

Matthew 6 Overview

by Don McClure

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living authentically for God through giving, prayer, and fasting while recognizing our daily need for Christ's guidance.

Duration: 56:51

Scripture: Matthew 6:1-6, Matthew 6:16-21, Matthew 6:25 - 7:5, Matthew 7:7-11

Topics: "Christian Living", "Discipleship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by discussing the importance of recognizing the eternal value of our actions and the need to prioritize our lives accordingly. He emphasizes the need for Christians to be fully committed to Christ and to live in a way that reflects His love and power. The speaker then highlights the significance of the Sermon on the Mount, which teaches us how to live practically before God and others. He concludes by urging listeners to seek God's guidance and to allow Him to work in and through their lives for His glory.

Transcript

Chapter 6, Matthew. Take heed that you do not your alms before men to be seen of them, otherwise you have no reward of your father which is in heaven. Therefore, when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men.

Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But when thou doest thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, that thine alms may be in secret, that thy father may seeth in secret himself, who shall reward thee openly. Father, we do thank you once again for this wonderful sermon.

Lord, that you have given it to us in these three chapters and we ask, Lord, tonight as we kind of step back a distance from it and look back into it that you would kind of recap, Lord, some of these great fundamental truths of living our life practically before you and before one another, that we may be used for your glory, that we may live in your glory, we may know, Lord, your indwelling life by your Holy Spirit in a glorious way, and that you may continue your work within us. And so, Lord, tonight as we look at it, may you just touch our hearts with it. Speak to us however you would in Jesus' name.

Amen. Well, once again, remember here as we get into Matthew chapter 6 and 7 tonight, that we're talking here primarily about somebody who has found Jesus Christ as Savior, and not just Savior in the eternal

sense. I think to me one of the most wonderful things about the Sermon on the Mount is it's somebody that has not merely found him eternally and that they desperately need him for eternal issues, but they found him daily and need him just as daily just as powerfully as they do on the daily as they do the eternal.

I think that's one of the great lessons in the Christian life when we discover that as desperately as we need Christ eternally, we need him every day of our life. When we discover that truth, when that begins to get under our skin and into our eye, I think it has a very, very profound effect. Paul and Colossians, he wrote to them, and in Colossians chapter 2, he says, As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.

In other words, the same desperation that you had in receiving Christ, the same hope that you had, the same need that you had in receiving Christ the day you came to him, Lord, either you died on the cross or I'm in trouble. Either your work on the cross is completely sufficient for me or I'm lost. Well, Paul says, Now walk that way.

Walk ye in him. When we learn that I need him every day, as desperately as if my heart was to stop beating, and the same thought that if we had that in our homes, in our marriages, as we had that in our relationships, the way we live and the way we walk and the way we talk and the way we relate, if there was that sense of passion and desperation, Lord, either you help me now or I'm left to myself. My own resources.

Either you give me your love, your wisdom, your guidance. Either you impart to me that which I need today or it's a waste. It's hopeless.

It's lost. People are going to suffer the consequence of having to live and deal with me. And that can be a pretty miserable situation.

And I don't think anybody knows that better than we do ourselves. And I think one of the reasons a lot of us tend to be so social is that because when we're left to ourself, we're quite miserable. The conversation can get quite monotonous and miserable and selfish, can't it? But when we realize, Lord, I need you for everything.

I need you in every area of my life. And this is what the Sermon on the Mount is all about. Somebody that needs him to save me from myself.

So I'm poor in spirit. I mourn and I meek. And you, I'm not going to review chapter 5 again, but the wonderful thing or the review of the review of the review, but I'm not going to.

But to realize, Lord, you must take your place within me. You must be king. You must be Lord.

And then we realize having that. At that point, Jesus now looks at us and says, You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world.

He looks at us and he says, Now you have discovered who you are, why you were created, what your real eternal worth is, the eternal potential of your life is far beyond anything trivial, anything simple, anything human. You are literally there, the salt of the earth and the light of the world. To me, the only difference between one person and another so often is the realization of that.

When they realize that God can take them and be they think ever so salty themselves or ever so useless or common. That's what salt is in and of itself. Sort of a thing.

You take salt and put it all by itself. It's amazingly kind of useless. And you did.

But but when it is mixed with other things around it, then is when it discovers its potential. But in and of itself, there's not much to it. But when a person realizes if I am just left to myself, I'm not much value.

A light all by itself is of no value. But when you put it in a room where people walk and people function and people communicate, and there's a world around and it gives light to all that are in the house. Now it has great potential.

And when we realize God looks at our human life, and he says, when you realize the potential of it. And so often you look at people like D.L. Moody, somebody there, you know, a shoe salesman, a man who went through a fifth or sixth grade. And yet at the same time, when he discovered his life being given to Christ and the potential of it, they're offered to him.

His language was never very good. His grammar was never very good. And yet at the same time, he didn't care about all of the reasons he shouldn't be used.

He just realized he ought to be used no matter what. He's a human being created in God's image, regenerated by the life of Jesus Christ within him. And now God, take my life.

And then you look at this man who literally sat down with kings and queens and shook the world and two sides of the Atlantic during his lifetime because he was just foolish enough to believe his life had a potential way beyond anything natural. And when we believe that, when we realize, God, what do you want to do with my life? And we begin to offer it up to him in his service. Then is when I think we're beginning to get things together.

And then I think also when we realize as well that one day, one day, you know, we'll close our eyes for the last time. One day, this life will end for everyone of us. It's appointed unto every man once to die.

And either we'll die or the Lord will come for us. But either way, the life in this life will conclude. It will be over.

And then there's that old kind of spiritual adage has it that soon one life will have come and passed and only what's done for Christ will last. And I believe every Christian will one day realize the profound truth of that. That we will look back at our life and we will realize that what was done in Christ, what was done for him and in his love and in his glory and in his life and in his power, as we were hungry and desperate for him.

Those are the things that will last eternally. Those are the things, you know, that take a person and make their life eternally powerful and eternally wonderful. Well, here is Paul or Paul, pardon me, Jesus goes on now after in chapter five of laying the groundwork of saying, here's who you are and here's your life.

And then as he went in in the latter part of chapter five of here's the changes that we'll be doing in terms of your anger, your lust, your commitments and your relationships and keeping your word. These are all the things that as more and more you're growing, that the salt will have a greater savor to it. The light will have greater brilliance to it.

If you allow God to continuously work within your life, if the desperation for Christ continues to grow, if you're never, you've never got enough of him, if you're never satisfied with what's been completed, you'll continue to be changed. And then as this is happening, then he gets into chapter six here and he begins to share with us the importance there of our life being lived before him. And in our, in some tremendous broad strokes to me is how I want to look at it tonight of our life in three areas.

We just read one in chapter six there at the beginning of it is when he says, take heed that you do not your alms before men to be seen of them. And he goes there from, you know, the giving of alms there till in verse five, he's going to pick it up and he say, when thou prayest, thou shall not be as the hypocrites are. And in verse five, he's going to talk about prayer.

And then over in verse 16, he's going to say, moreover, when ye fast and here he picks up three areas. Now of our Christian life live before God and before men. Now he has taken us.

The exchange life has happened. I've given myself to him, Lord, I do want to be salt. I do want to be light.

I do want you to change my heart and my attitude and my thought and my behavior and my struggles and my humanist work in that. But as God is doing all these things, now he looks and he gives us three areas that we're going to look at briefly here and kind of stepping back and and looking in broad strokes. But he talks about giving.

He talks about prayer and he talks about fasting in this first part of chapter six. And essentially, when he talks there about giving of alms, he doesn't say that if you give, he said, when you give, he doesn't say if you pray, but when you pray, he just doesn't say if you fast, but when you fast. Jesus now is making an assumption.

I poured my life into you. I've given you my love. I'm taking over your life.

I've I've been asked to be king and Lord. I've been asked to take your life and I've been changing and working and fashioning and molding and touching and transforming you. And now he looks there as is, as hopefully enthroned within our lives.

And now we begin to hopefully respond in three areas. One is giving. Another is prayer.

Another is fasting in those three areas. Again, I just want to look at them for a few moments with some very broad strokes. You might say again, as we kind of look at this in an overview sense.

But here, Jesus, he's talking, he's making an assumption there. He says, when you give and I believe that this is both specific and general. And what I mean by that, whether it's alms or whether it's prayer or whether it's fasting, what he's talking about, I believe here when you give is not just the material aspects of giving.

I believe he's talking to us now. He says, when you almost serving. He's looking now at somebody that is salt and light.

And he say, now, when you serve, when you are about the business of serving. And he's there. In other words, put your light right out there saying, God, I want to be used.

I want my life to be used. And I think one of the most important things there is for a Christian is that I looked now after I've been saved and Christ has come into my life and he's doing these wonderful things.

That now I think one of the most important aspects of my life is that now I want to serve God.

And I believe this is very, very important. If you're as a Christian and God has done things in you and he's taught you and you've grown and you're maturing and you are not serving. There isn't an outlet for all that God has been putting in you.

I believe pretty soon you lose interest in even having things go in you. I can remember when I was so excited when I went off to Bible school in England, because I had such a tremendous hunger for the Bible. I didn't know it.

I was a new Christian and I was so excited that the thought of being taught the Bible and just they had five hours a day where we went to school that they taught the Bible. And I thought, this is unbelievable. Five hours of nothing but the Bible.

Well, it was often a school that was pretty remote from the rest of the world around. I mean, the first week or two, man, I couldn't get enough. I'm taking notes.

I'm recording it. I got myself a recorder. This was back in the old reel to reel days.

And I had this recorder going, listening. I'd be writing notes as they're doing. And then because I wanted to know it desperately, then in the afternoons after classes were over, I'd go listen to the tape over again.

So because I wanted to get it in, get it in. And for the first couple of weeks, I did that to every study there was. I listened.

I wrote. I taped it. I listened to the tape, went over my notes, you know, tried to refine my notes, get my thoughts down better.

And I did that for the first two or three weeks. Then after about three weeks, you know, I found time to, you know, they're playing some football and some of the guys out there. I need a little football, you know, or something.

And I'd be out playing football or there'd be. And next day, I didn't need to listen to all the tapes. I mean, there's a lot of stuff to listen to, you know, and then and, you know, and then after a little while, you know, another couple of weeks, you know, I didn't even need to record the stupid things, you know, sort of a thing.

And and then, in fact, I think I've learned so much now. I don't even need to take notes after, you know, or whatever, after a little while, because the sharpness of of studying, of listening, of learning, I believe, is in direct response to a need to utilize the information. And until that happens, until there is something that you need things for, I think we tend to not listen an awfully lot.

But when there is something that, you know, that we we've got to know, it's amazing how much sharply we can listen. And I think that whether I'd suggest some of you take a Sunday school class, find something there to where you're going to start, you know, praying for your neighbors and going and talking and sharing with them and wanting to minister to them. Or Lord, use me at the office, or I want to be a witness in a testimony.

I want an outlet to where I am specifically putting myself and my service right out in front. And it needs to be done. Because I think that if we're not doing that, next thing you know, you're not sitting here listening

to be coming to the studies here to want to grow.

And pretty soon, you know, you're just kind of coming here to say, well, let's see. I had a little Chuck's Sunday. Monday night, I ate a little Corson, you know, or something.

And I had a little Broderson and had a little Corson. Let's see what McClure tastes like. Not as good as, you know, Broderson did that.

I listened to Broderson on this much better, much, much, much, much better. You know, or next thing you know, you're a critic. Next thing you know, you don't need all you just know whether it's good or not.

You're not, you don't eat it, of course. You just simply smell it. And you're like some sort of a food taster, not because you need the nourishment.

You're so gluttoned, you couldn't eat another thing. But the thing is, is are we serving? Is there something in our life where we are serving? And to the degree so often we are serving is the degree that we need to grow. We need his word.

We need to be touched. And here is Jesus there is saying, in a sense, make sure you're serving. Make sure that there's a, that your life is right on the edge, wanting to be a servant, wanting to be poured out, wanting to take of your time, your resources, your gifts, your energy, your life.

God, what is it of me that you can take and give? And I don't want to do it before men to be seen of men. I want to do it before you because of what you've given to me, that my life can be lived for your glory and for your purpose. And I think one of the greatest tragedies in the body of Christ is how few people really live with a sense of expectancy and desire themselves to be used.

Sometimes I think we're like Gideon. You remember the story of Gideon, of course, back in the Old Testament when they got about 120,000 Midianites all around them and they're just wrecking havoc in all of Israel, ripping them off and they're bringing in their harvest. And then, you know, the caves, they're tramping out, you know, the wheat, you know, so they can kind of have enough to live on while they're being ripped off by all these enemies.

And then the Lord comes to Gideon. He says, Gideon, we got to turn this around. I'm going to use you, you mighty man of valor.

And he said, I don't think so. And he says, yes, you are. And I'm going to use you.

And then they go back and forth and quibble about that for a while until finally Gideon gives in. And then the Lord says to him, he says, I want you to blow the trumpet and call the people we're going to put to get an army. And 32,000 show up, quite a number, but not very many compared to 120,000 that they're against.

But then the Lord looks at Gideon. He says, Gideon, we got too many. And he says, no, no, no, you're talking to the wrong, you keep getting the wrong guy.

You need to go to Midian. I said, they got too many. You know, he says, no, you got too many.

And he says, we got to cut it down. And so he says, you tell everybody who's afraid that they can go home. Well, Gideon probably thought goodbye, because he was quite afraid himself.

Literally, the Lord told him another chapter later, he says, Gideon, and he says, you don't, you still, after he proved to him over and over, he says, Gideon, if you're afraid, then you and your servant, you go down into the, you know, the enemy's camp and listen to them and see what they've got to say. And the very next verse, so Gideon and his man go down where? Down to the enemy's camp, which tells you what? He's afraid. And he gets down there.

And then they listen to a guy that has this dream. And they talk about this huge dream and all that's happening with it. And then the guy looks at him.

He says, oh, man, that is nothing other than Gideon and the sword of the Lord. And Gideon, we're done for. We're history.

And then Gideon hears the enemy. Here's the enemy after God says, I want to use you. I want to use you.

I want to use you. And then he goes down and the enemy says, God's going to use Gideon. And Gideon says, wow, we're going to be used.

And he goes back. I think if I was God, sometimes I'd have a real complex. I mean, you tell people things all the time and they never believe.

And then the enemy comes along and says, that guy is something. And he's me. OK, well, let's go for it.

And the next thing you know, he's putting his life into service. But then as he's cutting the army down, he goes to thirty two thousand, you know, the story down to ten and then Gideon. Then the interesting thing is, Lord says, there's still too many.

We got to cut it down again. And he says, I now want you to take him down and have him get something to drink. And he says, and the ones that lap it up like a dog, their laps up, you know, the water, he says, set those aside.

And the ones that kind of get down on their knees and are, you know, drinking it in, just enjoying it, laying in the water, he says, get those things off. And so he there's three hundred of them that kind of came like a dog where they're up and looking around and lapping up the water, but standing essentially. And then there's ninety seven hundred of them just fall in the water and just I am so thirsty and just drinking it in.

And it's interesting because they're ninety seven hundred of them. The Lord says here, you let all those there that just had to lay in it, let them go home. And the ones there that are kind of looking around, standing ready for battle, they're wondering where the enemy is looking around.

Take those. And there's three hundred, ninety seven hundred of them. All of them needed water.

But the interesting thing is, it's like the Lord told Gideon. He says, you go down there and people that spend an unnecessary inordinate amount of time and energy and effort on necessary aspects of life. Tell them to go home.

But the ones there that have a sense of their life being used and there's a battle at hand. Tell them to stay. And it's interesting because ninety seven percent went home.

Three percent looked there and said, we are ready for battle. And with those three hundred. And sometimes you look at the body of Christ in a lot of the service.

One of the things I will say, I think is tremendously different about Calvary Chapel. And I mean this because I see a lot of things around. But the is that there is a much higher percentage, I think, of that.

The word. And when you learn it, you grow in it. A much higher percent are being used.

But there's still I wonder how many that would even sit here tonight and say, God, I don't know where my life is being used. Am I somebody that I'm spending a lot of time on unnecessary things? And therefore, I am not even aware of the real eternal needs on how my life ought to be put into your service. And what things can I back off on and make myself more effective to be used for you? And here, when somebody looks at that, God, use my life soon will come and pass.

Only what's done for you will last. Let's get on with it. And here is Jesus, he says, when you serve, when you give, when you put your life and time and energy and effort and resources, do it.

There with all your heart, a pure heart, essentially, is what he's got to say. And then after he says there of act of being somebody there, you understand service. Understand service.

The second thing he goes on, he says, understand seeking. Seeking God essentially there, he says, and when thou prayest. And then he gets into the whole aspect of prayer.

Don't make it that it's again, as the hypocrites who love to be seen of men. And he says, but rather than that, you go into your closet and open your heart to God. There, he says, the factors, he says, that'll keep your life where it ought to be.

These wonderful things that happened in chapter five of where I'm desperate for you touch my life, change my life. I think some of the things that keep them in focus is now when somebody is about the business of serving and they're about the business constantly of seeking God. There, he says, when not if you pray, but you want to develop a prayer life.

I want to maintain communion with God. And I want to see to it that day by day as he teaches us how to pray the day by day. That we know what it is to come before God.

And when we do, you know, our father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. That there is something about that when I'm staying, not just simply serving God, but constantly seeking God.

That in the seeking, I'm seeking my father that is in heaven with all of his power and all of his glory and all of his majesty. God, I want to keep the focus on you who has loved me and redeemed me and given yourself for me. Be enthroned.

Be my father who sits in heaven, holy, separate, undefiled. Magnificent is your name. Be enthroned in my life today.

That is, I believe, something that God wants us to do every day. Every day we ought to be looking, Lord, take my life and use me. I don't know about you, but I'm the type.

And I mean, it's a shame, I guess. I can only hope everybody's as miserable a person as I am. But it's my only hope, I suppose.

But my nature is that if I do not consciously offer myself to God, my flesh says, well, by, you know, you didn't take the option number one. Option door number two is me. You've got me now because you didn't deliberately offer your life.

Open your heart. God be enthroned. Jesus be king.

Work within me. Fill me. Take my life.

Take my words. Take my relationships. Give me a sensitivity to the world around.

I don't know whether you're some. Maybe some people are spiritual enough that you can every once every week or two. You can just kind of pray and boy, yeah, man, I got enough communion with God for weeks.

I don't have to check in. I'm walking in his spirit, his love. I can wake up day after day, week in and week out.

And just hello, heaven, you know, or something. I don't know if you do that. Maybe some of you do.

I don't. I wake up and I say, oh, no, it's me again. What am I going to do today? You know, or something.

And unless the Lord, something happens where I just set a time in a process every day. Jesus be enthroned. Establish yourself.

Take my life. Take my day. Jesus said sufficient under the day is the evil thereof.

There's enough trials every day of our life there that what I had yesterday has very little effect on today. It's got to be something where now if yesterday was anything at all, it ought to just help me renew the conviction and the communion and the fellowship today that I wanted again. Now, maybe you're one of these people that tomorrow morning you're just going to wake up and, you know, people are going to come to you for devotions, you know, or they're going to come to you.

Just smile at me. Your power and your is wonderful. Or they may look at you and be more honest.

But the point of it is, is that we need here. Jesus says you want to keep the exchange life. You want to stay in victory.

You want to have your heart changed, your relationships, your anger. You want to deal with your covetous heart or your lustful heart or your inability to maintain commitments and keep relationships deep and strong and to keep your word and to know what it is to turn the other cheek and walk the second mile and give to him that asketh of thee. He says, then you need to have a life that not only there is service, but there's constant seeking of God.

There's a constant opening up of our heart to him. A constant need, just like we need air, like we need, you know, what I breathed yesterday, it was OK yesterday, I guess. I lived through the whole day.

But I need fresh air today. I ate yesterday. I don't remember much of what it was, but it must have worked because I'm still overweight today, you know, or something.

But that did not stop me from eating today. Every day. And so the same thing with the Lord.

We need to eat spiritually. We need to have something that we set within our lives to see that he's enthroned. If I'm going to maintain, I've got to maintain, you know, my service and I've got to maintain seeking.

And then the next thing is he goes into in verse 16. He says, moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites of a sad countenance. They disfigure their faces.

But here, interestingly enough, there's a third thing. Again, there's obviously very specifically their fasting. Which is a self-denial, you know, of our own physical desires, physical food, physical appetite.

And in the denial of that, it opens up and essentially greater understanding and wisdom and perception spiritually. But essentially, to me, what fasting is all about when I kind of step back and this is what we're doing tonight. We're looking back and in some broad strokes and general statements.

And Jesus here to me, he is saying, listen, if you want to maintain day in and day out, week in, week out, year in, year out, a fellowship, a communion, seeing your life being in the place it ought to be. I believe here he's looking there and he says then maintain an active service. Maintain an active act and heart and desire of seeking God and maintain an active life of practical sanctification.

And what I mean by this is that essentially what is happening here is on one hand, Jesus in John 15, he says, I'm the vine. You know, the first one, I'm the vine, you are the branches. But he goes on, he says, every branch in me that beareth fruit, beareth not fruit, he taketh away.

But every branch that bears fruit, he purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit. One of the interesting things Jesus says there that a fruit, a tree that is even bearing fruit, a tree that is growing and it's healthy and you're looking at it. One of the thing a good gardener does is a good gardener sees it and he goes and he deliberately trims it, cuts it back.

And every branch that's bearing fruit, he says, we trim it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Any of us, any of you that are doing gardening, you know that great truth. You've got to prune things if you want to have them really grow and be strong and healthy.

Years ago, when I started gardening, you know, and you plant some things and you know, you get a house and you just want to get some plants in it, you know, and you just go get your plants and you get them in there and they start growing. And I can remember my father-in-law, I love gardening, he says, you got to trim those. No, no, no, they're growing.

I got to have them grow. I need something here that says there's life, you know, and so you got to trim them. I'm too impatient.

I'm not going to trim it. I want it to grow. And then, of course, the thing, you kind of let it grow.

And then when the day comes that you do need to trim it, all the growth is now constantly on the outside. And there, when you begin to trim it, now you just got these sticks that you go back to and you realize, oh man, this is ugly. But if you trimmed it constantly, if you had just constantly been trimming hedges on how thick they grow, how full, how beautiful they are.

Well, essentially, what fasting is, is fasting to me is just self-imposed pruning. It's self-imposed denial of self. It's self-trimming back, essentially, there in our own heart, in our own life, stepping back from our own

gratification of ourself, saying, wait a minute, I want to deny myself.

I want to constantly have my life being trimmed, being pruned, being taken back, being to where in a fresh way, you know, things are stripped away and we're starting growth all over again. It's a wonderful thing. And one of the things that people have sometimes looked at me and they've wondered, because through the years, I've moved around more than I suppose most Calvary pastors have.

And I was here for four years, then went up and did the Bible college up in Lake Arrowhead when we started it up there and then started, you know, Calvary and Lake Arrowhead from up there and some other ones and then left there and came down to Redlands and was there for a few years. And then I got to go, I'm out of here. And every time something would kind of get okay, where it was a little stable and it was coming and it was growing, I'd say, okay, you want it? I'm out of here.

I'm going to go start something else. And to me, one of the most people look at that and say, why do you do this? And I say, I don't know. In the basically, you know, all my creditors find the address in a certain number of years and I got to move, you know, or something.

But the but no, to me, one of the things that is always for me personally, been one of the most exciting times in my life is when I go off into something and there's no income. There's no way it may happen. I don't know how it's going to work.

And but yet at the same time, it's almost this deliberate. I love to put myself into times where either God comes through or I don't know how it's going to happen. I don't know how it is going to work.

But the but through those times, there's some of the most wonderful times. It sharpens my spiritual senses. It gets me back where I'm afraid again, humanly.

Either God, you got to come through. There's no tomorrow. There's no hope.

There were down to nothing. I don't know how it can go on. And yet those are some of the most wonderful times, insightful times in life to me is when everything's back, you know, back to zero.

And something about to me fasting here. Jesus said, if you want to stay in fellowship, you want to see your life be used. He says, first of all, make sure you're in service and then make sure you're seeking me and then make sure you're sanctifying.

Don't have to wait for an external trial. Paul, on one hand in Romans five, he says, even so, we glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation works, patience, patience, experience, experience, hope, hope, make it not a shame for the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who's given to us. But here, Paul says, you know, tribulation works.

Tribulation, you know, when how many times your life is going along and, you know, you've got it nice and comfortable and everything's hunky dory and all this. Jesus, this is wonderful. And it's only wonderful because you finally got yourself to a place.

You don't need him. You ever notice that about us? We work so desperately to where we can get to where, Lord, I want to get to where I don't need you. We never say it that way because it sounds too honest.

So we say other stuff. Lord, please work this and do this and do this. And what we're really doing is our flesh, crying out to get ourself in this nice, comfortable situation where everything's hunky dory.

And then we get it where it's hunky dory and spiritually, it's monotonous until finally God has to pull the carpet up and then we're crying out again. Well, essentially, what is happening in fasting is it's self-imposed tribulation. It's somebody there says, God, I want to make sure my life is seeking and serving and living and hearing and responding in denying whatever there is of myself, that I am open to wherever it is you want to go, whatever it is you want to do, whatever it is you want to show me, whatever you want to reveal to me.

And that here, Jesus, he said, you want to see your life stay here. We invest this, you know, change life, pour in spirit, and we fill you with the spirit. And we give you a merciful heart and a peacemaker's heart.

And we give you a pure heart and all these things in your salt and your light. And he says, now we've got to keep these things at the forefront. And I want you to serve.

And I want you to pray and seek. And I want you to make sure that you're practically out of your own heart, wanting to stay in shape spiritually. You're wanting to constant.

That's what fasting is all about. You're turning the dials back to zero and say, Lord, speak to me. What am I doing? Where am I going? What it is, you know, what is it that is really going on? He then goes on in verse 19, from Matthew chapter six there.

And he says, lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and dust is corrupt and thieves break through and steal. And here he goes on now. He says, after that, you're somebody there that you find yourself to where you're you're seeking God as you ought to be or you're serving him and you're seeking him.

And there's practical, personal sanctification and purifying and it's going on. He says, then set your eyes on eternal things. Keep your eyes on eternal things constantly.

Lay not for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and dust is corrupt and thieves break through and steal. And he looks there and he says, don't worry about this life. Don't find yourself constantly worrying about, you know, what it is that you are acquiring.

Are you keeping up with the Joneses? Do you have what these everybody else has that is that isn't serving and isn't seeking? It isn't, you know, putting their life out there into the eternal things. But there's they're living in this world and they're working and building, doing this, acquiring. And that's on sometimes you can go down the Christian life and you can look over and say, man, look at this.

Look at all the stuff these people have. I do not have stuff like they do. Man, I don't know if I should be serving and I should be seeking and I should be, you know, denying myself.

Look at all I'm denying myself of that I could be having. The enemy's constantly whispering these things. Do you realize you could have a brand new Maserati? Instead of, you know, all these stupid trips you're taking over to the mission field and the missionaries you're supporting and the people you're giving to and the Sunday school class you're doing.

You could actually have your very own Maserati. That's how much you've given away, you know, for the kingdom of Shmevin, you know, or whatever sort of a thing. And the flesh sits there and thinks, you mean if I hadn't done that, I could have a Maserati? You know, and maybe, maybe there's a lot of things that somebody could have had.

But when somebody's looking there and saying, you know, and they, if they're going to find themselves constantly looking over at the treasures on earth, at the things they could have, and they're going to be disturbed by what they don't have. They're going to be in trouble. Jesus said, don't get caught in this trap.

And, you know, sometimes it's funny, I may run into some of the people that I, you know, that I went through high school with or went through college with. And once in a while you hear about some of them and what they've done and the things they've got and the successes they have, you know, and something. And then, you know, I'm here, you're in the ministry or something.

And I'm also a very good capitalist. That's one thing I'm very proud of. I'm a wonderful capitalist.

Basically, anything anybody gives me, I'm a very good American. I put it right back into the economy, you know, to help the rest in this country. I'm a very good capitalist.

But it's something to where you see people that they have acquired and acquired and acquired. And, you know, and sometimes the enemy wants to come and say, do you realize what you could have had? Maybe. And of course, I wonder, I'd probably be in jail or, you know, bankrupt or, you know, who knows what God saved me and the rest of the world from had I gone another direction.

But when we find ourself with our life saying, God, I want to serve you. I want to live before you. And therefore, here Jesus is simply saying, don't worry.

He goes on in the chapter, and we're going to have to keep on because we are going to finish this here in the next few minutes. And by hook or by crook or just by going off the air, which they do at nine. But the but he says there, he says, don't worry about these things.

And but then to keep it moving in verse 25, he says, therefore, I say to you, take no thought for your life. Don't be anxious what you're going to eat and what you'll drink. And and yet for your body, what you should put on is not life more than meat in the body than raiment.

Here he looks there and he says, don't worry about what you don't have. Don't be anxious about all of these things, he says here, the person there that is finding their life to where they're serving and where they're seeking and where they're sanctifying and keeping their heart and their life before God. That's where their life ought to be lived.

That's where every one of us, when we look back at our life one day, Lord, did I serve you? Did I live in fellowship and communion with you? Did day by day, were you enthroned in my life? Were you king? Were you leading me where you wanted to go? Were you at the helm of my life? And there was my life constantly being brought before you for inspection, constantly there, you know, seeking and sanctifying, setting my life apart for for service for the king in the kingdom. And then in there where God was, I free of this life. And then in it, somebody that lives that way, they're also going to learn to live by faith.

So he says, don't be anxious. Don't be anxious for tomorrow, what you're going to eat and what you're going to drink and wherewithal you'll be closed. He says after these things, the heathen have to worry

about them.

The Gentiles are the heathen. Those that don't have a heavenly father, they have to take care of themselves. So they're sweating these things out.

But you don't. Find there the great desire to just live your life. The person here that's living out the sermon of the mount.

Their desire is just say, God, where do you want to go? What do you want to do? Not worry about what they have or they don't have. And sometimes God does the amazing things. I look at somebody like Abraham.

You think about this man here at 75 years old, 65 year old wife in a very, very wealthy man. Unbelievably wealthy. He had 300 servants and God speaks to him.

You know, in this, in this huge enterprise of an existence he had. And he says, Abraham, go into a land that I will show thee. In Abraham, there was something within his heart and his life where he says, Sarah, we're going where? I don't know where God chose us, which is where? I just know it's Southeast, maybe somewhere.

Actually, West, you know, or something. But the, I mean, here is he goes out. But can you imagine to me? I mean, on one hand, Sarah, I mean, she probably had a nice club membership there with all the ladies there.

It's, I mean, you know, down there and she had her microwaves and she had her, you know, all the online services that anybody with 300 service servants could have. I'm sure she had everything. Earl of Caldes, the most progressive city in the world could offer.

And now to go out and live as a stranger in a pilgrim. They're in a world there, you know, in a tent. They're traveling around to see what it is.

What a wonderful thing. We would never heard of Abraham. We didn't never heard of Sarah had he not said, God, take my life and use it.

And there those two became the mother and the father of all the household faith. Now, some people could say, look at what they gave up. Look at the treasures they gave up.

But look at the eternal treasures they gained. By looking at their life and always being able to say, God, take it, use it. You look at Moses, a guy there who had the world at his feet.

And yet he forsook all the treasures and pleasures of Egypt, counting the reproach of Christ, greater riches than all of Egypt. I mean, here a guy who could have died like King Tut. I suppose he could have sat there and had one of them.

But if he did just stay the son of the daughter of Pharaoh in line to become Pharaoh himself, Josephus says, if the guy would have just sat out his term, he could have had, you know, he could have had a grave like King Tut. I mean, he gave up that beautiful cemetery plot, you know, there. I mean, to go out, to follow God, to suffer the reproach of Christ and call them greater riches than all of Egypt.

And instead, the poor guy, he was so broke when he died, he couldn't even afford a funeral. And God had to dig a hole all by himself and bury the poor fellow. But let me ask you, which way would you rather die? Would you rather die with, you know, with surrounded by the world encased in gold, or there's something to where God took you up on the hill and he dug your grave by his very hand and put you in, brought you home.

And you know, the interesting thing is that's the way life really is for many. That when we look there, what keeps our life in the Sermon on the Mount, what keeps us vital, what keeps us going is that when we look at Jesus Christ and, Lord, keep me, keep me in service. Keep me, Lord, there to where I, you know, want to be seeking you.

Keep me to where I'm sanctifying. I'm seen as my life usable. Am I there where I want? I don't want to get comfortable.

I don't want to just get set in my ways. Keep me usable all the way through my life. And I realize part of the consequence of that is, is that there may be some treasures and pleasures that may cost me, but I'd rather be with you.

I'd rather be about your business, serving you. He then goes on into chapter seven. See, we're almost done.

And actually, we really are because a lot of it's just exhortations that we did recently. But then he had another important thing. He says, judge not lest ye be judged.

And now he turns on, you know, kind of is one of the last great important things. He says, now, another great tendency that can get you in trouble is now you judge. And he says, you want to keep your life being used.

He says, see that you find yourself serving me. That you find yourself seeking me, sanctifying. Don't worry about the treasures.

Grow in faith, trusting me as Moses did, as Abraham. And one after another, this unbelievable list in Hebrews 11. I was going to look at those, but read them yourself.

We haven't got time tonight. But then, then he looks here in chapter seven. He says, now, judge not lest ye be judged.

And in a sense there, one of the things is, is I believe this is specifically of condemning other people, but it is also there to where you find yourself the judge of other people. And there's a tendency. Sometimes people, they do start serving and they do start seeking and they do start growing and they are being used and they are walking away from a lot of the things that they could have or could be or could be doing or whatever else.

And they are living the way that God maybe wants them to do. But there's a very big tendency sometimes to look around at others as a God. Look at all the rest of the body of Christ.

They aren't. They, they should be like me. And the Lord says, that's a good way to mess up yourself.

Really good one. You start judging other people and evaluating them. Leave them alone.

You know, it's like when, when Martha on one hand, when she's just doing her job, she thinks, you know, she's serving the Lord, cooking a meal. She sees Mary over here worshiping. She says, Lord, judge her.

Would you judge that sister of mine? She's sitting around worshiping, you know, and she should be serving with me in the kitchen. You know, and so often how easily we can judge other people, who they are and what they're doing and how they're doing it. And they ought to be doing it like us.

And here the Lord says, you want to keep your life being used. Are you serving? Are you seeking? Are you separating yourself and seeking God and then through even areas of self-denial as my life being used effectively? Am I seeing the kingdom and in the process of laying up eternal things and being about the business of that which is eternal? Am I free just to trust you through all the days of my life to take care of everything I have need of? And these are the things, as Jesus looks at us at the Sermon on the Mount and of just continuously keeping our life where they ought to be. And then he goes on into a series of exhortations there, which we just went through.

And so hopefully they're recent enough that I don't need to comment on them, but that we just look there and say, God, this is very important. Those are what those exhortations are all about. You know, when he when he goes on there in chapter seven, you know, laying out there after he tells us to ask and that God's going to take, seek and you'll find, knock and it shall be open.

But then he goes in to enter into the straight gate. He looks at the importance there of seeing to it that we are following him wholeheartedly. Seeing to it that when we build a house, some people build a house on rock, some build it upon sand and it all goes away.

And you and I, when we find ourselves, Lord, am I building on the rock? Serving, seeking, letting you purify and fast and pray and wait upon God when we know what it is to do those things. God has a way, I believe, of keeping us fresh, keeping our life fresh where it really ought to be until he comes for us. And don't end up on a shelf somewhere being a critic.

But rather than that word, God, take my life and use it. Just today, when on Wednesdays, Chuck and Brian and John and myself, we usually on Wednesdays try to meet together for a few hours. And during that time, a gentleman, wonderful man, who I've known for many years, came in for some counseling.

And and so we all four sat down with him and he had made some mistakes in his life. But in the process of it, everybody was trying to help this guy out and said, you know something you need to go do this. You need to back off from service.

You need to go do this with your life. And here's all the things you need to do. And so he's kind of looking around and said, well, maybe I, man, I, I guess I am a mess and I did blow it and I got to get things right.

The next thing you know, this guy has got himself where he's people little by little. He's completely out of service, completely out of being used, feeling so useless, being so guilty, and he's only getting worse. And it's worth sitting there talking to him.

And it had to be tough for him because all four of us seem to be loaded for bear, you know, on a thing. And and actually, the only one he needed to talk to was was there. And I don't know what Chuck and John and Brian were there for, because I but but since they all seem to agree with me entirely, it was OK.

It was really kind of funny because each one of us, the moment every time there was almost a little bit of a comma, somebody slowed down, another one jumped in. You get him. OK, he's almost OK.

You get him in. But it was just all of us essentially saying, what are you doing? Not serving God. You the work has been done on the cross.

You are cleansed. You are forgiven. You belong to him.

Now get in service. Get about the business. If you're going to wait till you're perfect, you'll never be used.

You can't be used. You'll be in heaven. That's the only perfect people there are.

You got to die to be perfect. And then you're no good here anymore. But so now the point of it is, is that we just God then take who I am and use me now.

If some of you are waiting to be perfect to go teach a sixth grade Sunday school class, believe me, you don't need to be perfect to do that. You just need to be stupid. You know, that's the first thing I ever did.

It transformed my life. From that point on, all I wanted to do was serve the Lord. I'm serious.

I came wanting to be God. I want you to use me. And I came to the pastor saying, here, I want to be used thinking he'd look at me and say, you know, you're you got you got destiny all over you.

We're going to rent the Coliseum and you're going to preach, you know, or something. And he says, you know, we need help with a Sunday sixth grade Sunday school boys. And I went and began to serve.

And that was the most exciting time. I couldn't believe, you know, the things that God would do. The kids oftentimes were distracted.

They weren't I, you know, I'd have to do everything I could to get them interested. But the amazing thing. What happened to me is I'm in the word and I'm studying, I'm getting a message and I'm praying and God used my life to even made it.

I'm convinced personally to this day, if God can use anybody to speak to a sixth grader, you can now raise the dead and heal the sick and cast out demons. From that point on, there is nothing you cannot do. But when somebody just says, God, take my life and use it.

And then when that happens, your prayer life will happen. You'll find yourself praying. And then when you're praying, you'll find yourself looking at all the ways it isn't and why it isn't being used.

And there'll be pruning that'll be going on. There'll be fasting. There'll be God.

Show me. Cut me off. Show me where I'm in the way.

And when we find ourself, God, use my life. I don't to me, I'd hate to be somebody that when you get to heaven, all of a sudden you're there and the Lord looks at us and says, well, where have you been for the last 30 years? I'd tell you where I've been. I've been at Calvary Chapel at Costa Mesa.

Yes, I have. Yes, sir. I've been through more Bible studies than most preachers, you know, or something.

And I believe him. Did you do anything with it? Oh, I did. I did think, you know, and you can't remember.

We ought to be saying, yes, I used it every day in my life. And said, God, take me and touch me and use me. Father, we thank you for your love and we thank you for your desire to take our lives and use them.

And Lord, I pray that you would maybe some of us feel like we're on the shelf and some of us can look back and remember times when we were there was salt and it had this savor and we had a light and people could see where they're going and we could help them. And Lord, somehow another with time where we're sitting and we're listening and we're almost a critic instead of there were somebody that's desperate for a word from heaven that we can now go and use it and see our lives be used. And Lord, I thank you for this wonderful sermon.

There's a sermon on the Mount, Jesus, and I just pray that it would be one that we would find ourself saying, Lord, show me and teach me and use me. Take my life and use me. I don't want to be the 97 percent that went home.

I want to be part of the 3 percent there, whatever that number is that found themselves where you look and says here you see the battle you're prepared for with all your heart. Now you go do it and I'm going to use you to destroy a world that's been attacking the kingdom of heaven. And Lord, may you take our lives and may you touch them and may you encourage them and strengthen them.

Lord, may there not be a person here who doesn't realize how they could be used. It ought to just be the question of us of Lord, where and how do you now want to use me? I know you can now show me ways, Lord, that my life can be used and until you come again. And then one day I can look back and just realize, God, thank you for lighting a fire into me, putting it in my heart and saying, let's get on with it.

And so, Lord, we thank you and we praise you for your word and for your love. In Jesus name, amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/8/SID8700.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/don-mcclure/matthew-6-overview/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net