

Matthew 6

Matthew 6:1-18 – Kingdom Principles – Part 3

Scriptures:

Matthew 5:16 - Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

1 “Take heed that you do not do your

G4337 – consider carefully, be alert for, watch out, beware.

charitable deeds before men, to be seen by

G1654 – alms – “alms n. — the act of contributing money or goods to the poor; especially as flowing from a disposition to kindness and compassion.”

them. Otherwise you have no reward from

G3408 - recompense

your Father in heaven.

Notes:

“Religion can be a highway to the heart of God, a road along which the faithful travel, or it can be a stage upon which insincere worshipers display their virtue.” (Powell, 1986) page 113

Chapter six begins with three religious duties that should not be neglected by Christ-followers. But Christ’s words are not about how we do those things, but the motives are behind our doing those things. Jesus will address the motivations behind religious activities in this section. Even right things can be done with wrong motives.

“Both public morality and religious ritual are good and proper expressions of our faith in God. Yet both can be admirably practiced with hellish motives.” (Moore, 2011) page 182

Jesus had previously exhorted us to ‘let our light shine’ and here He seems to be saying the opposite (Matt. 5:16). When we are tempted to hide our light because of opposition, we must remember Matthew 5:16, when we are tempted to promote ourselves through religious activities we must remember Matthew 6:1.

‘charitable deeds’ was also referred as alms, or giving alms, or alms-giving.

...before men, to be seen by them.’ This is a warning against doing your charitable deeds to draw the attention of people, rather than the attention of God. If you do it for the attention of men, then there will be no reward in heaven.

Anyone who calls themselves Christian should consider the needs of others. There is an expectation from Christ that within your means you will attempt to meet the real needs of others who are less fortunate than you.

“Let us observe that our Lord takes it for granted that all who call themselves His disciples will give alms.” (Ryle, 1993) page 36

“A giving Savior should have giving disciples.” (Ryle, 1993) page 36

² Therefore, when you do a charitable deed,

do not sound a trumpet before you as the

hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the

G5273 – actor –
pretender,
insincere person.

streets, that they may have glory from men.

G1392 - to be glorified (state)
v. — to be or become
positively acknowledged,
recognized, or esteemed for
one's character, nature, or
attributes.

Assuredly, I say to you, they have their

reward.

Notes:

Israel didn't have a government system that pays millions of people to not work like our government does. Jewish culture provided for the poor through the voluntary giving of alms.

It is suggested that the trumpets were blown to call the poor to receive these charitable donations. When someone gives to a charity, the question they must ask is, 'Am I doing this for the glory of God, or am I doing it so others can see me glorifying God?' If you are doing it for God's glory, then only God needs to know you did it. Trust Him to use your charity to bring Himself glory – He will.

The word 'hypocrite' comes from the theater. Actors would wear masks that hide their faces and project an image of someone they are not. We expect that when we watch a movie or show. We know the actors are wearing a mask to portray a character. When we go to church, there should be no masks. God calls us to be who we are, fallible people trying to grow in our faith to be more like Jesus.

'they have their reward.' – If we seek praise and glory from people, then we should expect nothing from God. But, if we seek only God's reward, He will reward us and may give us the praise and glory of people also.

Jesus is telling us that we get to choose where our reward comes from. We can choose to be rewarded by fickle people or we can choose to be rewarded by Creator God. Whatever God's reward turns out to be we can rest assured that it will be infinitely greater than anything humankind could give us.

Scriptures:

³ But when you do a charitable deed, do not

Notes:

Charitable deeds are the right thing for Christ-followers to do, but they don't make a believer right with God – only faith does that.

This is not to say that public financial commitments can't be used to encourage the body, but it is meant to challenge people to examine their heart.

Jesus is not dictating about behaviors but the motivations that drive those behaviors.

let your left hand know what your right hand

is doing,

Scriptures:

⁴ that your charitable deed may be in secret;

Notes:

G2927 - hidden

and your Father who sees in secret will

G991 -

Himself reward you openly.

Scriptures:

5 “And when you pray, you shall not be like

G4336 -

Notes:

Christ expects His disciples to pray.

“Prayer is the straight line between two points – the need of man and the sufficiency of God.” (Powell, 1986) page 117

the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing

G5368 – “phileō” – “a primary love, not unlike ἀγαπάω (agapaō), et.al., yet semantically favors an affection based in interpersonal association.”

in the synagogues and on the corners of the

streets, that they may be seen by men.

Assuredly, I say to you, they have their

reward.

Scriptures:

⁶ But you, when you pray, go into your room,

Notes:

There is a place and time for corporate or family prayer, but Christ is calling us to get alone with God.

and when you have shut your door, pray to

You can't fake it with God. He knows what is in our heart and mind. He knows when we are going through the motions. He knows when we are being sincere and when we are just doing our spiritual duty.

your Father who *is* in the secret *place*; and

your Father who sees in secret will reward

you openly.

Scriptures:

7 And when you pray,

Notes:

It is not the words or the quantity of words that matter to God but the heart from which those words flow.

do not use vain repetitions as the heathen

G945 – prattle,
babble.

G1482 - ἔθνικός
(ethnikos) -
pagan, Gentile.

do. For they think that they will be heard for

their many words.

G4180 -

Scriptures:

8 “Therefore do not be like them. For your

Notes:

Father knows the things you have need of

G1492 -

G5532 -

before you ask Him.

Scriptures:
Romans 8:15 - For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."

⁹ In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in

heaven, hallowed be Your name.

G37 – honor as
holy, feel
reverence, regard
as holy.

Notes:
This is often referred to as the Lord's Prayer. That is a bit misleading, as if this is what the Lord would pray. It is an example of prayer the Lord gives us to guide our prayers. A more accurate description of this might be a Model Prayer.

This is likely the most familiar prayer in the world. Even people who have little knowledge of the Bible are familiar with this prayer.

This prayer is filled with doctrine and theology.

One thing to note as we go through this prayer are the use of the words, our, us, and we. This should remind us that our faith is not a solitary reality, and that prayer should always include others. Even when we are praying by ourselves it should be with the understanding that we are a part of the whole church and that others are praying at the same time.

'Our Father in heaven...' – This tells us who we are to pray to. We are not to pray to angels or saints, no matter how holy we might think they are. We are to address our prayers to our Father, Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth.

'Father' – 'Pater' from which we get words like paternal. Our claim to be children of God is one of the highest privileges we can have. Jesus balanced the intimacy of calling God Father with a declaration that His name is holy. Our intimacy with God must be balanced with a reverence of His majesty, holiness, and character.

Through faith in Christ, we are adopted into God's family (Rom. 8:15).

All humanity was created by God and in His image. It is His desire that all would come to faith in Jesus. But only those who can rightly claim God as their 'Father in heaven.'

'Hallowed be Your name.' – This is a request that God's name be made known and glorified. The world and everything in it was created to glorify God.

"By the 'name' of God we mean all those attributes through which He is revealed to us – His power, wisdom, holiness, justice, mercy, and truth."

Scriptures:

Luke 17:20-21 - Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; 21 nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you."

[△]10 [△]Your [△]kingdom [△]come. [△]Your will be done on earth as *it is* in [△]heaven.

Notes:

'Your kingdom come.' – This can be understood two ways. The kingdom of God is where God rules. The first way we might pray this is that God's kingdom would come in our heart and in the hearts of others ([Luke 17:20-21](#)).

The second way we are to pray this is from the desire that Jesus would come back (Second Coming) and establish God's kingdom on this earth. It is this one that we should be most urgent for. When Christ establishes His kingdom on this earth sin, sorrow, and Satan will be driven out of the world. And while we wait for that kingdom, we pray for God's kingdom to come in the hearts of men and women.

'Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' – This is a prayer for obedience to God's will. The standard for that obedience is the obedience of those in heaven. In heaven, the angels yield to and obey God's will perfectly. This prayer should begin in our own hearts and then reach out to include all humanity. One of the reasons we don't obey better is a lack of understanding the good that comes through obedience to God's will, not just for us but for all who our lives touch.

"Our truest happiness is perfect submission to God's will, and it is the purest love to pray that all humankind may know it, obey it, and submit to it" (Ryle, 1993) page 40

Scriptures:

11 Give us this [⌚] day our daily bread.

Notes:

This is a crucially important prayer for modern Christ-followers. Most of us have enough resources to get anything we need almost immediately. It is easy to take those resources for granted and forget where they came from.

'daily bread' refers to the daily needs that all humans have. Because of prosperity, most of our needs are always met. We must daily remind ourselves of our utter dependence upon God's gracious provision. If you have it or can get something, it is because God provided it.

Scriptures:

Luke 11:4 - And forgive us our sins,

For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.

And do not lead us into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one.

Colossians 2:13-14 - And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

12 And ~~se 20~~ forgive us our ~~xxxx~~ debts, as we forgive our ~~se 20~~

G863 -

G3783 – moral debts, sins

Notes:

'debts' = sins (Luke 11:4).

'And forgive us our debts...' – this is a prayer of confession and repentance. As born-again Christ-followers, we know that all our sins have been forgiven on a judicial basis. Christ's death on the cross wiped away every reason God would be forced to judge me for my sins (Col. 2:13-14).

This prayer reminds us that we are still sinners in need to daily washing for the sins we commit that stand between us and an intimate walk with God, our Father in heaven. Our daily sins do not disqualify us from heaven, but it hinders our intimacy with God and diminishes His glory reflecting from our lives.

The washing of the feet of the disciples (John 13) is a picture of this.

'...as we forgive our debtors.' – Another way of saying this would be, 'Forgive me to the same degree or extend that I am willing to forgive others.' Jesus will say a little later that unforgiveness is a great sin and negates your prayers for forgiveness for your own sins. We should not expect to be forgiven, and therefore walk in intimacy with God, if we are unwilling to forgive others.

An unwillingness to forgive others is a sign of our own ignorance of how much we need God's forgiveness, and as Christ-followers, how much we have been forgiven and still need to be forgiven. Jesus' parable of the unforgiving servant is an example of this truth (Matt. 18:21-35).

~~xxxx~~ debtors.

G3781 – one who incurs moral debt.

Scriptures:
John 17:15 - I do not pray
that You should take them
out of the world, but that
You should keep them from
the evil one.

13

And do not lead us into temptation,

G1533 – to bring
into

G3986 -

but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is

G4506 - rescue

G4190 – bad,
morally corrupt.

the kingdom and the power and the glory

G932 – area ruled
by a king.

G1411 - δύναμις
(dynamis) –
supernatural
power

G1391 –
splendor, high
honor.

forever. Amen.

G165 -

Notes:

'Lead us not into temptation...' -
Temptations come for one of two
reasons. The first is to cause us to
tumble into sin. Because God never
tempts someone to sin, these come
from the enemy, the world, or our
own flesh. The second is to test our
faith. God may send a temptation
our way to test our faith, to prove
our faith, not to Him, but to us.

Jesus was tempted, so, we should
expect to be tempted.

This is a confession of our weakness
and need for God's constant care
and protection from the devil, the
world, and our flesh.

'...deliver us from the evil one.' This
literally reads '...deliver us from the
evil.' Some translations (NASB, ESV,
KJV) say, '...deliver us from evil.' The
original language includes the article
'the' before evil, which suggests the
NKJV translation might be preferred.
It is interesting to note that the
same phrase 'the evil one' is found
also in John 17:15 and the above
mentioned versions translate it as
'the evil one.'

'deliver' = rescue. – This reminds us
that we are helpless against the evil
that surrounds us. We need God to
rescue us every day and in every
way. Jesus would later pray this for
us all (John 17:15).

'For yours is the ...' – This is a
declaration of praise and recognition
of who God, our Father in heaven is.

Scriptures:

14 "For if you forgive men their trespasses,

G3900 - sin

Notes:

God will not give to us what we are unwilling to give to others. If you pray while harboring bitterness and unforgiveness toward another, you are wasting your time praying. Stop, forgive that person, and then pray. If you are struggling to forgive, but are willing, ask God to help you.

your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

Scriptures:

15 But if you do not forgive men their

Notes:

trespasses, neither will your Father forgive

your trespasses.

Scriptures:

16 “Moreover, when you fast, do not be like

G3522 - Go
without food.

Notes:

Fasting is the occasional abstinence from food or other things for the purpose of seeking God more deeply.

There is no direct command in the New Testament for Christ-followers to fast. It seems to be left up to the discretion of individual believers. Christ's point is that if you are going to do it, do it right. Jesus is saying that it is a private thing, you are fasting to God, not to man.

the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For

G4659 - sad, to
look somber,
appear downcast
or gloomy.

they disfigure their faces that they may

appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say

to you, they have their reward.

Scriptures:

17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head

Notes:

and wash your face,

Scriptures:

18 so that you do not appear to men to be

Notes:

It is not possible to do all our piety in secret. For example, it would be hard to fast so that your spouse was unaware of it. The question is, 'Who is your desired audience?' If it is other people, your reward comes from them. If it is God and other people, your reward will come from people. But, if your desired audience is God alone, He will reward you, even if for the sake of His glory you need to do those things where others can see it.

fasting, but to your Father who [△]is in the secret

[△]place; and your Father who [△]sees in secret will

reward you openly.

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