

Matthew 6:1

**This morning, we begin Matthew 6. In (V1-18) the Lord teaches us HOW to DO three (3) things as children of God, and how to NOT DO those same three (3) things.**

FIRST: Doing alms, (acts of charity, or kindness); or you might say, “doing righteousness”; SECOND: Prayer; how do you pray, when you pray, and THIRD: Fasting or afflicting yourself for the sake of communion with God.

These three (3) things are to be done in secret; concealed; meaning, when you do them, don’t call attention to yourself.

Don’t forget what the Lord Jesus said in *Matthew 5:20; (Quote)*. “The righteousness” of the scribes and Pharisees was a “surface” righteousness, a cover or mask, and not a true representation of what was in their hearts.

They covered their wickedness and corrupt hearts with a pretended, external piety. They loved and sought-after praises from men!

*That’s a dangerous warning sign to every one of us in regard to our Christianity.*

The Lord Jesus exposed their hypocrisy as we learned in (C5); for they had corrupted the law of Moses (leavened it with their own wicked opinions) and taught the people to do so as well.

**Jesus taught His disciples, and the multitudes that the nature of true righteousness was that obedience to God was to be from the heart and not just in the restraining of outward sins.**

The outward act of sin is the outward manifestation of what had previously originated in the heart. You may never actually commit the sin that you thought about in your heart, but if you entertained it and embraced it in your heart and mind, in the eyes of God, you committed the sin. And so, the thought of sin, is sin. *Proverbs 24:9, Mark 7:21-23, Romans 8:7-8*

As we begin (C6), the Lord Jesus continued to expose the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees in how they called attention to themselves, openly displaying their pretended piety before the eyes of the people of Israel.

*. And so, the Lord Jesus taught the people that what they saw in the scribes and Pharisees was NOT of God, and not a representation of true righteousness.*

**FIRST: Let’s deal with a seeming contradiction: Matthew 5:14-16**

But here in our text: (V1) the Lord says, “do not (do) your alms before men, to be seen of them”; (V3), when you do (do) alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth”; (V4), thine alms must in secret; BETWEEN you and your Heavenly Father.

*How do we reconcile what the Lord said in 5:14-16 with what we have here in our text?*

The key to understanding this is found in the negative command of Matthew 6:1: The motive of your heart must NOT be I am doing this “before the eyes of men, to be seen of them”; we are NOT to do alms or good deeds for the praises of men, but for the glory of God, and to magnify Him.

Therefore, do not sound a trumpet or call a press conference to highlight yourself. (Example of the rich)

In (C6), Jesus clearly exposed the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees, and their insatiable desire to be seen/praised by men. This is what Paul, in his epistles, called “Eye Service”. This is two Greek words literally meaning (Sight-Works or Eye-Bondage).

The Bottom line: You are to let your light so shine before men, but you are to do it in such a way that God would receive the glory; you are NOT to do acts of righteousness LOUDLY, so that you will be seen by others, to receive praise from them. *Ephesians 6:5-8, Colossians 3:22-24*

### **Matthew 6:1**

So now we should understand HOW we are to do alms or righteous deeds; not to receive praise from men, but to honor and glorify God, and in such a way in which, God gets the glory. Humbly and Quietly!

*(V2): “Do not sound a trumpet before thee as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may have glory of men”*

What is a hypocrite? An actor under an assumed character, a pretender or dissembler. A dissembler professes to be what they in reality are not.

The Lord had already exposed the hypocrisy and faulty self-righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees in that they had no heart for the commandments of God (C5), now He is exposing how they put their religious hypocrisy on display before the people of Israel.

*Romans 12:8: “He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity”; or as one who is free from pretense and hypocrisy, and not self-seeking.*

### **Let us move on to the rewards spoken of by our Lord:**

There are two (2) rewards indicated/desired in our text, one reward is the praises of men/women, (it is the hypocrite’s reward), the other reward is given by God our Heavenly Father.

*Which reward are you seeking? Or let me say it like this; which reward are you receiving?*

(V1-2): If you do your good deeds and acts of charity to be seen/praised by men; if you sound a trumpet and make sure everyone sees you doing your good deeds and acts of kindness, you ARE being rewarded, but NOT FROM your Heavenly Father. This requires introspection.

It is written of the Pharisees:

*John 12:43: “For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God”*

If you are seeking to be rewarded/recognized by men, you can expect no reward from your Father in heaven.

*“Verily, I say unto you, THEY HAVE THEIR REWARD”*

Think about it from the preacher’s perspective; if I am preaching to be complimented, or if I am worried about what everyone will think about the preaching of God’s Word, then I am not preaching for the glory of God but for the praise of men!

But when you do (do) alms deeds and acts of kindness (do them in secret, quietly), to be seen by your heavenly Father. Don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.

**The motive of our hearts should always be that God would be honored and glorified in all that we do in acts of righteousness and kindness toward others.**

We ALL know what the hypocrite looks like, don’t we? Who call attention to themselves when they’re about to do something good for someone else? Matthew 23:5-8, 14, 28

We all have great need to heed and take to heart the words of our Lord to:

*“Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them”*

Don’t sound a trumpet or make it obvious to others that you’re about to do something good. Don’t advertise yourself!

In fact, don’t advertise it to yourself.

*Let NOT your left hand know what your right hand is doing.*

Do it in secret and for the honor and glory of God. YES, conceal it (EVEN) from yourself, because “yourself” is the problem.

*Philippians 2:3, Galatians 5:25-26, Matthew 25:31-40*