

# (Through the Bible) Matthew 6

by Chuck Smith

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*The Sermon on the Mount is a call to the disciples of Jesus Christ to live a life of righteousness, motivated by love and faith, and to seek rewards from God, not from men.*

**Duration:** 1:37:09

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:3-10, Matthew 5:16, Matthew 6:1-13, Matthew 6:19-21, Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Eternal Rewards", "Kingdom Living"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker compares the fleeting glory of worldly rewards to the short-lived beauty of fireworks. He emphasizes that seeking the praise and admiration of others is a shallow and temporary reward. Instead, he encourages listeners to focus on the eternal glory of God's kingdom. The speaker references the Bible, specifically Matthew 6:2, where Jesus warns against performing acts of righteousness for the purpose of receiving praise from others. He concludes by highlighting the enduring beauty and significance of the stars in the sky, symbolizing the eternal rewards that come from serving God faithfully.

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## Transcript

Tonight, let's take a look at Matthew chapter 6. We are in the section of the book of Matthew that is commonly called the Sermon on the Mount because it was delivered to the disciples of Jesus on the mountainside there above the Sea of Galilee. Seeing the multitudes, he went into a mountain and when he was set, his disciples came unto him and he opened his mouth and taught them saying. So the first thing we note is that this Sermon on the Mount is not for general world consumption.

It is not a system of laws and all that the world should inaugurate or can inaugurate. The Sermon on the Mount is to the disciples of Jesus Christ and it is only those who have been described in the first part of the Sermon that can really put these things into practice and that only through the power of the Holy Spirit. And so there is first of all a description of the person of which Jesus is speaking and that description comes in the form of the Beatitudes.

As Jesus describes the person to whom the Sermon is applicable, blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are they that mourn, blessed are the meek, blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, blessed are the merciful, blessed are the pure in heart, blessed are the peacemakers. These are the children of God. These are the disciples of Jesus Christ.

These are the characteristics of the disciples of Jesus Christ. And then Jesus tells them what the reaction of the world will be towards them and that is of persecution, not understanding them, reviling them, saying all manner of evil against them falsely. But their response to the world's reviling is to be rejoicing and to be exceedingly glad.

Then he tells them the effect that they are to have upon the earth. Ye are the salt or the preserving influence in a corrupting society. You are the light in the darkness.

You are the light of the world. You are the salt of the earth. And then Jesus gets into an area that surely was mind-boggling to each of the disciples as he begins to talk to them concerning the law and its relationship to the believer.

And he declares to them that he did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill the law. But then that mind-boggling statement when Jesus said to his disciples, except your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and the Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven. The scribes and the Pharisees spent their entire life trying to keep every little part of the law.

And so to have Jesus make this kind of a statement immediately, the first reaction I could be would just be that of giving up. Well, that's it. I've had it.

There's no sense trying to go any further. There's no way I can be more righteous than those scribes and Pharisees. And then Jesus went on to explain what he meant.

For he began to give them five illustrations of the law as it was being taught and practiced by the scribes and the Pharisees. And he contrasted that with the law as it was intended when it was first given by God. And the basic difference between the way the law was being practiced and taught by the Pharisees and the way the law was intended by God in each case was that the Pharisees were teaching and practicing the law in a strict outward observance.

They were keeping the law from an outward aspect, but the way the law was intended was spiritual. And not understanding the law to be spiritual and governing my spirit, my attitude, they developed a whole wrong reaction to the law. As they looked at the law and their outward fulfillment of the requirements of the law, they felt very self-satisfied, very self-righteous, and very proud and judgmental against all other men.

Jesus aptly described the attitude of the Pharisee when he said the Pharisee went into the temple to pray and he said, Oh God, I thank you that I'm not like other men. I'm not an extortioner. I'm not a blasphemer.

But I pay my tithes and I do this and I do that. And he is perfectly describing the attitude that the Pharisee had as far as the law was concerned, a very smug, self-righteous attitude. But the law was not given by God to make men smug and self-righteous.

The law was given by God to reveal to man the exceeding sinfulness of sin and to make the whole world guilty before God. So their interpreting of the law was totally wrong. And it was creating a completely wrong reaction on their part to the law, rather than to make them feel guilty sinners before God and cry out, Oh God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Because of the way they interpreted it, they were able to fulfill the law. But the law being spiritual, though they may have fulfilled the outer or outward aspects, yet the spiritual aspects they had totally disobeyed. So in the contrast that Jesus is giving, the way the law was being taught, you'd heard that it hath been

said, thou shalt not kill.

And whosoever kills is in danger of judgment. But I say to you, whosoever hates his brother. You see, it's the hatred from which murder comes.

And you can be guilty of the law, thou shalt not murder if you have hatred in your heart against your brother. If you consider your brother a worthless fellow, you've destroyed him in your own mind. He's worth nothing.

You know, well, you've in your mind violated the law, thou shalt not murder. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Well, Jesus said, look, that isn't just the physical act.

If you're looking at a woman and you desire her, then you've committed adultery already in your heart. The law was intended to make us guilty before God. And as Paul the Apostle said, you know, there was a time when he thought that as far as the law was concerned, he was perfect.

He wrote to the Philippians and he said, it's concerning the righteousness, which is of the law. Man, I had it. I had it made.

But writing to the Romans, he said, I did not know that to desire or to covet was wrong, except the law said thou shalt not covet. So when I came to the realization that the law was governing the desires, hey, sin revived and I died. In other words, it killed me.

It condemned me to death. I was guilty. Now he thought he wasn't guilty for so long.

But when he realized that the law was spiritual and I am carnal, hey, I have failed. And that's basically what Jesus is showing is that the law is spiritual and thus man cannot and has not fulfilled the law of God. And thus your righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees.

If you're going to enter the kingdom of heaven, but how can your righteousness exceed the scribes and the Pharisees? Well, there's was a righteousness of works. And if you are trying to achieve a righteousness by works, there's no way you're going to exceed them. They've outworked you a long time ago.

But God has established another basis for righteousness, and that is the righteousness that God imparts or God accounts to a man by that man's faith in the finished work of God. By a man's faith in Jesus Christ, God accounts his faith for righteousness. And Paul said, I gladly threw over that righteousness that I once had, which was of the law.

Those things which were gained to me under the law, I counted loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ for whom I suffered the loss of all things and to count them, but refuse that I may know him and to be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness, which is of Christ through faith. So this new relationship with God, righteous by the faith and by believing in Jesus Christ and God having imparted to me, then that are God accounting to me righteousness. And thereby my righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees, because God has imparted to me the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Exceeding that of the scribes and Pharisees, and there in is my only hope of entering into the kingdom of heaven, my faith in God's finished work through Jesus Christ in achieving for me that righteous standing

before God. Now we get into chapter six and here Jesus, first of all, enunciates a principle and as is the method of great teachers, there is statement of the principle and then the illustration and amplification of that principle. The principle is this, take heed to yourself, be careful that you do not your righteous deeds, the alms being the righteous acts before men to be seen of men.

Now he's talking here about the motives for which you do things, for which you do your righteous things. Make sure that the motive by which you are prompted to do these things does not come from your desire to be recognized and noted by men. Take heed that you do not your righteous acts to be seen of men.

The Bible tells us that we are all going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ and our works are going to be judged of what sort they are. Our works will be judged actually by the motives behind the work. What motivated me to do it? And if my motivations in doing my righteous deeds are wrong, then those deeds are worthless and they will be burned and be consumed as wood, hay and stubble.

For all of our works will be tried by fire. Many of our works that we have done for the Lord will just be consumed, they'll go up in smoke. Now those things which I've done out of a pure heart and pure motive before God, those that remain the testing of fire, I'll receive a reward for them.

But all of our works are to be judged of what sort or what motivation is behind the works. Now Paul the Apostle speaks of that which motivated him, he said, for the love of Christ constrains me. And really love is the greatest motivator for Christian service and the only valid motivator for Christian service.

I can be doing a lot of wonderful things but if I don't do it in love, they become worthless. You see I could even sell everything that I have and distribute all of the profit to the poor. But I could do it in such a way that I call the newspaper and say, hey send a reporter out here, I got my house for sale, you know, and I'm going to give everything to the poor.

And then once I've sold my house, I put up a big sign, you know, Chuck's Relief Program and I invite all the poor in and all the photographers and everything else and I start doling out, you know, all of my goods and I feed the poor and I stand there smiling for the photographers and I, Channel 7 and Channel 5 come out, you know, and they take their pictures and I get my face in this wonderful look with this man is on, oh how glorious. He sold everything and gave it to the poor. But you see my motive was to get my smiling face before the public and have everybody say, oh isn't that marvelous? Well that's my reward.

Everybody is saying, oh isn't that marvelous? And I better listen carefully and tune in on that, oh isn't that grand? Because that's all the reward I'm going to get. And when I come up before God and stand before God and give him that pepsodent smile, you know, that I gave to the TV cameras, you know, pin it on me Lord, I'm ready now, you know, to receive. And he looks at the account and he says, whoa don't see anything here Chuck.

I said, wait a minute Lord, what do you mean you don't see anything? Didn't you watch Channel 7? Didn't you hear those people raving about how marvelous I was? Oh yes, I remember that was your reward. And that's basically what Jesus is saying here. Now be careful what your motive is.

Don't do things in such a way as to draw attention to yourself. That is to draw the praise of people and the plaudits of the crowd. For if that is what's behind it and you're doing it in such a way as to attract attention to your good works, then the attention that you've attracted is all the reward you're going to get.

So take heed that you don't do your righteous acts to be seen of men, before men to be seen of them. Now there is a balance here because earlier Jesus said, you are the light of the world and you can't hide a light. Therefore what you do is going to be seen.

It's going to be noticed. You can't hide the light. You're the light of the world, but let your light so shine before men that when they see your good works, they glorify your Father, which is in heaven.

Now that's not always easy to do, but we are we are to seek to do those good works in such a way that when people see what we're doing, they won't be glorifying us, but they'll be glorifying God. And that has to be, of course, the motive behind it all, to bring glory to God. Because I love God.

I want to serve God. I'm doing it for Him. That is the motive that God will honor.

But if my motive is to receive glory and praise and credit from man, then the glory, praise and credit that I receive is my reward. Now there are those who say that we should not be interested in rewards. That we should be good just for goodness sake.

And that's, you know, that's again a very magnanimous thing to say. And people usually say that in order that they might appear to be very magnanimous, and thus they have the reward when they have said it. Because people say, oh, isn't that marvelous? What pure heart he has.

Oh, what a pure motive. You know, he doesn't want any reward. He just wants to be good because he's good.

Oh, that's sweet, you know. Sickly. And it's unscriptural.

Jesus speaks many times here about rewards. And how that we should be concerned for rewards. Those rewards that come from our Heavenly Father.

And so there is a place of reward in the Christian experience. Now, salvation is not a reward. Salvation is a gift of God through his grace towards us in Christ Jesus.

And salvation is something that God gives to me through my faith in Jesus Christ. And it's nothing to do with my works or my effort or anything else. It only has to do with my simply believing on Jesus Christ.

And God gives to me that glorious gift of eternal life. God doesn't reward me with eternal life. That is a gift of God.

I don't earn eternal life. I can't work for eternal life. It's a gift of God and not of works, lest any man should boast.

But as a child of God, there are responsibilities that God places upon me. There are opportunities that God gives me of serving him. And I will stand before God and I will be rewarded according to my faithfulness in the fulfilling of those obligations and responsibilities that God has placed before me while I am here.

And so it is proper for me to desire that reward from God and to seek after that reward from God. Now, Jesus said, if you do your righteousness before men to be seen of men, basically you have your reward in the fact that men see what you're doing and acknowledge it and they praise you for it. And then Jesus gives three illustrations to this basic principle as he deals with the three basic righteous things that men

do.

And that is the giving of their alms, their prayer, and the mortifying of their flesh. And there is a right way and there is a wrong way to do each of these things. There's a right way to give to God.

There's a wrong way to give to God. You give the wrong way and you've received your reward. You give the right way and God will reward you.

And so it all depends on where and from what source you want your rewards. Do you want your reward from God or do you want your reward from man? Now, there are a lot of people who are satisfied and desire the reward of man. In a few days, the 4th of July, we're going to see tremendous pyrotechnic displays.

And these skyrockets are, they're getting more exotic every year. And as you watch these bursts of colors in the air, you hear the boom and you see all of these colors bursting out and these little things squirreling away. And everybody says, oh, you know, you're sitting there in the Anaheim Stadium, perhaps, and this thing goes off and everybody, ah, you know, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful.

Big flash, big burst. Everybody's awing over it. But, oh, it burns out so rapidly.

You know, it's just for a moment. Boom. It's gone.

So, the glory of the world. It's like a skyrocket. You know, you come on the world scene and we've watched it.

You've lived long enough to see those who came on the world scene and everybody's saying, ah, ooh, you know, and a big flash. But, oh, what a quick burnout. Now they're gone.

They're being replaced by the new flashing stars. And the glory of the world is so shallow. It passes so rapidly.

But, you know, up there in the sky, there are brilliant displays of fire and glory. Those stars, oh, I'll tell you, if you could just look at them closely enough, you'd see fantastic, spectacular displays of glory and beauty. And they just keep going on and on and on.

And long after the skyrockets have expended their glory and have fallen in ashes to the ground, the stars are still there. Daniel said, and they who are wise will lead many to righteousness and they shall shine as the stars forever and ever. And it all depends on which sky you want to shine.

You can do your works before men in such a way that everybody says, oh, ooh, you know, big flash. Everybody's all excited and everybody's going around saying, oh, did you know what he did? Oh, isn't that wonderful? Oh, he's so glorious. You know, you're soon ashes.

Everybody's forgotten and they're looking for the next flash. Or you can do it in such a way that forever in God's kingdom, shining in that glory of his splendor and his beauty. So when you give, don't sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have the glory of men.

Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. Now, I don't know if Jesus is exaggerating here or not. I have never really heard of anybody hiring a band to go before them when they are carrying their gift to church,

you know.

Ready to drop your money in the offering and have the guy give a trumpet fanfare, you know. And so you come forward and place your gift in. However, however, I have seen services where the evangelist will say, now God has revealed to me that there are 15 people here tonight that are going to give a thousand dollars to my ministry.

Bless God, hallelujah. I want you 15 that God is speaking to your heart now to give that thousand dollars. I want you to stand to your feet, you know.

And they harangue and they harass and they go on until, bless God, look there's a brother over there. Oh, praise God, brother, hallelujah, you know. And the guy is standing there holding up his check, you know.

And the evangelist runs back and gets it because I'll personally receive, you know. I'll personally take it out of your hand, you know. Greedy soul.

Now, as far as God is concerned, you will receive no reward from God for that thousand dollar offering that you just gave. You already have your reward because in a sense, you've sounded a trumpet. You've made a big public display out of your giving.

And everybody knows how generous you were. You stood to your feet. You received the applause of the people.

Just drink it in because that's all the reward you're going to get. Now, to me, it is indeed sad and tragic that there are many people who actually encourage people to give with that kind of motivation. Because even in their receiving the people's funds, using that as the motivator behind it, they have robbed those people from the reward that God would give them for the gifts that they have made.

And I hold the evangelist responsible. They should know better. Sheep are often dumb and they don't know any better.

But those people who are receiving money that way should know better and they are responsible. The Lord said you shouldn't be giving with a fanfare, in a way to be seen of men. Not to make a parade, not to make a big to-do over what you have given to God.

But when you give your alms, really, just don't even let your right hand know what your left hand is doing. Just give. Don't make a big deal over it.

That your alms may be in secret and your Father which sees in secret shall reward thee openly. So, in our giving is to be simple, with simplicity. Our giving to God, Paul tells us in the Corinthian epistle, is never to be out of constraint or pressure.

We should never feel pressured to give to God. God doesn't want people to give to Him motivated by pressure. Oh, here's the finance committee coming to the door and they're going to get our annual pledge.

Oh no, what are we going to say this time, you know. And of course, I'm under the pressure. Here are these important people.

There's the banker there and there's an attorney and here's my doctor, you know. And they're sitting there and I'm on the hot seat because I've got to make my pledge to the church for the year. And these guys are

all going to know what I'm going to pledge.

And I don't want to look like a skinny, skin flint. And so, what am I going to do, you know. So, I feel the pressure and I say, well, this year I think we're going to try and give a thousand dollars to the church.

And I hear my banker sort of, a thousand dollars, well, you know, we're really wanting to add a few programs to the church this year. And so, we really need, well, maybe I can give twelve hundred, you know. And so, then comes the first month and I owe a hundred bucks and I, oh, no, I can't afford this hundred dollars.

Oh, but I got to do it. I promised I'd do it, you know. And every month I find myself gritting and struggling over trying to make my pledge.

And I'm griping about it and I'm upset about it. Hey, God doesn't appreciate anything given to him that you gripe about. You'd be much better off not to give than to give and gripe.

Let them think that you're tight. Let them think that you're not benevolent. Let them think what they want, but don't give to God out of pressure.

Paul said, therefore, as everyone is purposed in his own heart, so let him set it aside and let him give hilariously because God loves a hilarious giver. Whatever you can give to God hilariously, give. What you can't give to God hilariously, keep.

God doesn't want it and God doesn't need it. And thus, the giving to God should always be a personal matter between the Lord and our family. And it is something that we do because we love the Lord and we're motivated by our love for him, but we're not looking for credit from man or not looking to receive from man great accolades because of our generosity in giving to God.

Now, the question of the tithe envelopes then. This is a necessity that is laid upon us by the US government, the Internal Revenue Service. It's just one of the other evils that come from the IRS.

I don't believe that we should pay more taxes than what are due. I think we should pay what are due, but I don't think we should pay any more than are due. And thus, for the purposes of the IRS, we make out checks or we fill out an envelope that we might keep a record in case the IRS questions concerning your giving.

But those files are strictly confidential. They are something that is between you and the Lord, and those are things that we only send you your receipt at the end of the year, and it is something that only you and the Lord know. I don't even know.

I don't bother to go through those files. I'm not concerned. It's something between you and God, and it's a personal thing, and we want to keep the giving just as personal as possible.

And so, you're giving. Let it be with simplicity. Let it be out of a cheerful heart, and let it be motivated by your love for the Lord and not your desire to be seen by men.

Then when you pray, there's a wrong and a right way to pray. Now, don't be as the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogue and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward.

Now, prayer was a very important thing in the life of the Jew. Twice a day, he had to say the Shema, which comprised of three sections of the Old Testament Scriptures, beginning with Deuteronomy 6, there, the Lord our God is one Lord, and also love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, with all thy strength. And he had to say that the first thing in the morning, and he had to say it the last thing at night.

He was to say it before nine o'clock in the morning, and he was to say it before nine o'clock in the evening. But twice a day, he would say the Shema. Then there was the second form of prayers, the Shemanoth.

The Shemanoth was actually 18 separate prayers. Later on, they added the 19th, but they kept the name Shemanoth, 18. And they were 18 prayers that they would memorize as a child, and they had to say three times a day, nine o'clock in the morning, twelve at noon, and three o'clock in the afternoon.

Now, because they had to say these same prayers every day, morning, afternoon, and evening, it became a custom as anything that, you know, we do by custom. It became something that to many of them was totally meaningless. I mean, it's a duty.

I've got to do it. So you race through these 18 prayers, saying them just as rapidly as you can. You know, it's a duty.

I've got to perform. You know, it's nine o'clock. Okay, here we go, you know, and you race through the 18 prayers.

And then, oh, it's 12 o'clock. Time to do it again. And you race through the same 18 prayers.

Now, with that as a background, you see, there were those who would time themselves so that when nine o'clock in the morning came, they would be in a very conspicuous place on the street corner. Nine o'clock, oh, you know, and prayer shawl comes on, and wrap themselves up, and so they go through the 18 prayers. And everybody says, oh, isn't that wonderful? He stops right in the middle of his busy day, right there on the street corner, going through his 18 prayers.

Oh, he must be spiritual. And it is possible that as you're going through your 18 prayers, you're thinking, oh, I know they're all watching me, and they know how spiritual I am. They know that I'm a holy man.

Isn't this glorious, you know, that everybody knows how righteous I am? Lord, I thank you, you know. Now, anything that we do repeat over and over again, the same words, can easily become meaningless. You know, we set the little groove patterns in our brain, and all we have to do is tune in to that particular channel, and set the, push the button, and you can just say it without even thinking.

Now, I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to keep.

You know, I mean, it, push the button, and it goes. It's like pulling the string on the little dollies. I mean, it's just something that's programmed in, you know.

God is great. God is good. We thank you, Father, for our food.

Amen, you know. And, and you can mouth these words without even, you can be thinking about something else entirely as you're saying these words. I don't have to be thinking about what I say, because I can just say these words by rote.

And thus, they become empty repetition of words. So, first of all, when I pray, I'm not to seek to get in some conspicuous place, so everybody will see that I am a man of prayer. I heard the reputation of a minister.

Everybody said, oh, he's such a man of prayer. And I was anxious to meet this fellow, because I'd heard his reputation of being a man of prayer. And so, it happened that I was at a summer camp speaking, and he was also at that same summer camp.

And I found out how he got his reputation as a man of prayer. Every morning at six o'clock, down in the chapel, you could hear this fellow praying. All over camp, you could hear him praying.

And from six to seven, you could hear him praying down there in the chapel, crying out to the Lord. And I often wondered, does God want us to have a reputation of a man of prayer? Is it not better to go into the closet and shut the door and pray to the Father who sees in secret? And the Father who sees in secret, then, will be the one who rewards us. I would not be surprised, but what the reward that that man gets from his prayer life is not the fact that he has a tremendous reputation of being a man of prayer.

And he loves that reputation. And he's doing everything to keep that reputation alive, by praying in such a way that everybody is noticing the fact that he is praying. Now, we've got to be careful about motivation.

Even in prayer, what I pray for is tested by motivation. James said, you have not because you ask not. And then he added, and you ask and receive not because you ask amiss that you might consume it on your own lust.

In other words, it's possible for me to even have the wrong motivation for praying what I'm praying for. Motivation is such an important thing. That's why the Bible said, let every man examine himself, for if we will judge ourselves, we will not be judged of God.

And it's good to examine, why did I do that? Now, I do not always know it's possible for me to deceive myself and David realizing the possibility of deceiving himself concerning his own personal motivations. Said, Lord, you have searched me, you know me, you know, my down sittings, my uprisings, you understand my thoughts and their origins. He said, such knowledge is too great for me.

I cannot attain it. I really don't know myself, Lord. And so he concludes that psalm by saying, search me, oh God, and know my heart.

Try me and know my thoughts and see if there be some wicked way in me. Oh God, you search me. God, you show me.

God, you reveal what is in my heart because I can be deceiving myself, but I'm not deceiving God. For he searches the hearts, the reins. He knows what are the motives behind everything I do.

And God knows I don't want to waste my time. If I'm going to do it, I want to be doing it out of the right motivation. And I want to receive the rewards from the Lord for doing it.

And so in our prayers, be careful that we do not seek to pray, drawing attention to ourselves or pray to impress people that they might be seen of men. The idea behind it is they're trying to impress people. Be careful that you don't pray to impress people.

Prayer is not intended to impress people. It's intended to impress God. Go into your closet, shut the door.

Your father, which sees in secret will reward you openly. The second negative is don't use the vain repetitions as they were doing in those days, thinking that you'll be heard for your much speaking. It isn't the length of prayer, nor is it the time or the amount of time spent in prayer that makes prayer valid.

Those prayers that are recorded in the Bible are all of them very short. So many times we think that prayer doesn't really become effective until we've been on our knees for an hour. Not so.

There's no sense of just filling up the time with meaningless little stereotype phrases when I'm talking to God. When you come into God, sit down, declare your business to God, declare your heart, open it to Him, lay it out before Him, and be brief, be concise, because the Lord knows what you have need of before you ever ask Him. Prayer is not information time where I'm now going to inform you, God, of everything that's gone wrong in my life today.

God knows everything that's gone wrong. I don't have to rehearse it for Him, nor do I have to go over a long list of my needs. God knows what I have need of before I ever ask Him.

And so don't use vain repetitions just to fill up time. The heathen think that they're going to be heard for their much speaking, but it isn't the much speaking. Now, Jesus then gave to us a model prayer.

It is tragic that many people have taken this model prayer and use it in vain repetition. And so they say this model prayer over and over again. And they're encouraged many times to do so, as far as their penance is concerned.

You know, so many Hail Marys and so many Our Fathers, which are nothing but vain repetition. The very thing that Jesus spoke against, thinking that you'll be heard for your much speaking. No, you won't.

And just to repeat the Lord's Prayer out of memory really has no value. There's tremendous value if you will take it very slowly, phrase by phrase, and really think upon it and meditate upon it. But basically, He is giving to us a model prayer.

And as He gives to us the model prayer, first of all, prayer always is dependent upon relationship. And thus, it is significant that the prayer opens, expressing relationship, our Father. And if He is not your Father, then you have no right to call on Him.

The blind man said to the Pharisees when they were challenging him on how he was healed, he said, well, this man came and he laid his hands on me and I could see. Well, what did he do? Well, I told you. And they said, well, as far as this man, they said, give the glory to God.

As far as this man, we don't know anything about him. I said, well, isn't that a marvelous thing? You're someone you know anything about and he's opening the eyes of the blind. He's doing the work of the Messiah.

And they got angry at the man. The man says, hey, we know that God doesn't hear the, you know, the prayers of sinners. I mean, he must be doing something right if God's answering his prayers.

Now, notice that that isn't necessarily biblical truth. This is the statement of a blind man to the Pharisees. Because in reality, God does hear the prayer of sinners.

One prayer at least. God be merciful to me, a sinner. Thank God he hears that prayer.

And yet David said, if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord does not hear me when I pray. That's divine truth. God's hand is not short that he cannot save.

Neither is his ear heavy that he cannot hear. But your sin has separated between you and your God. That's divine truth.

Sin separates a man from God. However, there is relationship involved in prayer. And that relationship is a child coming to the Father.

And I am a child of God through my faith in Jesus Christ. And so I can say, Father, our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. The word hallowed could also be translated reverend.

You know, the Jews had a very high respect for the name of God. In fact, they had such a high respect for the name of God that they came to the place where they felt that their lips were unworthy to utter the name of God. Ultimately, they came to the place where they thought that their minds were unworthy to even think of the name of God.

To think it in their minds. So, as the scribes in copying the Scriptures would come to the name of God, instead of writing the vowels, they only wrote the consonants. YHVH.

Try and pronounce that. Without the vowels, you don't know how it is pronounced. And so to the present day, we do not know how to pronounce the name of God.

But before the scribes would even write the YHVH in their manuscript, they would go in, take a bath, put on fresh clothes, take a new pen, dip it in fresh ink, and then write those consonants, YHVH. Now imagine in a passage where you have the name of the Lord listed five or six times. Yet it became a little tradition among them that when they were copying, they would always go in and take this ritual bath and put on fresh clothes and then write those consonants, YHVH.

Now, whether or not the name was pronounced Yehovah or Yahweh, we're really not sure. Most scholars think that it was Yahweh. But the pronunciation of God's name has been lost as the result of this tradition among the Jews.

But oh, how highly did they esteem His name. In the Psalms, the Psalmist declared, holy and reverend is thy name. Here, basically, the same thing is being said in the Lord's Prayer.

Hallowed or reverend be thy name. Now, where in the world men ever got the tradition of tacking reverend on the name of a man, I do not know. But I really do not consider myself as Reverend Chuck Smith.

I don't think there's anything reverend about the name Chuck. But it's unfortunate, you know, they start out and they say, Reverend Chuck Smith. And then, you know, they're trying to puff you up a little more and they say THE Reverend Chuck Smith.

And then they're trying to pump you up a little more and they say, the most Reverend Chuck Smith, you know, and the most right Reverend Chuck Smith. And, you know, they start adding all these titles to man. Oh, how tragic.

How sad. I really don't care for a title. The name of the Lord is reverend.

It's hallowed. But surely not the name of any man. Now, a lot of people take the title in ignorance, and I will accept that.

A lot of people in writing to me, write Dear Reverend Smith, or Reverend Smith, or whatever. And I just laugh and I know that they don't know me. Because I don't consider myself reverend at all.

I do reverence God and I reverence his name. But there's nothing reverend about my name. And so, I don't make a big deal over it, but I mean, it's just something that, you know, it's one of those things that people start and they carry on.

And it's the exalting of man. And I don't believe in the exalting of man. I believe, you know, that no flesh should glory in his sight.

Let's exalt the Lord. Let's hold his name reverend and hallowed. But let's not be exalting man.

For he that exalts himself, the Lord will abase. So, recognition is next. First of all, relationship, our Father.

Recognition, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Holy and reverend is thy name. I'm talking now to God, who has created the universe.

He said to Jeremiah, Behold, I am the Lord. Is there anything too hard for me? I need to remember that when I pray, because so often when I pray, I carry my own limitations in. This thing is too tough for me.

It's too much for me. I can't handle it. And I'm prone many times to carry that sense of defeat or overwhelmed by the problem into my prayer life with God, as though, you know, it's overwhelmed me.

Surely, it's going to overwhelm God. And so, recognition of the one that I'm talking to is so important in prayer. We are told in Hebrews, for he that cometh unto God must believe that he is, that he is what? That he is the eternal God who sees, as Jesus said, who knows, as Jesus said, who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all I ask your thing.

Now, hallowed be thy name is actually a petition. It's praying that God's name be revered and held in high esteem or hallowed by men. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Two more petitions, but the first three petitions all relate to God. They do not relate to me. In prayer, my primary thrust in prayer should be that desire to get God's will accomplished.

It is wrong to think of prayer as a agency by which I can get my wishes fulfilled. God never intended prayer to be a means by which my wishes can be granted. God intended prayer as a means whereby I might work in cooperation with him in getting his will done on this rebellious planet earth.

And true prayer begins with God, the purpose and the plan of God, and prayer is never intended as changing the purposes of God. I believe that every right thing that I have ever prayed for and received, God had already purposed and planned to give it to me before I ever prayed. You say, then why pray? Because God has made me a free moral agent.

God has given me the capacity of choice and God honors my choice and will not violate my free will. God will only do for me what I am willing for him to do for me and what I allow him to do for me. Therefore, prayer is opening the door to God to do the things for me that he was planting and wanting to do all the while, but would not do against my will.

Jesus said to his disciples in John the 15th chapter, now you have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you that you should be my disciples and that you should bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain. That whatsoever you ask the Father in my name, he may, not shall, he may give it to you. God wants to give it to you.

God wants to do for you, but he will not cross or violate your free will, which he gave to you. But prayer opens the door then for God to do for you what he's been wanting to do the whole time, but will not violate or cross your will to do it. So prayer begins with God, the purposes of God, and the real thrust of prayer is not my will be done.

And this is the fallacy of these teachers today who have become so popular on television and in the full gospel circles. And that's the tragedy of the full gospel circles is the lap, the lack of theological depth. The people are so shallow.

They are chasing after every new wind of doctrine and slight cunning of men who are going around with some new concept and everybody begins to trace after them. And now it's the old, you know, thing that prayer is, you know, you're grabbing the scepter and ruling the world. You demand that God do it, you know.

And you insist and you press and you pray and you believe and God's got to do whatever you ask him to do. Not so. God is no little genie that has to fulfill your wishes.

He is the sovereign Lord of the universe and in control of the universe. And let me say that I thank God for all of my unanswered prayers. I would have had this world in a big mess had God answered all my prayers, because I was praying about things about which I really did not fully understand because I could only see partially.

And I was sure that I had full knowledge, but I only had partial knowledge and I was praying according to my partial knowledge. And when I got full knowledge, I said, whoo, thank God he didn't answer that one. Boy, what a mess I would have been in, you know.

Let God be sovereign. Let God be God. Honor him as God and realize that the real thrust of prayer is not to fulfill my wishes, but it's to get his will done.

Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Yes, I do have needs. And yes, it is proper and right that I petition God for my own needs.

And so, we have these petitions that deal with our own needs. Give us this day our daily bread. Those provisions that are so essential for life and the maintenance of life.

Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And forgiveness is such an important thing. Notice the first one deals with the present.

It's my present needs. Give us this day. The second one deals with the past, the forgiveness.

That's of the things that I've done wrong up to this moment. Forgive us our debts. That deals with past.

And then lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. That's in the future. God, take over the reins and guide my life through the future.

So, in these petitions, they deal with the past, the present, the future. They deal with my provisions, with my forgiveness, with my guidance, and with my deliverance. These personal petitions.

And those are the basic issues that I need to come to God for concerning my own personal life. The provisions, the forgiveness, and the guidance and deliverance. With them, prayer goes back to God.

Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen. Now, prayer actually takes three forms.

Prayer is worship. Prayer is just that awareness and awe of the greatness and the glory of God. And this is an important part of prayer.

Just that worshiping the Lord for what He is. Not asking Him for anything, but just that worshiping God as I am aware and conscious of His greatness and of His glory and of His power. It's that sense that you feel when you look up into a desert sky.

Oh, God is so great. Oh, He's so vast. And just that awareness and consciousness and awe of the greatness of God.

It's that sense that you get when you look at a beautiful flower. And oh, He's so beautiful in His creative designs. It's that awe you get when you see a child born.

Oh, He's so wise in His design of the life forms. Worship. But prayer is also petition.

In a narrow sense, the asking of God for my own needs. But in its third form, prayer is intercession where I am seeking then and petitioning God for the needs of the lost world around me. And all three of these are brought forth in this model prayer from Jesus.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. Intercession for the kingdom. Give us this day our daily bread, the petition for my own need.

Thine is the kingdom, the power, the glory forever, that awe, the wonder and the glory and the greatness of God, the worship. Notice prayer begins with worship, ends with worship. Now, we usually give petition first and then we move into intercession.

But in the model prayer, we have intercession first and then it moves into petition. I don't think the order is important. But I think that all three forms should be followed when we pray.

I think that we should spend time worshiping God. I think that we should spend time in intercessory prayer. And I think that we should spend time in the petitioning of God for our own individual needs.

Now, it is interesting that in these various petitions that we make, that the petition for forgiveness is predicated upon our forgiveness. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And immediately there comes the question, is this then works? And does my forgiving another depend upon, or does God forgiving me depend upon my forgiving another? And if so, then is forgiveness dependent upon works? And so you have a naughty theological problem.

What does Jesus say? For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Now, do you want me to change that? Do you want me to be responsible for changing the words of Jesus? You say, but I don't understand.

Wait a minute. He didn't call you to understand. He just called you to believe.

And so I believe that it's very vital that we understand the importance of forgiveness and that we are to forgive, not as a matter of mathematics as Peter thought. Lord, how often shall I forgive my brother the same offense? Seven times? And I'm sure that Peter thought he was growing in grace when he suggested seven times that he could actually conceive of forgiving a guy the same thing for seven times. And Jesus said, no, Peter, 70 times seven, 490.

Aye, Lord. Now, forgiveness is not a matter of mathematics. Jesus figured he'd lose count before he got to 490 and realized that forgiveness is just a matter of the Spirit of the child of God.

Having been forgiven so much, it is incumbent upon me to forgive. And Jesus gave an interesting illustration one time in which he uses, as he so often did, the ludicrous to illustrate his point. There was a certain man who owed his master \$16 million.

And the master called him in and said, well, your time is up on this loan. Pay me what you owe me. And the fellow said, oh, I just don't have it to pay.

I can't do it right now. Give me a little more time. And the master said, oh, forget it.

Just cancel the debt. And he crossed out his \$16 million debt. This servant went out and got a fellow servant that owed him \$25.

And he took him by the throat and said, all right, you pay me what you owe me. And I said, oh, my wife's been sick and I've had to pay the doctor. He goes, I don't have the money right now, but just give me a little time and I'll pay you.

Oh, no, you've had all the time you're going to get. And he calls the sheriff and he gets him thrown in the debtor's prison. Now, the Lord of that servant heard what he did.

And he called him in and he said, how much did you owe me? And he said, \$16 million. He said, did I not forgive your debt? Yep. How is it then that I hear that you've had a fellow servant thrown into the debtor's prison for a \$25 debt? And he called the sheriff and he said, throw him in until he's paid the uttermost farthing, every last half penny.

And then again, Jesus emphasized the fact that you have been forgiven so much by God, who are you to hold a debt against your brother? So having been forgiven, we forgive. And if we forgive, then we are forgiven. If we don't forgive, Jesus said, we are not forgiven.

I have no intention of modifying the statement of Jesus Christ. I just intend to follow it and to be forgiving and to forgive. God helped me.

That's against my nature. My own nature wants to get even. My own nature wants everything that's coming.

My own nature just doesn't want to forgive. Someone has taken a key and scratched a whole side of my car. And I don't want to forgive that person, whoever they are.

Someone stole two suits out of my car. And they were dirty. I didn't even take them to the cleaners yet.

And what they can do with a suit my size, I don't know. But anyhow, they ripped them off. I had them in the car ready to take them to the cleaners.

And I don't know who did it, but yet, you see, my own nature just doesn't want to forgive it. I'd like to get hold of the person that scratched that side with a key. And yet, thank God, he's put in my heart that spirit of, oh, well, it's all going to burn, you know.

And there is a certain price that you've got to pay for people knowing you. And the more people know you, the more people hate you. You know, percentage-wise, there's a percentage of people who are going to hate you.

And so, the more exposure you have to people, the more enemies you're going to create. And so, I suppose someone saw the licensed Calvary and realized my car and said, oh, you know, we'll fix him. Poor person.

You know, that they would have that kind of hatred and bitterness, that they would do malicious kind of damage like that. But I've got to forgive. I can't let that bother me.

I can't let that just, you know, boil inside. Because you know what it'll do? If I am just thinking of this and musing on this and just getting angry over this and, you know, and just going to say, I have certain little glands that start producing chemicals that will start eating me up inside, start destroying me inwardly. It's important.

Jesus knew that it was important that we forgive, that we not be bitter, that we not hold these feelings of bitterness or animosity or anger within. Because Jesus knew the chemical system inside. And He knows the chemicals, the destructive chemicals that are created by my glands when I have these thoughts of bitterness or anger or revenge or whatever.

And so, it's for your own good that you forgive, that you're not holding in your mind some evil intent against someone who did you wrong way back when. It's tragic that many people have just destroyed themselves physically over unforgiving spirits, over bitterness that they have held. So, forgive.

Now, the third righteous action was that of fasting. And again, right way or wrong way, don't be as the hypocrites of a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear unto men to fast.

Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head, wash your face, that you appear not unto men to fast, but unto your Father which is in secret, and your Father which sees in secret shall reward thee openly. So, again, don't draw attention to yourself or don't be doing it in such a way that you are receiving from man that awe and wonder because you are so spiritual because you fast.

It used to be in the earlier days of my ministry that I fasted quite often. Obviously, I don't fast much anymore. But in those early days of the ministry, many times I would be fasting and I'd go on my pastoral calls.

And some sweet lady would offer me a piece of homemade cake, you know. And I was fasting, you know, for the last couple of days. And she would say, what are you going to do? Well, thank you, but I'm fasting.

No, I'd just break the fast and eat the cake. Because I figured, hey, if you go ahead and just say, oh, no, I can't eat that, I'm fasting, then you have your reward anyhow. And I wasn't really looking for the reward of

man.

I was wanting, you know, to receive the reward from God. And so, I offered something to eat. If I could get out of it, I would.

But, you know, when they bake a cake, you can't really get out of it. They want their reward. Oh, this cake is delicious, you know.

Now, Jesus moves into a different realm in this sermon as he talks to us concerning our treasures. And basically, negatively, don't lay up for yourself treasures upon earth, where moth and rust are corrupt and where thieves break through and steal. A few years ago, there was a great move by many people to buy gold and silver.

And they created, through their buying, a demand, an artificial price. Because of inflation, they began to purchase the gold and silver as a hedge against inflation. And all of these men, who were writing these McKeever letters and all, were encouraging the people to buy the gold and silver as a hedge against inflation.

And they were glad to take the worthless dollars that these people had and to sell them gold and silver in exchange for their worthless dollars, or their dollars that would soon be worthless. And they were so magnanimous. I was always a little suspicious of why they would take my worthless dollars and give them to me for free.

Why would they give me gold instead? If gold was going to be so valuable and the dollars weren't going to be any good, why would they then be so nice to me as to take my worthless dollars for their good gold? Yet, they were. However, I didn't buy any. Because in James, it said, If he'd only read James instead of McKeever, he could have spared himself a lot of misery.

And now silver's \$5 an ounce again. And gold is down around the \$300. And so you watch all of your value dissipating.

Gold that was \$800 an ounce, now \$300 an ounce. Ooh, how I feel sorry for those who bought gold at \$800 an ounce. Hang on to it, gold will come back.

No. The Lord says, hey, don't lay up for yourselves treasures on earth. The value of gold is apt to depreciate.

Silver is apt to depreciate. Moth and rust can corrupt it. Thieves can break through and steal.

But lay up for yourself treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. Now, he has a reason behind this. Why should you be laying up treasures in heaven instead of here upon the earth? The whole reason is this.

Wherever your treasure is, there your heart will be also. And if you've laid up your treasures upon earth, then your heart is going to be in the material things of this world. If you've laid up your treasures in heaven, then your heart's going to be in the things in heaven, the spiritual things.

Now, one is temporal, the other is eternal. And if you lay up your treasures on earth, they at best are temporal. You lay up your treasures in heaven, they are eternal.

Jesus gave a very interesting parable that is very difficult for people to understand, and we'll be getting to it when we get to Luke. It's about the fellow who was going to get fired from his job. And so he was the accountant for his boss, and so he called the creditors in and he said, how much do you owe my boss? Hundred barrels of oil here, let me change your ticket.

And he wrote fifty barrels. How much do you owe my boss? Ten majors of flour here, let me change it. He made it five majors of flour.

And he brought all of the debtors in and he halved their debts, because he knew that in two weeks he's going to be out of a job. So, when he was out of a job, he would be able to go around and say, hey, you remember that bill where I cut it in half? I'm sort of needing a little bit. And these people would be obligated to him because of what he had done.

Now, Jesus said, the Lord of that servant commended the servant, not for his dishonesty, but for his wisdom, saying that the children of this generation are wiser than the children of life. You see, he was using his present position to establish his future. Jesus is telling you pretty much the same thing.

Use the present to establish the future. Take opportunities of the present, because you cannot add anything to your spiritual account once you die. I mean, the treasures that you lay up in heaven are that which you are doing now.

Once you die, then you can't say, oh Lord, but I wanted to leave it all to you. Everything I have belongs to the Lord, and he lets me use it. You know, and I use it all and he doesn't get anything left.

No, the Lord says, take advantage now. Lay up for yourself treasures in heaven. And the reason is, where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Now, the light of the body is the eye. If your eye is single, single purpose, the whole body is full of light. But if your eye is evil, your whole body will be full of darkness.

Now, if the light is in you is dark, oh man, then how great is your darkness. And no man can serve two masters. Either he'll hate the one and love the other, else he'll hold to the one and despise the other.

You cannot serve God and mammon. So, this all has to do with laying up treasures. If mammon is where your heart is, that is the thing that is mastered your life.

If you are mastered by your possessions, you cannot then be a servant of God also. You cannot serve God and mammon. You cannot be mastered by two masters.

You'll begin to neglect the one along the line. You'll hold the one and hate the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Mammon tried to do it, but you can't do it. Now, the Lord then talks to us about worrying. Don't worry, take no thought.

The idea is take no anxious thought or don't be worried about your life. What you're going to eat, what you're going to drink, or don't worry about your body, what you are going to put on. For your life is more than meat and your body is more than clothes.

First of all, behold the fowls of the air, because they do not sow, nor do they reap, nor do they gather into barns, and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much better than they? So, He is telling us don't worry. Look at the birds.

They don't sow, they don't reap, nor do they gather into barns. Now, the Lord isn't actually advocating then that we're not to plant and we're not to harvest, we're not to work. That is not at all what He is saying, nor are we to be totally passive as far as the needs, our needs being fulfilled or supplied.

You don't see a little bird standing on a top of a telephone pole with its mouth open waiting for the worm to fly in. He is active, He does go down and He pecks on the ground and He finds the worm and He eats it. He isn't totally passive and the Lord isn't teaching us a total passivity here.

You know, you can just cruise, lay back, do nothing, God will take care of you. That's not scriptural. Paul said, if you don't work, you shouldn't eat.

And the Lord has given us the strength and the ability to work. And like my little granddaughter says, God gave me a brain and He wants me to use it. And God's given us the capacities and He wants us to use them.

But don't worry, don't be fretting, don't say, oh, what are we going to do, how are we going to pay, what are we going to do, you know. And don't be worried about these things because your Father knows that you have need of these things. And your Father sees that the birds are taken care of.

Now if your Father sees that the birds are taken care of, He'll surely see that you're taken care of because He's your Father. And you're more important to Him than birds. And so if your Father makes sure the birds are fed, you can be sure your Father will see that you are fed.

So don't worry about that. Now, which of you by worrying can add one cubit, which is about 18 inches to his height? Oh, I'm so worried about being a shorty. Oh, you know, I wish I were tall.

Oh, and which of you by just worrying about it and sitting there wishing can add 18 inches to your height? Can't do it. Worry doesn't, you know, worry, the Lord is just saying, hey, worry really doesn't have any value. There's no value in worry.

Why worry? And why do you take thought or why are you worried about your clothes? Oh, is my wife here? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They toil not neither do they spin. Now you get the idea of the spindle and the ladies, of course, had to make their own thread.

They made their own cloth. Jesus said, look at the lilies of the field. They don't toil.

They don't sit at the spindle. Yet even Solomon in all of his glory was not arrayed like one of these. I mean, Solomon with all of his wealth and all of his glory wasn't dressed as beautifully as that lily out there in the field.

Now, if God so clothes the grass of the field which exists today and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe ye, O ye of little faith? Now, you see, Jesus is now bringing in the contrast of worrying to faith. If you really have faith, you will not worry. If you worry, it is an indication that you're lacking faith.

Faith and worry are mutually exclusive. O ye of little faith, God clothes that beautiful grass of the field which today exists and tomorrow will be cast into the oven, burned. How much more will he take care and see that you're clothed? Then incidentally, I made a joke about my wife, but I thank God.

Those are the things that Kay has come to a place in Christ a long time ago, and I thank God for her and for the spiritual example that she is to me and to the ladies in the church as one who is not overly concerned at all with dress or with anything else. We live very simple lives, and I thank God that he has given me such a partner who sees as I see the simple life that the Lord would have us to live in Christ Jesus. And I kid her, you know, I use her just to get a laugh, but that's probably not right, but God forgive me.

Otherwise, she'll say to me, hmm, you say that I do this, and I'm going to go ahead and do it, you know. Therefore, take no anxious thought or don't be worried saying, what shall we eat or what shall we drink or what shall we wear? For after all of these things do the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things.

Your Father knows you need these things. Don't worry about them. Your Father knows you need them.

And thus, that is not to be our primary concern. We're not to be seeking those things as the paramount issues in life. But what are we to be seeking? But seek Ephesus.

Now, the Gentiles seek those things. Oh, the fashion of this world. The word Gentiles is also translated heathen.

The heathen are all seeking. I mean, look at the eateries today, the gourmets. All of the emphasis of the magazines upon food, upon clothes.

And it's amazing the interest that the heathen world has in these things. But you seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Priority.

Oh, how important. Put first things first and God will take care of the rest. If you will seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, all these other things will be added.

God will take care of those. You don't have to worry about those. All you have to do is seek God first and foremost in your life.

The kingdom of God, His righteousness, and God will take care of everything else. Now, if you look at our lives, and if you look at the time that we spend and are concerned in purchasing the clothes, in purchasing the food, in getting the money to purchase the clothes and the food and these things, you'll find that so much of our time is absorbed because we are exposed constantly to the pressures of Madison Avenue to be conscious about the style, the width of our lapel or the width of our ties or whatever because, you know, this is what's in style, this is what is vogue. And so we get rid of clothes before they are really worn out because they are no longer in style.

And we have become the victims of this whole commercial system. And we've become lazy in our food preparation. And so we pay a dollar and twenty-five cents to get a loaf of bread.

When if you want to do just a little work, you can buy raw wheat for six and a half cents a pound. And you can grind it. And you can make a healthy loaf of bread for nineteen cents.

But oh, you know, that takes a little extra effort. But don't worry about these things. Basically, and that's what the Lord is saying, don't let this be the paramount issue.

Don't let these things be the primary things of your life. Let the primary thing be the kingdom of God and His righteousness. And God will take care of all these other things.

You don't have to worry about them. The Lord knows that you need these things. Again, remember Jesus said, when you pray, don't think that you have to pray a long time.

God knows what you need before you ever ask Him. The Lord knows that you need these things. Therefore, don't worry about tomorrow.

And isn't that interesting that most of our worry is about tomorrow? Our worry is always more about tomorrow than it is about today. I'm in today, and here I am, and I ate, and I've got clothes, and so I don't worry so much about today, but what am I going to do tomorrow? What am I going to do when that bill comes due next week? And it's usually about the future that our worry is generated. But the Lord said, don't worry about tomorrow.

For tomorrow will take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. I'm reminded of the exhortation from James in his epistle when he said, Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

Now, as we finish the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says much the same thing. As He likens those who hear His words and do them. They are likened to a wise man who, when he built his house, first of all dug deep and laid his foundation on the rock.

Contrasted with the foolish man who hears the words but doesn't do them. And he's like the man who just builds his house upon the sand. And so, may the Lord help us as we look at this great manifesto that was laid out for us by Jesus Christ, that we won't be just hearers of the words.

Say, oh my, isn't that marvelous. Oh yes, that's so true. Oh yes, I really shouldn't be worried about these things.

Oh yes, I should lay up treasures in heaven. Oh yes, you know. And I agree to it.

I say, oh yes, yes, yes. But I don't do it. I'm foolish.

I'm building on the sand. I'm building a superstructure that's going to collapse in the storm. It's important that I be a doer of the word and not hear only.

So, may God help each of us as we go out this week, that rather than admiring the Sermon on the Mount, that we might in reality live the Sermon on the Mount. That these principles might become realities in our own lives. And that we might abide by these words of Jesus Christ.

That we might indeed be the children of the Father and thus the recipients of all of those blessings and joys and goodness that the Father bestows upon His children.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/chuck-smith/through-the-bible-matthew-6/>

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