

## 108. Sermon on the Mount, Don't Be A Hypocrite! (Matthew 6:1-18)

Prayer: Our Father in heaven, You encourage us to pray, and You promise to see and hear our prayers and You will answer. Please teach us now how to pray. Teach us how to live with all our words, actions, and thoughts focused on You. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

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Matthew 6:1-4 Jesus said, "Be careful! Don't do your righteous actions in front of people. Don't try to make them notice you. If you do that, you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you give to poor people, don't announce with a trumpet. Hypocrites do that in the Jewish churches and on the street. Why? They want people to honor them. They already have all their reward. But when you give to poor people, keep it secret. When your right hand gives something, don't tell your left hand what you are doing. Your Father in heaven sees your secret actions, and He will reward you."

- When we do good deeds, who should we do them for? (There are several choices – ourselves, the people we help, God, our community, maybe more.)
- If you do good deeds to get people's attention, what is your reward? If you do good deeds for God, what is your reward?

Matthew 6:5-8. Jesus said, "When you pray, don't pray the same as the hypocrites. They love to stand in church and on the street corners and pray. They want many people to see them. They already have all their reward. But when you pray, go in your private room in your house. Then shut the door and pray to your Father in secret. Your Father sees you praying in secret, and He will reward you. When you pray, don't say a lot of words without meaning. The non-Jews pray like that. They think God hears them because they talk so much. Don't pray like that. Even before you ask, your Father already knows your needs."

- Where do hypocrites like to pray? Why do they pray in those places?
- Where does Jesus say we should pray? Does that mean we can't pray together in church?
- What kind of prayer does God hear best, and what kind will He answer first? A prayer with fancy words, or a prayer with lots of words that goes on and on, or a short simple prayer without anything fancy?

- Jesus said before we pray, God already knows our needs. If He already knows, why does He want us to pray?

Matthew 6:9-15. Jesus said, “This is how you should pray. ‘Our Father in heaven, holy is Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will happen on earth the same as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, the same as we forgave people who sinned against us. Don’t lead us into temptation, but save us from evil. Because the kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours forever. Amen.’ If you forgive someone who sins, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you don’t forgive, then your Father will not forgive your sins.”

- Jesus here gives the Lord’s Prayer. Name 4 things we ask in this prayer.
- Does this prayer ask for everything we need?
- Jesus emphasizes one part of the prayer because it is so important. What is the most important part of the prayer for us?
- Jesus said if you don’t forgive, God will not forgive you. Is He serious? What does that mean we should do in our lives? How should we treat other people?

Matthew 6:16-18 Jesus said, “When you don’t eat for a short time (called a ‘fast’), don’t look sad. Hypocrites look sad and don’t take care of themselves. Why? They want people to know they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they already have their full reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face. Then people won’t know you are fasting. But your Father sees your secret actions, and He will reward you.”

- People sometimes will eat nothing for a short time so they can study God’s word and pray. The goal is to grow closer to God. The hypocrite’s goal is what?
- If you fast privately, how do you think God rewards you?
- When we give help or pray or fast, why do we do those things? Are we only trying to get a reward? Or is there another reason? (Remember the first question on page 1.)