

Doing Good For God Alone
Matthew 6:1-4; 16-28
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Introduction:

1. Matthew chapter 6 falls in the heart of Jesus' sermon on the Mount.
2. The main theme of the sermon is "Fix your heart and don't be like everyone else."
3. Therefore Christ begins his sermon with the proper attitudes we are to have and then uses two powerful illustrations.
 - a. His followers are to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world.
 - b. That their lives are to bring glory to the Father in heaven (Matt 5:16)
4. This is far away from what the religious leaders were doing in bringing glory and attention to themselves in the name of God.
5. After all, religion has always been a money maker for people in bible times and throughout history even today.
6. Christ wants His disciples to understand that they need to go beyond their righteousness Matthew 5:20.
7. Jesus is not contradicting what He said in Matthew 5:13-16, we can do good things, but we must do them for the right reasons.
8. We cannot use the good works that God established for us to do and put them on parade for attention.
9. The religious leaders such as the Pharisees were using religious acts or charitable deeds to bring glory not to the Father but to themselves.

I. Take Heed to Practicing Benevolence (Matthew 6:1-3)

- A. (1,16) The reason they were practicing righteousness was to "Be seen by men."
 1. This is from the Greek word that forms the word Theatrical. They were putting on a show for people with their good deeds.
 2. Christ is not condemning doing good in public:
 - a. Jesus publicized the two mites the widow gave in (Mark 12:41-44)
 - b. The liberality of Barnabas is seen in Acts 4:36-37)
 3. If we were not allowed to practice good works and be benevolent this would extinguish our lights.
 4. The reward they were after was attention from man, that is the reward they would receive.
- B. (2,17) "Therefore, when you do charitable deeds," Christ expects us to be doing good deeds.
 1. The Pharisees and religious leaders were wealthy. (Luke 21:1-4)
 2. The idea of "sound the trumpet" could be metaphoric or literal.
 3. Consider Luke 18:10-14 where the pharisee went up to the temple to pray.
 4. When someone seeks something physical (In this case attention) that is their reward.
 - a. Apply this to anything in this life, when we seek physical blessings or riches, that is our reward.

- C. (3-4, 18) When one has the right motives there is no dramatic performance when doing good.
 - 1. Even if no one else ever knows, God knows and that is enough.
 - 2. This is part of the reward God promised (19-21) that when we lay up for ourselves treasure in heaven, we have an incorruptible reward awaiting us.
 - 3. It may cost us something here and we may not get the glory, but we have for us a reward that is far and away better than a few moments of glory from man.
 - 4. (18) The same went for fasting, it was all for show.
- II. Laying up treasure in heaven (19-20)
 - A. This comes after the rebukes of religious works being done for the wrong motives.
 - 1. When we do things in the name of God, but our motives are not right there's an issue.
 - 2. Is it wrong to be wealthy? No certainly not.
 - 3. Consider the young rich ruler. Was he condemned because he had riches?
 - 4. The pursuit of earthly treasures is a disease that feeds and increases upon itself.
 - 5. Plus, there is uncertainty about earthly riches, right?
 - 6. This is sometimes hard for us to fathom since we cannot see or touch heaven.
 - B. Where our treasure is there our heart will be. (21)
 - 1. When you own something (Home, car, etc.) do you not treat it a lot better?
 - 2. If our desires are in physical riches and things then God knows that is where our heart will be as well.
 - 3. But if our desire is in heaven then that is where our heart will be.
 - 4. Yes, physical things like homes, vehicles, and things are a part of life but they do not have to be our treasure.
 - 5. If those things are our source of happiness, then we will only be happy for a little.
 - 6. God is interested in your heart, and he will not take anything less than 100%.
 - 7. The devil will be satisfied with just a little bit of your heart because he knows that if he has a little, he has the whole thing.
- III. No one can serve two masters. (22-24)
 - A. (22) The eye is the lamp of the body.
 - 1. Imagine trying to keep one eye on earthly treasure and one eye on heavenly treasure.
 - 2. If our eyes (Focus) are on physical things then everything else will follow (Desire, heart)
 - B. Why is it important for us to give 100% to God?
 - 1. Paul uses the same illustration in Romans 6 after describing what Baptism did.
 - 2. (16) You are a slave at whom you obey.
 - 3. (17) One is either a slave of sin or a slave of righteousness but in either case, one is depicted as a slave.
 - 4. The very act of obedience, even in one act, to sin is disobedience entirely to God.
 - C. The word for "mammon" is wealth.

1. It can be described as riches, money, property, or possessions.
 2. This is what the religious leaders were after on this day.
 3. They would do good and put on a show for others so they would appear devout.
 4. But inwardly, as Jesus describes them, they were whitewashed tombs and hypocrites.
 5. They would do this by taking advantage of widows. (Luke 20:47)
- IV. How to deal with anxiety (25-26)
- A. With earthly treasure brings worry and anxiety.
 1. Notice the “Therefore,”(NKJV) or “For this reason, I say to you,” (NASB)
 2. When our heart is on earthly things and our earthly lives we will worry.
 3. We cannot take things with us, and to a degree, most know that, so they live it up while they can.
 4. God knows that when we put our hearts in His reward, that cures anxiety.
 - B. The peace of a heavenly reward.
 1. Peter describes heaven as imperishable, undefiled, never fading, and reserved for us (1 Peter 1:4).
 2. No wonder God is the God that gives us peace that surpasses understanding. (Phil 4:7)
 3. If our heart is fixed on that treasure, we will never have to worry.
 - a. Heaven will never perish, all things on earth will.
 - b. Heaven will never be defiled, things on earth can be corrupted.
 - c. Heaven will never fade away, all things on earth fade away eventually.
 - d. Heaven is reserved for the Christian, nothing on earth is guaranteed.
 - C. Jesus is trying to spare us the heartache of the physical condition.
 1. No wonder Jesus tells us to lay up for treasure in heaven.
 2. If we do so, we won’t have to worry or be anxious.
 3. We can rest assured that no matter what happens to us here, our reward in heaven will always be there.
 4. You cannot have that with physical things and what is the outcome?
 5. You have a world filled with anxious people worrying every day about physical things.

Conclusion:

1. This is a hard section of scripture for many.
2. Though we may not be like the scribes and Pharisees in trying to be theatrical in our good deeds, we can be like them when it comes to where our hearts are.
3. We may not be over the top about it and so engulfed in the praise of men as they were but how many of us can get entangled in physical desires so much, that we put God second?
4. How many of us try to serve God and wealth? Many say they serve God, but their actions say otherwise.
5. They will choose jobs, family, hobbies, and friends over God on any given Sunday or Wednesday.

6. God desires 100% of your heart, not 99%.