

THE KING'S SERMON
On Earth As It Is Heaven
The King's People Delight in the Sight of God
Matthew 6:5-8, 16-18

Big Idea: The King's People Delight in the Sight of God

Delight in Christ is fueled by the spiritual disciplines.

The spiritual disciplines are not by themselves the marks of Christlikeness as much as they are the means to it.

Spiritual disciplines are the God-ordained means by which we bring ourselves before God, experience Him, and are changed into Christlikeness.

Donald S. Whitney

Jesus teaches that every aspect of a believer's conduct must be characterized by a righteousness that surpasses mere appearance.

1. Greater righteousness in relation to the Law (5:21-48).
2. Greater righteousness in relation to personal devotion (6:1-21).
3. Greater righteousness in relation to daily life in the world (6:19-7:11).

1. Greater righteousness in relation to the Law (5:21-48).

Jesus explains that the scribes and Pharisees are not interpreting the law correctly.

2. Greater righteousness in relation to personal devotion (6:1-21).

Jesus exposes that the scribes and Pharisees are not practicing their spiritual disciplines with sincerity.

▪ **Jesus warns against practicing spiritual disciplines with wrong motives (6:1)**

1 "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.

> **What is the danger of practicing spiritual disciplines with wrong motives?**

- It corrupts our hearts.

Matthew 15:7-9

7 You hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said:

8 " 'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; 9 in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' "

Matthew 23:27-28

27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. 28 So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

- A wrong motive makes impossible any God-given reward.

▪ **Jesus reveals that the moral quality of a deed is determined by the motive that gives it birth.**

"The love of honor is the deadly bane (ruin) of true piety. Other vices bring forth evil works but this brings forth good works in an evil way." **Augustine**

> **How do you practice spiritual disciplines with pure motives?**

- Know that God has given you a conscience that is enlightened by the Word and quickened by the Spirit to examine your motives (Prov. 20:27; Heb. 4:12-12).

Proverbs 20:27 The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD, searching all his innermost parts.

- Remember God searches the heart and test the mind (Jeremiah 17:10; Ps. 139:1, 23-24).

Jer. 17:10 "I the LORD search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds."

- Aim to glorify God in everything you do (1 Cor. 10:31; Ps. 115:1).

1 Corinthians 10:31 So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

- **Jesus gives three examples of spiritual disciplines that meet the standards of Jesus' greater, heart-level righteousness.**

(1) **Christians give (1:2-4)**

(2) **Christians pray (1:5-8)**

- **What is prayer?** Prayer is communion with God.

Prayer is the open admission that without Christ we can do nothing. Prayer is an expression of faith in God's power, fueled by a desire for more of him.

John Piper

- **When is praying not praying (v. 5)?**

5 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.

> **Examine your motives:**

- Do you pray more frequently and more fervently when alone with God than you do in public?

- Do you love the secret place of prayer?

- Is your public praying simply the overflow of your private praying?

- **How and why are we to pray (v. 6)?**

6 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.

The King's People Delight in the Sight of God

- Liberates us from the perils of man's praise

- Liberates us to the promise of God's reward.

(3) **Christians fast (6:16-18).**

- **What is fasting?** Fasting is feasting on God.

"Fasting is not primarily about not eating. In fact, fasting is all about eating, of a sort. Fasting is feasting on God." **Sam Storms**

- **When is fasting not fasting (v. 16; Isaiah 58:1-7)?**

16 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.

- **How and why are we to fast (vv. 17-18)?**

17 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 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.

Why God's people fast:

- Inward: To express repentance (Neh. 9:1-2)

- Outward: To grieve hard providences (Esther 4:1-3)

- Forward: To seek God's favor (2 Chron. 20:1-12, Neh. 1:11, Acts 13:2)

David Mathis