

Sermon on the Mount – Matthew 6:1-8 Bellevue Church of Christ – Fall 2015

Further application of what Jesus said in 5:20 – “unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees...”

Practicing your...

Jesus uses the three chief acts of Jewish piety (2-18)– almsgiving, prayer, fasting – as an illustration for this warning.

1. Giving

-Jesus assumes His disciples will be active in almsgiving.

-10:42; 25:35-45; 2Co 9:6-7; Phi 4:18-19; 1Ti 6:18-19; Jam 1:27

-“trumpet” is a figurative way to emphasize that they go out of their way to receive glory from men

- John 5:44; 12:43

2. Prayer

-Jesus assumes His disciples will be active in prayer.

-Is Jesus forbidding public prayer?

-18:19-20; Acts 1:24; 3:1; 4:24-30

As the Gentiles do...

-Change of focus from Hypocrites to Gentiles (pagans)

-A slight digression from the overall point of this section

- During Jesus’ lifetime, repetition was used in Graeco-Roman religions to pester the gods so they would grant someone’s request.

1^c **Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.**

The difference between this warning and Jesus’ instruction in 5:14-16 is personal motivation. Praise for God or for Me!

(1)

2^c **Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.**

Hypocrites - Lk 12:1-2

(3)

3^c **But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,**

(4)

4^c **so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.**

(1)

5^c **And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.**

Stand in synagogue - Lk 18:9-14

(3)

6^c **But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.**

7^c **And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words.**

8^c **Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.**

...having told his disciples of the true righteousness expected of them, He now warns them of the danger of religious hypocrisy

Each of these illustrations follow the same pattern (2-18)

(1) Warning not to do the act to be praised by men,

(2) Guarantee that those who ignore this warning will get what they want but no more,

(3) Instruction on how to perform the act of piety secretly, and

(4) Assurance that the Father who sees in secret will reward openly

Is the posture and location of prayer, Jesus’ main point?

In the Bible people pray...

*Prostrate (Num 16:22; Josh 5:14; Dan 8:17; Mt 26:39; Rev 11:16)

*Kneeling (2Ch 6:13; Dan 6:10; Luke 22:41; Acts 7:60; 9:40; 20:36; 21:5)

*Sitting (2 Sam 7:18)

*Standing (1 Sam 1:26; Mk 11:25; Luke 18:11, 13)

Again it is the motive that is crucial: “that they may be seen by others.”

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Righteousness – Pharisees

Matthew 5:20 (ESV)

²⁰ For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Hypocrites

Luke 12:1–2 (ESV)

¹ In the meantime, when so many thousands of the people had gathered together that they were trampling one another, he began to say to his disciples first, “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.” ² Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known.

Giving – Disciples

Matthew 10:42 (ESV)

⁴² And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward.”

Matthew 25:35–45 (ESV)

³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

⁴¹ “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’ ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ ⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’

2 Corinthians 9:6–7 (ESV)

⁶ The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Philippians 4:18–19 (ESV)

¹⁸ I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. ¹⁹ And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

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1 Timothy 6:18–19 (ESV)

¹⁸ They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹ thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

James 1:27 (ESV)

²⁷ Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

Trumpet

John 5:44 (ESV)

⁴⁴ How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?

John 12:43 (ESV)

⁴³ for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.

Posture in Prayer

*Prostrate (Num 16:22; Josh 5:14; Dan 8:17; Mt 26:39; Rev 11:16)

Numbers 16:22 (ESV)

²² And they fell on their faces and said, “O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and will you be angry with all the congregation?”

Joshua 5:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ And he said, “No; but I am the commander of the army of the LORD. Now I have come.” And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped and said to him, “What does my lord say to his servant?”

Daniel 8:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ So he came near where I stood. And when he came, I was frightened and fell on my face. But he said to me, “Understand, O son of man, that the vision is for the time of the end.”

Matthew 26:39 (ESV)

³⁹ And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.”

Revelation 11:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God,

*Kneeling (2Ch 6:13; Dan 6:10; Luke 22:41, Acts 7:60; 9:40; 20:36; 21:5)

2 Chronicles 6:13 (ESV)

¹³ Solomon had made a bronze platform five cubits long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high, and had set it in the court, and he stood on it. Then he knelt on his knees in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven,

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Daniel 6:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.

Luke 22:41 (ESV)

⁴¹ And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed,

Acts 7:60 (ESV)

⁶⁰ And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Acts 9:40 (ESV)

⁴⁰ But Peter put them all outside, and knelt down and prayed; and turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up.

Acts 20:36 (ESV)

³⁶ And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

Acts 21:5 (ESV)

⁵ When our days there were ended, we departed and went on our journey, and they all, with wives and children, accompanied us until we were outside the city. And kneeling down on the beach, we prayed

*Sitting (2 Sam 7:18)

2 Samuel 7:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ Then King David went in and sat before the LORD and said, "Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far?"

*Standing (1 Sam 1:26; Mk 11:25; Luke 18:11, 13)

1 Samuel 1:26 (ESV)

²⁶ And she said, "Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the LORD.

Mark 11:25 (ESV)

²⁵ **And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."**

Luke 18:11 (ESV)

¹¹ **The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.**

Luke 18:13 (ESV)

¹³ **But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!'**

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Public Prayer

Matthew 18:19–20 (ESV)

¹⁹ Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”

Acts 1:24 (ESV)

²⁴ And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen

Acts 3:1 (ESV)

¹ Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.

Acts 4:24–30 (ESV)

²⁴ And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, “Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, ²⁵ who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit,

“ ‘Why did the Gentiles rage,
and the peoples plot in vain?

²⁶ The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers were gathered together,
against the Lord and against his Anointed’—

²⁷ for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, ²⁸ to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. ²⁹ And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, ³⁰ while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”