

Episode #7-25 Matthew 6 Part 1-Not Like the Hypocrites

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. The Lord was giving His great teaching session to His disciples commonly called the “Sermon on the Mount.” He spoke of those who are blessed in the kingdom of the heavens. The disciples are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. The Lord does not abolish the law, but fulfills it. Then, the Lord compared His teaching with what was said of old in the Scriptures.

III. Motivation for Good Deeds.

- A. Matthew 6:1. Charitable deeds = righteous acts, pities, mercies. We may call them religious externalities. *The Companion Bible*: “All the critical texts read “righteousness” referring to all the subjects that follow. But this is conjecture, because “alms” is the first subject (v.2). *DikaiosunE*, “righteousness,” was subsequently substituted for *eleEmosunE*, “alms.” This is about being seen as the motivation, for others’ admiration. It is not a rule that you must do your acts in secret or in private. Reward = *misthos*, third time in Matthew (5:12, 46).
- B. Verse 2. As crazy as it seems, some of the religious elite would actually sound a trumpet to draw attention to their “good deeds”! For these, the glory of people is all they will ever get. Have = received, Bullinger says this is used for formal receipts.
- C. Verse 3. There is no word for “hand” here, “let not your left be knowing what your right is doing.”
- D. Verse 4. “Secret” means hidden or concealed; “openly” is in the well-lit places.

IV. How to Pray.

- A. Verse 5. “Love” here means fond or affectionate. The street corners would be the crossroads. Again the recognition of men will be all the reward they will ever get.
- B. Verse 6. You = singular, each individual prayer. “Secret” here is the hidden place; Bullinger says a “storage-place.” Then there will be a future reward!
- C. Verse 7. Vain repetitions are stammering utterances or repeated words. The “heathen” are the men of the nations. They would repeat a request, like “bread, bread, bread, bread” or “money, money, money, money” and think they would be heard and receive it because of their many words.
- D. Verse 8. The idea was to get the idea of what you want through the gods’ thick heads. But this is just an insult to the living God, Who knows what is necessary for you before you ask. This does not mean that you don’t need to ask, but that you shouldn’t treat God like He is stupid.
- E. Verse 9. This is often called the “Lord’s Prayer,” but really He was teaching His disciples to pray like this, so really it was to be the “Disciples’ Prayer.” The Lord’s Own prayer is recorded in John 17. Many will go to the Bible in order to find works to do and prayers to pray. This prayer is one that people repeat constantly. It becomes just one of the vain repetitions He just talked about.

V. Conclusion: Charitable deeds should not be done just to impress other people, but should be done quietly or even secretly, so the Father Who sees all secret things will later reward you openly. Prayer should not be done in public places to impress others, but in a secret place like a storage room, so the Father Who sees all secret things will see and reward you openly. In the “Lord’s prayer,” the Lord was really teaching His disciples how to pray, not praying Himself.

(We have Him pray on His Own behalf in John 17.) Let us all learn to look to God for our ultimate reward, and not the admiration and appreciation of other people!