

New Covenant Truths - the Inner Life - Part 6

by Zac Poonen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a secret life, following Jesus' teachings, and seeking the power of the Holy Spirit to live the Christian life.

Duration: 10:03

Scripture: Matthew 6:5

Topics: "Inner Life", "Holy Spirit"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of true Christianity where acts of righteousness, such as giving, praying, and fasting, should be done in secret without seeking recognition or praise from others. Jesus teaches about serving God wholeheartedly and not being divided in loyalty between God and worldly treasures. The message warns against false prophets who distort the narrow path outlined in the Sermon on the Mount, highlighting the seriousness of sins like anger and lust. It concludes with the call to build our lives on the teachings of Jesus and the necessity of being filled with the Holy Spirit to live according to God's will.

Transcript

In chapter 6, he goes on to say, in the old covenant, it didn't matter how you prayed or with what motive you prayed, they could stand in the street corners and pray, they could give and let everybody know they're giving. The Pharisees, they'd give, they'd do righteousness to be noticed. You know, that means when they gave a gift, they'd make sure that a little plaque was written with their name.

This thing was donated by so-and-so. This building was donated for Christian work by so-and-so. But he says, in true Christianity, you shouldn't do that.

Nobody should know your name, who gave it. You must give secretly. That's why we never pass a collection bag here.

We've never done it in all our life. Because when you pass a collection bag, somebody sees you. I mean, even if you put one rupee in, somebody's seeing that you're doing it, and they're not supposed to see it.

That's what Jesus said. Do it secretly. Whether you give a thousand rupees or one rupee, it must be secret.

That's the important thing. Everything we do for the Lord is your righteousness, something good you've done. Make sure, as far as possible, nobody knows.

Do you find a secret delight when somebody discovers the good that you did secretly? Work on your salvation, brother. It's good. Work on our salvation until that secret delight disappears.

When somebody accidentally discovers. Or perhaps we do things and we hope somebody will accidentally discover that it was I who did it. Our nature is so corrupt to the core.

Jesus said, if that is your motive, you've already got your reward. It's not that people praise you. You cannot avoid people praising you.

You know, people appreciated Jesus too. In fact, at the end of the Sermon on the Mount, it says that people were absolutely excited when they heard such preaching from Jesus. The last verse of Matthew 7. Did Jesus lose the reward because of that? No.

He didn't do it for their honor. That's the point. It's not a question of whether people get up and appreciate you.

But do you do it for their appreciation? Do you do it for their honor? No. So Jesus said, when you give, when you pray, don't let anybody know about your private prayer life. Have you read these stories about people who prayed for 2 hours and 4 hours and you wished you could pray like that? How did they know? Jesus said, when you pray, nobody should know.

When you fast, nobody should know. That's how it should be. Never talk about it.

Everything in your life must be secret, inward, before the Father. Your Father who sees in secret, verse 4, will reward you openly. Verse 6, your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

And verse 18, your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly 3 times. In secret, in secret, in secret. Then he went on to say about treasure on earth, verse 18, and treasure in heaven.

And he said in verse 24, you can't serve 2 masters. Now in the Old Testament, you could serve 2 masters. Do you know that? At least, that was their level.

You know, it's like in the kindergarten. You're permitted to do a lot of things in kindergarten. You're not permitted to do in the 10th standard.

So Solomon could accumulate all the wealth and go after gold and go after silver and go after all this. And David could go after all those things and also be a man after God's own heart. But in the New Covenant, you cannot serve 2 masters.

You've got to make a choice. You can use money, but you've got to live for it. You've got to live for God.

And money becomes your servant under your feet. You can use it as much as you like, but it must be your servant. It's not a question of how much money you have.

A lot of people think if somebody's got a lot of money, he loves money. This is a wrong understanding of many Christians. And if somebody is poor, he doesn't love money.

I can disprove it in a moment. Have you ever met a beggar who doesn't love money? Anybody met a beggar who doesn't love money? They are the poorest people. So poverty means you don't love money.

It's a deception. It's usually people who don't have much money who think that those who have much must be loving money. It's not true.

Love of money is an attitude. You know, it's like having 25 servants but keeping them as servants. Another person got one servant, but he runs the house.

So it's not a question of how much you have. Make money your servant. If you have 25 of them, keep them all as servants.

That's the point. I don't live for it, I don't love it. And at the end of this tremendous teaching of not living for this world, etc., not judging other people, he finally says in Matthew 7, verse 13, this is a narrow gate.

It's not easy to go through this. In verse 15, beware of the false prophets who don't teach you this narrow gate in this narrow way. Who are the false prophets? I can find out very easily.

Those who don't preach the Sermon on the Mount. Whenever you see a verse in its context, where did he speak about false prophets first? The first time in the New Testament that you read about false prophets is in the end of the Sermon on the Mount. He's saying this way is very narrow, which I've been describing to you in the last three chapters.

Now beware of false prophets who come and try to make this way broader and say, no, no, no, we don't have to do that. When I listen to a man over a period of time and I never hear him preaching against the love of money, I never hear him preaching against anger, I never hear him preaching against lusting after women, I say, I have a question in my mind whether that guy is a false prophet. I don't care what else he preaches because I follow what Jesus said.

Somebody asked me once, Brother Zach, why do you preach so much against anger and lusting with the eyes? I'll tell you why I said. Because in the Sermon on the Mount those are the only two sins that Jesus mentioned that will take a man to hell. Do you know that Jesus mentioned hell only twice in the Sermon on the Mount? Only twice.

That means they were pretty serious sins and he said it in relation to anger and in relation to lusting with the eyes. You read that in Matthew 5, 22-30. I said that's because Jesus emphasized it.

That's why I emphasize it. It's pretty serious. Then he concludes with saying it's like two men who built two houses.

All of us heard these words today. The wise man and the foolish man both heard the words of Jesus. One man did it, another man didn't do it.

That's all the difference. So just because we heard it and understood it doesn't mean we are wise. We heard, understood, excited about it and do it.

That is the new covenant. And that building is the church built on a rock. Jesus said go into all the world and teach them to do everything I commanded you.

That's what we seek to preach in this church. Teach people to do everything that Jesus commanded. And he also said that very few would find it.

You're not going to have a mega church if you preach the Sermon on the Mount. I'll tell you that. No.

Because he said in Matthew 5, 14 very few find it. He himself after a lifetime of preaching could gather only 120 on the upper room to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Imagine a lifetime of preaching.

The greatest preacher that walked the earth. All across Israel with all the miracles he did. Only 120 waited for the new covenant.

That wasn't a big church. But they were the people who turned the world upside down. So it's all a question of what we want.

You know there's one thing Jesus left out in the Sermon on the Mount. Let me say that in closing. And that is he never told us how we can live this life.

For that we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And that's what happened on the day of Pentecost. Let's pray.

The purpose of the Sermon on the Mount was to bring us to a sense of need in our life. And when we have a need we turn to God and seek him for the power of the Holy Spirit to live this life. We can't live without that power.

So if you found a need created in your heart that's the right thing that the Lord intended. So that you seek him for the power of the Holy Spirit so that you can live this life. Thank you Father for your word.

Help us to seek after you that we live the life you want us to live. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

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