

Righteousness Consisting of Ideas (Attitudes)

by Paris Reidhead

True Christianity is about a vital and real relationship with God, and using all of life for His glory.

Duration: 30:04

Scripture: Matthew 6:19

Topics: "Righteousness"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the transformation that occurs when a person comes to Christ. They emphasize the power of God's grace and the work of the Holy Spirit in making the old man new. The sermon focuses on the importance of having a changed heart and living out that transformation in various aspects of life, including religious service and financial matters. The speaker highlights the contrast between superficial, self-seeking actions and genuine acts of love and devotion to God. The sermon references Matthew 6 and emphasizes the need to do things for the right reasons, not for personal recognition or approval.

Transcript

You turn please to the portion that we read as our New Testament reading, Matthew chapter 6. We begin our consideration with the 19th verse. We understand this portion, however, by reviewing just a moment what we have seen previously. We saw in the Beatitudes the description of the heart that Christ's changed, the man that has experienced his transforming love.

See, there is power in the blood, there's power in the grace of God, power in this work of the Spirit, making that old man new, making all things new. For if any man is in Christ, he's a new creation. This is what he does.

He gives one this kind of a heart. We see the outworking of this heart toward the law, to keep it, to fulfill it, just as Christ kept it and fulfilled it himself and on the cross in order that he might fulfill it in us by his Spirit. Then that 20th verse declares that our righteousness must be of another kind than that of the Pharisees.

For he said, except your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter the kingdom of heaven. Why? Well, their righteousness consisted of ideas. Is there anything wrong with ideas? No.

The only trouble is that you can miss heaven by 18 inches if your salvation consists merely in ideas. It isn't what's in your head that's going to save you, it's what's in your heart. What a tragedy it is that the seventh chapter of Matthew tells us about people that come up to the door and rap on the door and expect to be put in and invited in.

They're sent away because they had all their salvation up here and never made the migration down to their heart. This is the Pharisees' trouble. Oh, they were fundamental, orthodox in terms of their day and thinking as compared to the Sadducees.

They were evangelistic, missionary, premillennial, devout, fasting, tithing, praying, all of these things they did, but they had not life. And so the rest of the sermon, the rest of chapter 5 and chapter 6 is to establish the contrast, the contradistinction between that which is superficial, shallow, and light, that which is vital, real. The difference is this, two people give on, but one person gives on so that he can have a reputation of being an almsgiver, that he can be seen, be honored, be recognized.

His appetite for status insatiably demands approval, recognition, and gratitude for every service presented. This is Phariseeism. The one that has been born of God gives alms, but he doesn't want his right hand to know what his left hand is doing, because he's not doing it to be seen or known.

He's doing it because he loves Christ. This is Christianity. Two people pray.

One person prays to get a reputation of being a prayer. Well, he's eloquent, fortunate, and the other person prays because he loves God. Burdened for souls, longs to worship the living God.

He goes alone into the closet and closes the world out. He doesn't need the approval of men because he has God. God is the answer to the heart's need.

So, both pray. One person has his reward. One person prays so that he can acquire status as a spiritual person.

The other person prays because he loves God deeply and earnestly. Now, remember, it's not your responsibility to tell how anybody else is praying. Oh, it's so simple and easy, you know, to sit and take the truth and put the pitchfork under it and pass it back over our shoulders and say, I wish so-and-so were here to hear this, or I wish so-and-so would read this.

No, no, no, no, no. That isn't what he's saying at all. He's not giving you the standards by which you can judge others.

He's giving us the standards by which we can judge ourselves. It's all the difference in the world. So, he said this, look well to your motives.

Why do you do what you do? If it's to be seen, to be approved, there's no value at all. Except, of course, remember the alms given do help the hungry. There's no value for the glory of God or for your own joy.

And there's the other spiritual service of fasting. One person fasts to be seen fasting. And the other one fasts in order that he might see God glorified.

Thus, he says, intention, purpose, motive changes all religious activities from mere nothing to that which will endure and abide, be to the glory of God. So, he's taking Christianity away from almsgiving and away from praying and away from fasting. He's putting it down in the heart.

Well, that's right. The scripture says, with a heart man believeth unto righteousness. It's the heart.

This is where all of our relationship to Christ is when it's vital and real. Christ comes into the heart. And it's with the heart we believe, with the heart we've committed.

What do we mean by heart? That organ forces blood through our bodies? No. We mean the personality in its total submission to the sovereignty of Christ. Part of you that thinks, feels, will, gladly, totally, permanently abandon to the one end of glorifying Christ in all your spiritual activities.

Oh, it's so easy to acquire manners, attitudes that are superficial. She isn't here and I don't mind telling it. She might be embarrassed.

The first time I really was aware of my wife was at Hospital of Ohio in college. They were in speech class, vocal and literary interpretation of the Bible. We were working together.

The teacher assigned various people to work and help each other. Well, I've been a preacher, a country preacher. I guess that's the worst kind, easiest place to acquire superficiality.

You know, I was reading the scripture. When I finished, I can't, I can see it now. She said, come down, come down.

Why do you talk like that? Why do you sound like that? Who were you trying to impress? Well, I've been, I had that then and I've never escaped from it and I'm very grateful for it. It's so simple. It's so easy to acquire superficial mannerisms and attitudes, lose reality.

Once in a while, I meet people, you know, and I say, they can't be for real. Nobody's like that anymore. There just isn't anyone like that, but there they are.

They're just like that. Oh, that God should show us that our faith is not in mannerisms and attitudes and acts and all of this, but it's in a relationship with the living God. Christ comes into the heart.

He changes the man from within. It's awfully easy to acquire superficial reactions and mannerisms and even perform pietistic services. It doesn't count.

God looks on the heart. He sees what's there. So he said, you search your heart.

You test your heart. Why do you do what you do? Why do you talk the way you talk? Why do you pray? Why do you fast? Why do you give? Why? It isn't what, it's why that makes the difference. Well, now, if this is true in religious service, don't you expect it to be true also in our financial life? And he's talked to us now about what seems to be religious and verse 18 goes right into verse 19 and he immediately goes into another realm, another area, the practical, the economic, the business.

He said, this is what a Christian is going to do in relation to the law. This is what a Christian is going to do in relation to fasting and tithing and praying. This is the kind of a person he's going to be in all of these various relationships, but he hasn't touched one yet.

What kind of a person is he going to be in relation to business? That's where he's coming now. And he begins in a very lovely way. Whenever I read this portion, I think of John Wesley's sermon on it.

John Wesley was a wise and good man. God greatly blessed and used him, but he often had unresponsive hearers. They tell about a Scotsman.

I do not believe this is true, particularly I'm speaking of my own when I speak of them. So fellow Scotsman, let's not take offense at this, but a Scotsman came down from Edinburgh and into one of Wesley's meetings and he heard him preach. His first point was, earn all you can.

The man's heart just blossomed out and opened up. He said, ah, that's preaching. And then John Wesley's point was, second point was, save all you can.

And the man said, I've never heard such an eloquent and wise man before. But he got up and left the church when Mr. Wesley announced his third point, give all you can. This spoiled the message.

This is exactly the thing that you find here with the Lord Jesus Christ. I suppose that what Wesley said is absolutely true. He is saying it in his own words.

Do you mean to say that the Lord is indicating that a person shouldn't have a checking account or a bank account laid out up for yourselves treasures upon earth? Do you mean to say that a person shouldn't have capital with which to conduct his business, or shouldn't have made some provision for the needs of his family for tomorrow and the next day? I don't believe that's what the Lord is saying at all. I think that what he is saying here is as clear as his words are, that you lay up treasures. You know, money can be just money.

It doesn't have to be a treasure. Do you know that? Money can be a tool, not a treasure. It depends upon how you feel about it.

If you look on it as a tool, it's just something that's there to be used like an axe when it's needed, or a shovel when there's a hole to be dug, your attitude toward it will probably stay right. But when you set your love upon it, set your affection upon it, when it becomes a treasure to you, something that you want to hoard, something you want a husband, something in which you find satisfaction, something in which you find pleasure, something in which you find comfort, something in which you find security and find rest, then it has become a substitute for God. This is what he said.

It's become a substitute for God. Just as a person needs ease and rest and relaxation and release from tension, so how does he secure it? Well, the unwise person will seek to secure that relaxation and release from tension and ease of mind from a bottle, from alcohol. What has he done? He is securing by an illegal and forbidden means the kind of ease and peace and rest that can only come to a human being from a right relationship with God.

It's a perversion of human personality. It's a prostitution of character to secure rest and ease and peace and comfort from fermented grain. The reason for the lack of rest and ease and comfort is that we're not rightly related to God through Jesus Christ.

So that person that's come to that proper and whole and entire relationship with God discovers all of a sudden that he's not dependent upon these things anymore. He doesn't need them because he has something within. He has something that has been transformed inwardly.

He doesn't need to get his security there. So it is that that person that's come to see that God is his father, that he's a child of God, and that he's a joint heir with Christ, and that he's partaken of the divine nature,

and he has the witness of the spirit that he is born of God, and he sees God sitting on the throne as sovereign. He realizes that nothing can touch the child of God but what the Father permits it.

All of hell can't touch him. All of men can't touch him. That he's inviolate against all the forces of circumstances and nature because he's born of God, as long as he's walking in obedience and submission of trust to God.

Therefore, his security, his confidence, his treasure is in God. I submit to you that just as people can find the wrong source of comfort and ease and satisfaction through narcotics, so Christians can find the wrong source of security against the changes of the future. In money, it can have the same effect upon the human spirit.

If one looks to it as the means of giving protection against the things of the future, and in such a way it secures himself against dependence upon God, that which has become a tool has become a God. This is what our Lord Jesus is condemning, and thus his words are clear and explicit seen in this light. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth.

Don't take these things and hold them as treasures, something in which you trust, something from which you find your satisfaction and your wholeness, your happiness as a person. Moth and rust are going to take these things. Thieves are going to break through and steal.

Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust is corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Does this mean that you shouldn't have money for tomorrow's bread and clothing? No, it isn't talking about the tool, it's talking about the treasure. Now, if you turn the tool into a treasure, it's wrong, but if you view it as just a tool, just what it's to be, just it means what's a cowrie shell? Say, well, if we dealt with cowrie shells, I wouldn't love cowrie shells, they're just little miserable shells.

You wouldn't? It's just, they're just as important as the value that you and others attach to them. I'll never forget that little boy out in Dinkeland coming into the school. The teacher, the principal said to him, now, Dang, you have to take all of ornaments off.

See, in our country, the men may wear the ornaments. That is out in Africa, but you can still think of it as black country. And he opened this envelope and it had Dang's name on it.

I said, put it in. This boy couldn't do it. And he had to reach around and loosen the back.

It was hair from a horse's tail that he'd used as the string. And the little bead, incidentally, was part of his dowry. It represented about a third of the price of a wife.

And here he was, about 15, and he already had a third of a wife. And he was proud of this, and he wanted it. It was a treasure.

So he passed it to his son and dropped it into the envelope. Dirty, grubby, little stone. To me, because I attached no value to it, but he did.

That's what the Lord Jesus Christ is saying. When you set your affection on things below, then it's become a substitute for God. Lay not up treasures upon earth.

Don't let these things that you use, don't let the axe with which you chop the tree, or the spade with which you turn the earth, or the money with which you buy the food. For it's just a tool, same as a hoe is. Don't let it become anything else than a tool.

Keep things rightly oriented. Your security is not in the tool. If you use the tool wisely and well, don't let it get out of place.

Wouldn't you think it folly if a man had gilded a hoe and put it up over the mantelpiece? There it is. What's this? Oh, well, this is my treasure. Well, it's as much as money is.

So he says, keep things in right perspective. See them as they are. Use them properly.

Don't let them get out of balance. It's a tool. Lay up treasure in heaven.

What's this mean? Just give? Tithe? Of course, God says tithe. You know what we've said about tithing? Abraham commenced it, Moses commanded it, and Christ commended it. You can't improve on it or get beyond it.

But is that what he's talking about here? No. What he's talking about here is the fact that you realize that what you're putting in heaven is not just your tithe. Because we're coming to another principle in just a moment.

Whatever you do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. Whether you eat or whether you drink, do all for the glory of God. So if you use a portion of your skill in some mark where you're paid, this becomes a remuneration and tithe of which can go to the Lord or more.

But what about the rest of the time? What about the other? You work eight hours a day. What about the other 16 hours a day? What is he saying? He is saying that when you are born of God, the whole life becomes Christ. And everything you're to do, you're to do to this one end, the glory of God.

When you play, when you relax, when you study, when you work, when you visit, wherever you go, whatever you do, whether you eat or whether you drink, do all on account of the reputation of Jesus Christ. Do all with an eye single to his glory. Then your whole life is laid up as a treasure in heaven.

Not just a portion. What is money after all? All it is is fluid life. You work in an office or a shop or a store or a business for eight hours.

And the employer, you're working for somebody even if you own your own business, you're working for the customers. The employer pays you what he thinks your time is worth. You may not agree with him, but you're getting what he thinks you're worth.

And at the end of the week, he puts into your hand the exchange for time. In other words, money is just fluid, liquid life. It's all it is.

Life is made up of time and time is sold for money and there it is. But what about the rest of the time? Isn't that valuable? Oh, yes. So the Lord Jesus Christ, being jealous of what he purchased with his blood, says, I want it all.

I want all of it. So whether you eat, whether you drink, some dear housewife, you know, you housewives, you mothers with children, you know, your husband couldn't afford you if he had to hire you on the open

market, don't you? You ever thought of that? He never could afford you. Why, you think how much you get as a cook, what your wages would be.

And then it's how much you get as a babysitter and babysitters don't get anything. You don't do anything but just that. And you're and how much you get as a housekeeper and then as a chauffeur and as a gardener and you'll name the different hats that you have to.

He could never afford you if he had to hire you in the open market. Don't you think that this counts for eternity? Of course it does. Whatever you do in word or in deed do all in the name.

What do we have here in our next words? The light of the body is the eye. If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness.

If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness? What is he saying? He's saying, if your eye is fixed on the glory of Jesus Christ, all of your whole being is enlightened by it. Everything you do is done by the illumination from this one consuming purpose, the glory of God. All the release that comes, dear heart, when you discover the heavenly economics, the housewife that's there doing the dishes isn't counting how much you get at a restaurant for the same chore.

She isn't figuring how much her husband has to pay for the services and be hired. No, no, no. She's saying, I am doing this as unto Jesus Christ.

I love him. Because I love him and because my eye is single to his glory and my one passion is to please him, whether I eat or whether I wash the dishes on which others have eaten, whether I sleep or make the beds upon which others have slept, whatever I do in word or in deed, I do it all for one purpose, the glory of Jesus Christ. Oh, the unity.

Then notice his words. No man can serve two masters. You can't serve yourself.

You can't divide your life up and say, I'm working for him now. Now I'm working for me. Now I'm working for the Lord.

You hear people say, I want to go into full-time service. My friend, if you aren't in full-time service, going won't help anywhere. Where will you go? You're to be in full-time service, not to go somewhere to do it.

You're there. Whatever you do, you're to do to this end. That means that your tithe is the Lord's, of course.

But what about the nine tenths? That's his too. What about the time after you've earned? That's his too. It's all the Lord.

You're not serving two masters. He thinks that you are. No, he thinks that you're working for him.

You aren't. You're working for the Lord Jesus. Now, if you work for him, you're going to be careless, shoddy.

I've had employers say to me, you know, I just don't like to hire Christians because they don't work hard. They don't do their work well. They take advantage of the fact that they're Christians and slovenly about their work.

Now, I don't think that's true, but certainly it never should be true. Because a Christian ought always serve Christ first. And in serving Christ first, the employer is going to get the kind of service he never could get for any wage.

Because you're doing whatever your hands find to do with all your might, with all your heart, you're doing it as unto Christ. The whole is being sanctified because your eye is single to his glory and the whole body is full of light. Everything is coming under this.

This is the way it's to be. This is what he's saying. He is saying that when I come into a man and I change a man, I immediately break down all delineations between secular and sacred.

I immediately sanctify the whole of life, all of it. Because when I come into the heart, I change all values. You don't just do work for money and then work for the Lord.

Whatever you do, whatever you do, and everything you do, you do all in the name, on account of the reputation of Jesus Christ. No man can serve two masters. You can't work for an employer and for Christ.

You can't work for yourself and for Christ. You can't work for your family and for Christ. You've got to work for Christ.

Part of working for Christ may be for an employer, and part may be here, but it's always working for Christ, for the Lord Jesus. And now he sanctifies the whole and the menial and the mundane, the monotonous. Even the unpleasant becomes the service of worship.

The church office of Smith has on the wall a little sign for Mrs. Graham. Divine service will be performed here today. I believe that on the wall of every heart there should be such a sign.

Divine service will be offered here. Whatever you do, word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord. You're redeemed.

You redeemed every part of you, all your time, all your talent, everything. And I sing to this glory. Your conversation, your relaxation, your reading, your work, everything.

Does this glorify Christ? No man can serve two masters. You either love the one and hate the other, hate the one and love the other. But when you serve one master, Christ, your life is unified.

There's that wholeness that he loathed and prayed. Oh may God bring you to the same place you died to. May we live in this place, you and I, for all we're doing, we're doing to the glory of Christ.

And let's not question one another's motives. Let's just believe that everybody that loves Christ is just as sincere as the other. And allow the Lord Jesus Christ to be the taste of it.

Shall we bow our hearts? Our fathers, sinners or sick people live to please themselves. Spiritually sick, that's why I always use the word save, the same word that says heal, because they think they can be happy in the midst of others' needs, live to please themselves. All of us were sinners, Lord.

There were so many traits and habits and attitudes of mine that characterized our whole life. When we've come to Christ, we've carried some of them in with us. We tried to departmentalize our lives, Lord.

We tried to work for our employer eight hours and then tried to serve the Lord in our spare time. Show us the folly of this. Show us that thou has claimed all time and all strength and all talent and all money and all life.

That thou has said we can't serve two masters. The only master that we're committed to serve is the Lord Jesus. And when we serve others to whom he sends us, we serve him in whatever ministry we bring.

So to that end, Lord, let the healing that comes from seeing our lives unified in this one grand purpose, to glorify Christ. Let that healing, we pray, seep down into our minds and hearts and spirits until it will people that will fulfill the word that says whatever you do in word or in deed, do all. We ask it in his name, praying for the ones among us who may not know Christ.

We hear him as he says, come unto me, all you that labor in the heavy laden, take my yoke upon you, learn of me, and I will give rest unto you. We pray for such unsaved ones. We pray for such Christians that we will realize the rest comes when we live our lives in every area, department, and phase, and aspect.

Then we rest.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/25/SID25549.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/paris-reidhead/righteousness-consisting-of-ideas-attitudes/>

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