God threatens to withhold forgiveness as a day-to-day cleansing from Christians who refuse to forgive others (cf. 18:23-35).”*
- How does this information change your view of forgiveness to those who have wronged you?

#### **Matt 6:16-18 Fasting**

<sup>16</sup> *“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. <sup>17</sup> But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup> 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.*

#### **DISCUSSION:**

- What is the purpose of fasting?
- Why shouldn’t we boast of our fasting to others?
- What is the theme we have seen through much of this chapter?

#### **Matt 6:19-34 Wealth**

<sup>19</sup> *“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, <sup>20</sup> but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

<sup>22</sup> *“The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, <sup>23</sup> but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!*

<sup>24</sup> *“No one can serve two masters, for 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 God and money.*

<sup>25</sup> *“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? <sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? <sup>27</sup> And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? <sup>28</sup> And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, <sup>29</sup> yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. <sup>30</sup> But if God so clothes*

*the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?*<sup>31</sup> *Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'*<sup>32</sup> *For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.*<sup>33</sup> *But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*

<sup>34</sup> *"Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*

#### **DISCUSSION:**

- Why are we told not to lay up treasures on earth? What happens to them? Read II Pet 3:10-12.
- Why does he say "*where your treasure is, there will your heart be also*"? How does this play out in your life? Read Luke 6:45.
- According to Vs. 24, why can't we love both God and money/stuff? How have you experienced this in your life?
- Why is Vs. 25 so hard to apply?
- What examples does Jesus give as to God's provision for those who are His?  
1: \_\_\_\_\_  
2: \_\_\_\_\_
- Why does this give us cause to not worry?
- What are we told to seek after? What happens as a result of seeking it?
- In Vs. 34 it says "*sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*" What does this mean?

#### **APPLICATION**

- As you examine your life, what do you find to be the area you like to flaunt before men to receive their praise?
- What part of "The Lord's Prayer" do you struggle with the most? What will you do this week to strengthen that area?
- Who do you need to forgive this week? What grudges have you been holding onto that need to be forgiven and given to God?
- What will you do this week to show your good deeds to God, and not flaunt them before men?
- Share with your class what you will do this week to model Matthew chapter 6.