



Matthew 6:1-8, 16-18

# THE HYPOCRISY OF RELIGION

*There is no reward from God for those who seek it from men. ...Let me put it like this very bluntly. If I am concerned as I preach this gospel as to what people think of my preaching, well that is all that I will get out of it, and nothing from God. It is an absolute. If you are seeking a reward from men you will get it, but that is all you will get. Work through your religious life, think of all the good you have done in the past in the light of that pronouncement. How much remains to come to you from God? It is a terrifying thought.*

—D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

## The Purpose of the Sermon on the Mount:

- To characterize the true nature of a kingdom citizen.
- To confront people with the perfect righteousness of God.
- To call people to a life submitted to Jesus, the King.

Jesus began His ministry preaching: *Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!* (4:17). Many people of Jesus' day would have thought that they automatically qualified for the kingdom by being good religious Jews. The Sermon on the Mount confronts this view. First, Jesus describes the true kingdom citizen (5:3-16) then He shows the true righteousness required by God in the Law (5:17-48).

In 6:1, Jesus makes a transition. Not only do people tend to lower God's righteousness to a reachable level but they also tend to raise their own sense of righteousness by their good, religious deeds. Jesus' point in this section is simple:

\_\_\_\_\_ Actions + \_\_\_\_\_ Motives = \_\_\_\_\_

## HOW NOT TO GIVE (6:2-4)



*So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.*

The Hypocrite's Giving: \_\_\_\_\_

The Disciple's Giving: \_\_\_\_\_

**The Father's Reward:** God responds to secret giving because He alone sees the secret \_\_\_\_\_ of the heart (cf. 1 Sam. 16:7; 2 Chron. 16:9; Psalm 51:6; 139:1-6; 1 Cor. 4:1-5; Hebrews 4:12-13).

**Hypocrite.** Greek, *hupokrites*, "an actor on the stage; one who plays the part of another person, often by wearing a mask."

*There are three different kinds of hypocrisy. In one the hypocrite feigns goodness but is actually evil and knows he is being deceptive. In another the hypocrite is carried away by his own acting and deceives himself...but does not fool most onlookers. A third kind of hypocrite deceives himself into thinking he is acting for the best interests of God and man and also deceives onlookers.*

—D. A. Carson

*We are all tempted to outwardness in religion.* —F. B. Meyer

*To the Jew there were three cardinal works of the religious life, three great pillars on which the good life was based—alms-giving, prayer, and fasting.*

—William Barclay

*Who you are in public will never blind God to who you are in private.* —John Blanchard

*When a man gives, the world asks, "How much did he give?" Christ asks, "How did he give?"*

—Andrew Murray

## HOW NOT TO PRAY (6:5-8)



Prayer was a regular part of Jewish devotion. Three times a day were set aside specifically for prayer (9am, 12noon, 3pm). At those times, the devout Jew was to stop all activity and to pray.

### The Hypocrite's Praying:

- \_\_\_\_\_ (6:5)

- \_\_\_\_\_ (6:7)

### The Disciple's Praying:

- \_\_\_\_\_ (6:6)

- \_\_\_\_\_ (6:9-13)

**The Father's Reward:** Our Father, who dwells in the secret, looks beyond our words and hears the secret prayers of our heart. He sees us better than we see ourselves and He knows our needs before we even ask Him (cf. Psalm 139:23-24; Romans 8:26-27).

## HOW NOT TO FAST (6:16-18)



In the OT, the Jews were only commanded to fast on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 23:27). However, many examples of fasting could be found in the OT (cf. 2 Sam. 12:16; 2 Chron. 20:3; Esther 4:16; Dan. 9:3). The Pharisees made it a practice to fast twice a week (Luke 18:12).

**The Hypocrite's Fasting:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The Disciple's Fasting:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The Father's Reward:** God sees the passion of our hearts not the piety of our faces. Fasting that is not motivated by a desire to know God more and to seek His direction can actually be detrimental to one's faith (cf. Is. 58:1-12; Col. 2:20-23; 2 Tim. 4:1-3).

*The Spirit-led disciple shines the spotlight on Christ not on himself, quietly producing the fruit of the Spirit for the glory of God alone.*

**Vain repetitions.** Greek, *battalogo*, lit., "to speak batta" Thus, "to babble; to utter meaningless or unintelligible sounds."

*Counting beads and reckoning time occupied in devotion are both idle things. Christians' prayers are measured by weight and not by length. Many of the most prevailing prayers have been as short as they are strong.*

—Charles H. Spurgeon

*Some men's prayers need to be cut short at both ends and set on fire in the middle.* —D. L. Moody

*When you pray, it is better to have heart without words than words without heart.* —John Bunyan

**Sad face.** Greek, *skuthropos*, "to look sad, downcast, grim-faced."

*People who are consumed with concern before God do not stop to take a lunch break.*

—John MacArthur, Jr.

*You know, Lord,  
How I serve You  
With great emotional fervor  
In the limelight.  
You know how eagerly  
I speak for You  
At a women's club...  
You know my genuine enthusiasm  
At a Bible study.  
But how would I react,  
I wonder,  
If You pointed to a basin of water  
And asked me to wash  
The calloused feet  
Of a bent and wrinkled old woman  
Day after day,  
Month after month,  
In a room where nobody saw  
And nobody knew.*

—Ruth Harms Calkin