

10-16-2022, COTR Texarkana

Title: Jesus said, WHAT? Pt-5

Purpose: Provoke people to help the poor and needy and fast regularly.

Truth for Today:

Text: Matthew 6:1-4, 6:16-18

Topic: Giving, Poor, Fasting, Hypocrisy, Reward

Series Title: Jesus said, WHAT?

Series purpose: Provoke people to apply the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount to everyday life.

Title Jesus said, WHAT? Pt-5

I. Introduction

- A. Review series: Jesus said, WHAT? It's about applying the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount to everyday life. It is perhaps the greatest sermon ever preached and relevant to us today.
- B. Last week Jesus taught us to (1) keep our word, (2) resist the desire for revenge and (3) love our enemies.
- C. Today's 'Truth for Today': Jesus wants His followers to help the poor and needy and embrace the spiritual discipline of regular fasting.
- D. Title: Jesus said, WHAT? Pt-5

II. Life application #1, Jesus helped the poor and needy, so should we.

- A. Context: 6 areas, you've heard it said by the religious teachers, but I say to you'. Now Jesus talks about the religious hypocrisy of the pharisees and the proper way to give to the poor, pray, and fast.
- B. [Mt. 6:1-4 (NLT) "Watch out! **Don't do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward** from your Father in heaven.]
 - 1. In Mt. 5:16, Jesus said to let our light shine so all people will see our good deeds. What's the difference? The heart/ motivation of the good deed: To be praised on Facebook or because we love and serve God.
- C. [Vs. 2 **When you give to someone in need, don't do as the hypocrites do—blowing trumpets...to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. 3 But when you give to someone in need, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. 4 Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.**

1. Background: Giving to the poor/ alms, prayer, and fasting, were the three most important expressions of a Jew's religious duties.¹ Jesus rebuked them not for what they did but why they did these religious acts.
 2. Def. Hypocrites Gk.: an actor who played a role¹; a pretender; "those who appear to be one thing but are really the opposite"¹ Hypocrites give to the poor was T "so that people will praise them", "looking for applause", "so that people will say how good they are"¹, "for all the world to notice you", instead of an act of worship or thanks to God. The issue is our motive. Why do we do what we do? The answer determines when and who rewards us.
 3. Giving in secret is the opposite of giving so people will see us. This is not a prohibition of dropping an envelope with your name on it in the usher's bag with people behind you. I believe having our giving recorded to save taxes is good stewardship. The issue is not calling attention to ourselves. Illus tithing envelop
- D. Other Scriptures Jesus said about helping the poor and needy.
1. [Luke 14:12–14 (NLT)... "When you put on a... banquet,"... "don't invite your friends, brothers, relatives, and rich neighbors. For they will invite you back, and that will be your only reward. 13 Instead, **invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind.** 14 Then at the resurrection of the righteous, God will **reward** you for inviting those who could not repay you."]
 2. [Luke 16:19–25 (NLT) "There was a certain **rich** man who was **splendidly clothed**...and who lived each day in **luxury.** 20 At his gate lay a **poor** man named Lazarus...21...longing for **scraps** from the rich man's table...22...the poor man died and was carried by the **angels** to sit beside **Abraham at the heavenly banquet.** The rich man also died and was buried, 23 and he went to the place of the dead (*ESV* *hades*). There, in **torment.**...24 "The rich man shouted, ...Send Lazarus over here to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue. I am in **anguish** in these flames.' 25 "But Abraham said to him, 'Son, remember that during your lifetime **you had everything you wanted, and Lazarus had nothing.** So now he is here being comforted, and you are in anguish.]"
 3. [Matthew 25:31–40 (NLT)...the Son of Man...will sit upon his glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered in his presence...34 "Then the King will say to those on his right...inherit the Kingdom prepared for you...35 For **I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you**

gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. 36 I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.’ 37 “Then these righteous ones will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you...40 “And the King will say...when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’

E. 3 things make it hard to help the poor and needy: (1) We don’t have extra money especially with inflation, Siri 40% behind on bills & 2/3 live paycheck to paycheck. Answer: not how much we give but that we give something to help the poor. (2) Government programs have taken over the role of church; able body people get lazy and won’t work. It’s frustrating. (3) Professional panhandlers deceive us, e.g., signs on the street. I give to the poor through known, proven ministries I can trust.

F. At COTR we use a lot of money you give to help the poor and needy: E.g., Feed kids in Kenya, Haiti, India, Syria, Mexico trip rice/ beans, Benevolence, 2 food pantries at local schools, Bread machine in Syria, \$ and volunteers Flower Acres, diaper drives...

1. Sometimes people go around to church members asking for money. They shouldn’t. Don’t feel obligated to give. Refer them to our staff. We have a benevolence fund. You can also help someone in need thru the church.

III. Life application #2: Jesus said fasting is a spiritual discipline for His followers (Skip ahead; next week learn about prayer)

A. [Matthew 6:16–18 (NLT) “And **when you fast** (“When you go without food for a period of time in order to worship God in a special way.”¹), **don’t make it obvious**, as the **hypocrites** do, for **they try to look miserable and disheveled** (“leave their faces unwashed and their hair uncombed and put ashes on their heads¹”) **so people will admire them for their fasting...that is the only reward** they will ever get. 17 But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. 18 **Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father**, who knows what you do in **private**. And **your Father, who sees everything, will reward you**.

1. Def. fasting: (1) Primarily abstaining from food but sometimes food and water (Jesus 40 days); (2) Partial: Abstain from certain foods (Daniel meat/ wine); (3) Abstain from certain pleasures/ entertainment (King Darius while Daniel was in lion’s den). There are two kinds of fasting, (1) public (2 Chron. 20 Jehosophat) and (2) private (David dying child).

*Biblical fasts are always accompanied by prayer, repentance and seeking God. Fasting's purpose is (1) To set ourselves apart to God and seek Him in a special way, showing remorse for sin if necessary. (2) Call on God in national calamity, (3) Fasting is also a way to humble ourselves, i.e., deny/ crucify our flesh. / Tell ourselves no for self-control! ^{1 or 2} (E.g., If I don't have time to read my Bible, fast TV, internet)

B. Fasting is more than not eating; it is a return to living righteously. [Is. 58:3–11 (NIV) ‘Why have we fasted...and you have not seen it?...**on the day of your fasting, you do as you please** (*NCV you do what pleases yourselves*) **and exploit all your workers.** 4 Your fasting ends in **quarreling and strife**, and in **striking each other** with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. 5 Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for people to humble themselves...(MSG) 6 “This is the kind of fast day I’m after: to **break the chains of injustice, get rid of exploitation in the workplace, free the oppressed, cancel debts.** (NLT) 7 **Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help...Then...** 11 The Lord will guide you continually, giving you water when you are dry and restoring your strength...

IV. Conclusion

A. Response/ Prayer ‘Truth for Today’: Jesus wants His followers to help the poor and needy and embrace the spiritual discipline of regular fasting.

B. Kneel at the altar for a private moment with God/ Souls

V. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

1. Newman, B. M., & Stine, P. C. (1992). [*A handbook on the Gospel of Matthew*](#) (p. 156). United Bible Societies.
2. Barbieri, L. A., Jr. (1985). [Matthew](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 32). Victor Books.
3. Achtemeier, P. J., Harper & Row and Society of Biblical Literature. (1985). In [Harper's Bible dictionary](#) (1st ed., p. 304). Harper & Row.

VI. Supplemental material

A. II, TEV “so that your best friend will not know about it.” A number of commentators believe that Jesus is speaking of a generosity that even one’s

most intimate friend must not know about, and at least one commentator notes that the interpretation as a reference to one's closest friend finds support in a current Arabic proverb. But whether the reference is to one's best friend or to one's self, the focus is on the secrecy of the action. Jesus is here calling upon his followers to disregard self in the giving of gifts for the needy. Giving is to be for the sake of the poor and not for personal satisfaction. In giving, one is not to seek praise from God or from people; a person who truly loves God and others does not think of self.¹

- B. II, *Sound no trumpet before you* is translated nonfiguratively by TE¹V: “*do not make a big show of it.*” This figure of speech is probably not to be taken literally, but as a metaphor for attracting notice. However, it may contain a reference to the practice of blowing trumpets in the Temple at the time of collecting alms for some special need.¹
- C. II, Galatians 2:9–10 (NIV) 9 James, Cephas and John, those esteemed as pillars, ...agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised. 10 All they asked was that we should continue to **remember the poor**, the very thing I had been eager to do all along.
- D. III, Fasting was a third example of Pharisaic “righteousness.” The Pharisees loved to fast so that others would see them and think them spiritual. Fasting emphasized the denial of the flesh, but the Pharisees were glorifying their flesh by drawing attention to themselves.²
- E. III, In all three examples of Pharisaic “righteousness”—almsgiving (vv. 1–4), praying (vv. 5–15), and fasting (vv. 16–18)—Jesus spoke of **hypocrites** (vv. 2, 5, 16), public ostentation (vv. 1–2, 5, 16), receiving **their reward in full** when their actions are done before men (vv. 2, 5, 16), acting **in secret** (vv. 4, 6, 18), and being rewarded by the **Father, who sees** or “knows,” when one's actions are done secretly (vv. 4, 6, 8, 18).²
- F. III, *Dismal* (TE²V “*sad face*”) translates a word used in the New Testament only here and in Luke 24:17. It may be used of one who looks angry, sullen, or sad. In the Septuagint it is used to describe the chief baker and the wine steward of the king (Gen 40:1). A number of translations render it

¹TEV Today's English Version

²TEV Today's English Version

with the meaning “gloomy” (NJ³B, NE⁴B, A⁵T, Mf⁶t, Br⁷c). To *look dismal* can be “to go about looking pitiful (or, sad or, gloomy).” The word *hypocrites* is first used in verse 2 (see comments there). The real point is that the hypocrites are intentionally acting in such a manner as to draw attention to themselves. Translators may say “that is what the hypocrites do” or “that is how the hypocrites show (or, present) themselves.”¹

³NJB New Jerusalem Bible

⁴NEB New English Bible

⁵AT American Translation

⁶Mft Moffatt

⁷Brc Barclay