

Day 6, Matthew 6

by David Servant

Jesus teaches that true followers of Christ are motivated by love for God and love for others, and are focused on laying up treasures in heaven, not on earth.

Scripture: Matthew 6:1

Topics: "True Righteousness", "Kingdom Priorities"

Description

David Servant preaches on the importance of true righteousness that surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, emphasizing the need for genuine love for God and others. He highlights the significance of sincere prayers that align with God's will and kingdom priorities, contrasting them with hypocritical prayers. The sermon delves into the dangers of greed and the pursuit of earthly treasures, urging believers to focus on laying up treasures in heaven and seeking God's kingdom above all else. Jesus' warning about those who think they are full of light but are actually full of darkness serves as a caution against false appearances and the love of money.

Transcript

Everyone knew who Jesus was referring to when He spoke of those who blew trumpets in the marketplaces prior to their distributions to the poor, who prayed on street corners, and who advertised their fastings---it was the scribes and Pharisees. Remember, Jesus requires that our righteousness surpass theirs (5:20). His true followers are motivated by love for God and love for others. They are conscious that, even when people aren't watching, God is, and they're striving for His praise rather than the praise of men.

Tragically, many professing Christians give nothing to the poor, much less give secretly to them. Does their righteousness surpass that of the scribes and Pharisees, who did give to the poor, albeit for the wrong motives?

It is a good exercise to compare our regular prayers with the prayer Jesus taught His disciples to pray. Notice that the first requests are for our Father's name to be hallowed, for His kingdom to come, and for His will to be done. How can anyone but a true and devoted disciple of Christ make such requests without being hypocritical? Yet millions of false believers whose lives dishonor God's name and don't reflect kingdom priorities regularly pray the "Lord's prayer."

In this "disciple's prayer," our material needs are minimized to daily bread, reflecting submissive trust and a contentment that stands in contrast to the world's greed. This prayer also elaborates on the fourth beatitude, our "hunger and thirst for righteousness," as we request forgiveness for our sins (we haven't reached perfection yet) and ask that God will not lead us where we will be tempted lest we fail, but rather will deliver us from evil. All of these requests make perfect sense, because God's kingdom, power and glory are eternal (6:13). We want to please Him!

Everyone in Jesus' audience also knew what He meant when He spoke of the "evil eye." It was a common expression for a "greedy heart." Proverbs 28:22 says, "A man with an evil eye hastens after wealth," and Jesus also used the same expression in Matthew 20:15. Those with greedy hearts are "full of darkness" (6:23), that is, void of truth. A "clear eye" (or "good eye" in 6:22) is the opposite of the "evil eye," and thus represents a heart that is not greedy, and one that is "full of light" (6:22), that is, filled with the truth.

What characterizes a greedy person? He lays up his treasures on earth, where his heart is also. Money is his master because he loves and serves it, and he actually hates God. He is full of darkness. This is obviously not the description of a heaven-bound follower of Jesus, but of an unsaved person. True followers of Christ, those who are focused on God's coming kingdom, are laying up their treasure in heaven where their hearts are, keeping their earthly pile as small as possible. They are full of the light of the truth. They aren't tithing as a means to grow rich on earth, something commonly taught in apostate churches today.

But notice Jesus' warning about the great darkness of those whose light is really darkness (6:23). He can only be speaking of those who think they are full of light, while their actions reveal that they are actually full of darkness. No doubt Jesus once again had the scribes and Pharisees in mind, men who were "lovers of money" (Luke 16:14), and whose earthly treasure piles testified of their great darkness and hatred of God. Yet had you asked any of them, they would have testified that they loved God! Thinking they were full of truth, they were actually full of darkness, which was their doom. "Prosperity preachers" take note! You are no different!

Finally, note that Jesus told His followers not to worry specifically about food, drink or clothing (6:25-34) something that most of us are never tempted to worry about because we are so wealthy (by the world's standards). Our material worries usually revolve around the fear of becoming less wealthy. May God help us to see our great wealth, as well as our great responsibility before Him because of it.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-servant/day-6-matthew-6/>

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