

## Ulterior Motives

February 15, 2026

- Matthew 6:1-6
  - Don't do your good deeds to be admired by others
  - You will lose your reward from your Father in Heaven
  - Giving to be seen – that's your reward
  - Do it in private – Father will reward you
- Matthew 23:5–7 - The teachers of religious law and the Pharisees
  - Everything they do is for show
  - Seeking places of honor
  - Love respectful greetings in public
- Luke 14:8–10 ...take the lowest place at the foot of the table.
- John 12:43 Jews that believed in Jesus - wouldn't admit it
  - For they loved human praise more than the praise of God.
- Proverbs 29:25 Fearing people is a dangerous trap, but trusting the Lord means safety.

## Evaluation

- Self-Evaluation
  - 1 Corinthians 2:11 (NLT) — 11 No one can know a person's thoughts except that person's own spirit,...
  - Jeremiah 17:9 (NLT) — 9 "The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?"
- God's Evaluation
  - Psalm 139:23–24 (NLT) — 23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; ... 24 Point out anything in me that offends you ...
- Reconcile a bit of a tension
- Matthew 5:16 (NLT) — 16 In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.
  - Deflect
  - Thank you. Praise the Lord
- 1 Peter 3:16 ...Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ.
- Proverbs 22:1 Choose a good reputation over great riches; ....

- Colossians 3:23–24 ...Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ.

## The Highest Motive

- Rewards – a good motive
- Matthew 22:36–40 ...the most important commandment
  - love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.'
  - 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'
  - The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."

## Genuine Love

- Romans 12:9–11 (NLT) — 9 Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them.
  - Romans 12:10 (NASB95) give preference to one another in honor;
- 1 Corinthians 13:1–3.
  - Clanging cymbal
  - Would be nothing
  - Would gain nothing
- 2 Corinthians 5:14–15
  - Christ's love controls us.
  - no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them.

## Selfish Ambitions vs. Spiritual Aspirations

- Motives for Selfish Ambition
  - Need for Validation
  - Insecurity
  - Envy
  - Fear – of insignificance
- Motive for Spiritual Aspirations
  - Inward persistent desire for spiritual growth
  - Desire for divine union
  - Not passive, it requires active commitment
- Colossians 3:16–17 ... And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.