

## Text Outline                      Matthew 6:1-18

- I.     “Be careful not to practice your righteousness**
- A.     in front of others**
1.     to be seen by them.
  2.     If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.
- B.     <sup>2</sup>“So when you give to the needy,**
1.     do not announce it with trumpets,
    - a)     *as the hypocrites do*
      - (1)     in the synagogues
      - (2)     and on the streets,
    - b)     *to be honored by others.*
  2.     Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.
- C.     <sup>3</sup>But when you give to the needy,**
1.     do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,
  2.     <sup>4</sup>so that your giving may be in secret.
  3.     Then your Father,
    - a)     *who sees what is done in secret,*
    - b)     *will reward you.*
- II.    <sup>5</sup>“And when you pray,**
- A.     do not be like the hypocrites,**
1.     for they love to pray
    - a)     *standing in the synagogues*
    - b)     *and on the street corners*
    - c)     *to be seen by others.*
  2.     Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.
- B.     <sup>6</sup>But when you pray,**
1.     go into your room,
  2.     close the door
  3.     and pray to your Father, who is unseen.
  4.     Then your Father,
    - a)     *who sees what is done in secret,*
    - b)     *will reward you.*
- C.     <sup>7</sup>And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans,**
1.     for they think they will be heard because of their many words.
  2.     <sup>8</sup>Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.
- D.     <sup>9</sup>“This, then, is how you should pray:**
1.     ““Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
  2.     <sup>10</sup>your kingdom come, your will be done,

- a) *on earth*
- b) *as it is in heaven.*
- 3. <sup>11</sup> **Give us today our daily bread.**
- 4. <sup>12</sup> **And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.**
- 5. <sup>13</sup> **And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'**
- 6. <sup>14</sup> **For**
  - a) *if you forgive other people*
    - (1) when they sin against you,
    - (2) your heavenly Father will also forgive you.
  - b) <sup>15</sup> *But if you do not forgive others*
    - (1) their sins,
    - (2) your Father will not forgive your sins.

### III. <sup>16</sup> **“When you fast,**

- A. **do not look somber as the hypocrites do,**
  - 1. **for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting.**
  - 2. **Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.**
- B. <sup>17</sup> **But when you fast,**
  - 1. **put oil on your head**
  - 2. **and wash your face,**
  - 3. <sup>18</sup> **so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting,**
  - 4. **but only to**
    - a) *your Father, who is unseen;*
    - b) *and your Father,*
      - (1) who sees what is done in secret,
      - (2) will reward you.

## Conceptual Outline

**Theme: The focus of a believer's charity and spirituality is to please God.**

### I. Act of charity

**A. Practices of righteousness that are intended to be seen by man will not receive God's reward**

**B. Giving should not be like that of hypocrites who**

- 1. announce their giving everywhere**
- 2. seeking for man's praise**

**C. Giving should**

- 1. not be self-seeking**
- 2. done in secret**
- 3. Then, your Father**
  - a) who sees what is done in secret*
  - b) will reward you*

### II. Prayer

**A. Do not be like the hypocrites**

- 1. they pray in public places to be seen by man**
- 2. Their reward is from man.**

**B. Pray**

- 1. in private**
- 2. focus on your audience, the Father, who is unseen**
- 3. Then, your Father**
  - a) who sees what is done in secret*
  - b) will reward you*

**C. Do not keep babbling like pagans**

- 1. for their theology is distorted: thinking that more words increase the chance of being heard**
- 2. but your Father knows before you ask**

**D. Model prayer**

- 1. Address our Father in heaven & bless His Name**
- 2. acknowledge Him as King and commit to do His will**
- 3. plead for supply of daily needs**
- 4. plead for forgiveness as we forgive others**
- 5. plead for deliverance**
- 6. Reason for forgiving others**

- a) *if you forgive, your Father will forgive you.*
- b) *if you do not forgive, your Father will not forgive you.*

### III. Fasting

#### A. Do not look somber as the hypocrites

1. they disfigure their faces to announce their fasting
2. they have received their reward in full

#### B. When you fast

1. look sharp
2. so that others will not know
3. Your Father
  - a) *who is unseen*
  - b) *but sees the secret of man's heart*
  - c) *will reward you.*

## Questions & Potential Answers:

1. Can you name a few top philanthropists in 2013? How did you learn about their giving? What has their giving done for society, for them, and for you?

*50 Philanthropists Who Have Given Away The Most Money*  
 This story appears in the December 2, 2013 issue of Forbes.

*Philanthropists who make pledges during boom times sometimes renege when markets tank; others pull back based on preconditions such as milestones or matches. The large majority of donors deliver on their word, but many a high-profile, big-money promise dribbles in over time frames that can exceed a decade. And while the rich and famous often give generously to their foundations, those foundations need deploy only 5% of the total each year, shrinking the effect.*

Read Matt 6: 1-18

2. In today's passage, Jesus teaches us 3 important religious practices. What are they?

- Almsgiving
- Prayer
- Fasting

Jesus uses a similar pattern as He presents each of the topic to us. Can you identify the pattern? Why?

- He starts with negative instructions "do not". Then positive, "But when you..." Finally, a promise "Then your Father,"

Before beginning to teach, Jesus makes an assumption about our spiritual devotion. Can you identify what it is?

- He assumes that we practice these devotions. He didn't say, "If you..." but "when you..."

Why does Jesus make this assumption?

- These are basic practices of a genuine follower and ways to build relationship with God.

In a way, Jesus expects His believers to practice them regularly.

3. Let's make a list of contrasting instructions. With each of the devotions, what are the negative and positive instructions?

### Giving

Negative	Positive
do not practice your righteousness in front of others	do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing
do not announce it with trumpets as the hypocrites	do in secret

### Praying

Negative	Positive
do not exaggerate in public like hypocrites	go into your room
	close the door
	pray to your Father, who is unseen

do not keep on babbling like pagans	modeled the Lord's Prayer
-------------------------------------	---------------------------

## Fasting

Negative	Positive
do not look somber as the hypocrites; disfigure their faces to show others	put oil on head
	wash face
	so that it will not be obvious to others
	obvious only to your Father

## 4. What are some of the similar instructions among the three devotions?

- Not to focus on showing others but to do them in private.
- Not motivated by others' praise and admiration or feeling good about oneself
- Focus on God's reward

What are the reasons given for not broadcasting our spiritual devotions?

- Gaining short-term reward from others will cause us to forfeit reward from God.

What's so wrong with the hypocrites' devotions?

- Pretentious. They took what should be done in the Name of God, focus in God, and to please Him as a demonstration of they own competence to satisfy their own ego and boost their social status. The exhibition of religiosity is manipulating God & using His Name in vain.

What kind of reward did the hypocrites receive?

- seen by others - vs 1, 5
- honor by others - v.2
- show others - v.16

Who are the "others"?

- no specific target audience, maybe the general public or anyone

What is the power of the "others"?

- They are very powerful in giving judgment & opinion.
- They can determine our behavior by their judgments.
- They are influential & constitute pressure to us.

Why is doing good in "secret" so important?

- It takes away the temptation to please others.
- It helps us focus on our most important audience, God.

Instead of good, what do we usually expect to hear or seen in a person's secret lives?

- Secret is usually a place for bad and evil. Things that we're ashamed of are done in secret. When we can replace our secret place with good, God reigns in the deepest part of our heart.

What is God's reward for people who obey? What can be the potential effect of finding good in a person's secret life?

- Jesus was not specific about the reward. If giving was done as a response to God's providence, one would assume God will supply even more when He finds one faithful. God will be praised in their lives and the gospel will be furthered. Satan will have no room to boast. If prayer is to seek God's ear, then being in His presence and enjoying His

attention would be the greatest reward. If fasting is for praise, penitence, supplication, it'll be granted. Immediately after this passage, in Mt 7:7, Jesus promised:

<sup>7</sup> *“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.*

- Another reward is freedom from man's judgment. Free to live and serve God.

5. What is the problem with the pagans' prayer?

- Unintelligible repetition. Praying without the heart & mind, unsure if the words would reach god. Mechanical & meaningless.

From the pagans' prayer, can you tell what kind of god they believe in?

- Counts number of words, mechanical, non-relational, unintelligent.

How should Christian prayer be different?

- Genuine
- Relational
- Personal
- Meaningful
- Mindful
- God being the only audience

If God already knows what we need, then why do we still need to pray? What, then, is the purpose of prayer?

- Communication with Him; deepening our relationship with Him
- Verbalizing our needs to Him to learn dependence & reliance
- Affirming that He is worthy of our trust
- Aligning our desires with His will

Read Matt 6: 9-15

6. Next Jesus shows us how to pray. What are some of the key elements of the Lord's prayer?

- Addressing God as Father and hallowing His Name
- Praying for His Kingdom & will to be done
- Praying for our daily needs
- Praying for forgiveness
- Praying for guidance and protection

7. How many times "your Father" & "our Father" appear in this text?

- 10 times

How does this text describe our Father?

- Father in heaven - v.1
- sees in secret - v.4, 6
- unseen - v. 6
- rewards - v. 1, 4, 6, 18
- knows what you need - v. 8
- wills - v. 10
- King - v.10
- gives - v.11

- forgives - vs. 12, 14
- leads - v. 13
- delivers - v. 13
- just - (implied v. 14)
- personal - (implied in "your" & "our")

Why is it important to address our Father and hallow His Name?

- When we address Him and invoke His Name, we remember who He is, His character, and who we are in relationship with Him. It'll remind us to focus on Him.
- We'll know that He loves and will give us the best.
- We're to submit to Him.
- We're to lift up His Name in our lives & the way we live.

8. Next, we are to pray for His kingdom to come and His will to be done. What does it mean?

- He is King of the universe. When we acknowledge Him as King of the universe, we are also reminded to further His Kingdom on earth by proclaiming the gospel. Individually, He is King when we submit to His will.
- We acknowledge that His will is best and that we're committed to seeing His will be accomplished in our lives and in the world. Accomplishing His will is our purpose for living.

Why is it important?

- It sets our hearts in the right place to bring our needs to Him and to listen to His answer and instruction for us.

9. Why do we need to pray for our daily bread today? What if we already have plenty, do we still need to pray?

- It acknowledges our dependence and reliance on Him.
- It helps us to thank Him for His providence so that we do not take pride in ourselves & lose sight of Him.

10. Why is praying for forgiveness important?

- It puts us in the right place with God. It sets our heart pure & tender. With sin in the way, we can never communicate with God.

What debt do you owe God?

- Debt of sin, shame & guilt
- Debt of love to His redemption
- Debt of our lives. The Triune God is our Creator, Savior, and Sustainer.

Why does Jesus put the condition of forgiving others as a pre-requisite to being forgiven of our sins?

- When we can forgive others, it demonstrates how we understand the magnitude of our debt to Him and the grace of His forgiveness. When we model after God's forgiveness, we are truly His follower. It proves our faith genuine.

Is this a requirement for salvation? Why or why not?

- No. Salvation is by grace through faith. It's the work of Christ. As noted, however, forgiveness of others shows our genuine repentance.

11. What makes it hard for you to forgive others? Does forgiving the person mean that you'll have to trust the person again?

12. The last element involves praying for God's guidance & protection from temptation & the evil one. When we pray this way, what are some of the things we acknowledge?

- The presence of temptation & evil in our lives is real.
- Our inability to face them by ourselves
- Our total reliance on God & His Strength

How might this pray affect the choices we make?

- If we're aware of our needs, then we have to do everything we can to guard against evil and invoke God's Name and strength to protect us.

13. What is an area of your spiritual devotion that you'd like to ask God to help you change?

**Questions:**

1. Can you name a few top philanthropists in 2013? How did you learn about their giving? What has their giving done for society, for them, and for you?

**Read Matt 6: 1-18**

2. In today's passage, Jesus teaches us 3 important religious devotions. What are they? Jesus uses a similar pattern as He presents each of the topic to us. Can you identify the pattern? Before beginning to teach, Jesus made an assumption about our spiritual devotion. Can you identify what it is? Why does Jesus make this assumption?
3. Let's make a list of contrasting instructions. With each of the devotions, what are the negative and positive instructions?

Giving

Negative	Positive

Praying

Negative	Positive

Fasting

Negative	Positive

What are some of the similar instructions among the three devotions? What are the reasons given for not broadcasting our spiritual devotions? What's so wrong with the hypocrites' devotions? What kind of reward did the hypocrites receive? Who are the "others"? What is the power of the "others"? Why is doing good in "secret" so important? Instead of good, what do we usually expect to hear or seen in a person's secret lives? What is God's reward for His people? What can be potential effect of finding good in a person's secret life?

4. What is the problem with the pagans' prayer? From the pagans' prayer, can you tell what kind of god they believe in? How should Christian prayer be different? If God already knows what we need, then why do we still need to pray? What, then, is the purpose of prayer?

**Read Matt 6: 9-15**

5. Next Jesus shows us how to pray. What are some of the key elements of the Lord's prayer?
6. How many times "your Father" & "our Father" appear in this text? How does this text describe our Father? Why is it important to address our Father and hallow His Name?
7. Next, we are to pray for His kingdom to come and His will to be done. What does it mean? Why is it important?

8. Why do we need to pray for our daily bread today? What if we already have plenty, do we still need to pray?
9. Why is praying for forgiveness important? What debt do you owe God? Why does Jesus put the condition of forgiving others as a pre-requisite to being forgiven of our sins? Is this a requirement for salvation? Why or why not?
10. What makes it hard for you to forgive other? Does forgiving the person mean that you'll have to trust the person again?
11. The last element involves praying for God's guidance & protection from temptation & the evil one. When we pray this way, what are some of the things we acknowledge? How might this pray affect the choices we make?
12. What is an area of your spiritual devotion that you'd like to ask God to help you change?