

“Sermon on the Mount – Chapter 2”

Matthew Chapter 6

We have seen in Chapter 5 that the people of the kingdom of heaven ARE different than people of the kingdoms of the world.

1. They have a different Attitude HAPPY (blessed) because of the ultimate outcome to life
2. They have a different Effect SALT and LIGHT are what we ARE and is important to life
3. Their life standard is Outstanding Obedience to the Law is from the heart not from the letter

In this chapter we will see that living according to the kingdom of heaven is not from a religion but from a relationship with a Father in heaven.

12 times in this chapter we see “*your Father*” or “*your Father in heaven*”

Matthew being a Levite, from a priestly tribe, has probably seen the hypocrisy in the system of religion and Jesus’ message stood out. Jesus in this chapter addresses an error that at some point touches each one of us.

The word hypocrite comes from the Greek word *hypokrités*. Its original use was for the stage actor who was “*playing a part*”. In the early days of the theater there were very few women actors. Men had to play female roles. They would have to use masks to have a different identity.



Mat 6:1 "Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.

- For the believer, Jesus defines hypocrisy at the beginning of this section of His sermon.
- There are three important points to highlight here
 - 1) It is expected that believers are to be practicing their righteousness.
 - In this passage Jesus will illustrate this using Giving, Praying and Fasting.
 - 2) There is a caution that we can be hypocritical in our practice.
 - Performing righteous deed not necessarily for righteousness sake but to be seen and to impress others.
 - 3) Our practicing of our righteousness should be rewarding.
 - Our reward should be with our Father in heaven. Not with praise from men in this world
- In Matthew 5:16 Jesus said to let your light shine to be seen by men - the difference is that men would see it and GLORIFY GOD.

Mat 6:2 1) Prohibiting Hypocrisy in Giving vs 2-4

"So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

Mat 6:3 "But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,
Mat 6:4 so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

- The practice of the day was that the Pharisee would come to the poor and someone would blow a trumpet and the Pharisee would throw out coinage to the poor. The Pharisee is noticed and praised for his great generosity and care for the unfortunate.
- Their generosity is on display so they will be seen and honored by men.
 - Well it will work. They will get that reward in full. They will be honored by men.
 - God desires us to be genuinely concerned for the poor and give generously to them IN SECRET. It isn't so much that it is to be kept a secret but more that it is discrete.
 - Discrete - for the sake of the unfortunate that they and their condition is not a stepping stone for you to step on for glory.
 - Discrete - demonstrates the care for others rather than oneself.
 - Here is a strong promise. GOD SEES what is not seen by others. And He will reward our secret ministries.

Mat 6:5

2) Prohibiting Hypocrisy in Prayer vs 5-15

"When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

Mat 6:6

"But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

- Again Jesus is illustrating hypocrisy with stuff that the disciples are aware of in their everyday living.
- The religious Pharisee loved to be asked to pray. They loved to be known as the one who speaks to God. They loved this recognition so much that they would be walking to the synagogue or where ever and if it was the designated time for prayer (9am, Noon, and 3pm) they would stop in the street and pray loudly. People would stop and see and watch. The Pharisee loved this.
- In contrast the disciple of the kingdom of heaven is to pray in PRIVATE. So private that Jesus says not just in your own home but in an inner room (a closet) in your home.
 - Jesus is not creating new "letters of the law" to be followed. He is not saying that we should not pray around other people or not pray in public, but that our motivation for praying is to seek God not seek men's recognition.

DANIEL AND THE LIONS DEN

- Daniel 6:7-11 "All the commissioners of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, the high officials and the governors have consulted together that the king should establish a statute and enforce an injunction that anyone who makes a petition to any god or man besides you, "O king, for thirty days, shall be cast into the lions' den. Now, O king, establish the injunction and sign the document so that it may not be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked." Therefore King Darius signed the document, that is, the injunction.
Now when Daniel knew that the document was signed, he entered his house (now in his roof chamber he had windows open toward Jerusalem); and he continued kneeling on his knees three times a day, praying and giving thanks before his God, as he had been doing previously. Then these men came by agreement and found Daniel making petition and supplication before his God."
 - Daniel had "previously" prayed and could be seen but this wasn't his purpose. He simply sought God regularly. I do not believe that he was trying to make a point. Daniel just loved to consider Jerusalem when he prayed so he opened his window and if men noticed or not wasn't his concern.
- Again, there is a promise of a God who sees what is done in secret and rewards those secret ministries.

Mat 6:7

"And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words.

Mat 6:8

"So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

- Jesus takes the opportunity to give instruction on prayer.
- He gives the everyday example, not of the hypocrite but the Gentile this time.
- The gentile prays repetitive and many words. They felt that the longer the prayer the better the prayer.
 - 1 Kings 18:26 the Prophets of Baal prayed a half a day
 - Acts 19:35 the mob in Ephesus cried out "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians" for two hours.
 - Clark said "the true God isn't impressed by the length or eloquence of our prayers, but the heart. "Prayer requires more of the heart than of the tongue". The eloquence of prayer consists in the fervency of desire, and the simplicity of faith."
 - Psalm 34:6 "This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him and saved him out of all his troubles." This always leaves me with the thought that all this poor man cried was "HELP"
- Jesus said don't be like the Gentiles.
- Not only does God see what is secret but He already knows what you have need of.
 - You do not have to convince Him of your need with long repetitive prayer.

Mat 6:9

"Pray, then, in this way:

- Jesus gives an example of how men should pray.
- This is not the words to recite but an example of thought and principals.

Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.

- First and foremost the direction of prayer is from men to the Father in heaven (not men)
- "Our Father" was noticed due to the intimacy. The Jews refrained from calling God "Father" for it was too close and common. Jesus wants our relationship to be common and intimate.
- And it is first honor and praise of who the Father is.
 - The first thing is not our request or begging
 - It seems to me and most of our prayers are like children whose only thought is of ourselves. We run to the Father and ask and want.
 - We need to come to him in Praise.
 - Psalm 100:4 "Enter His gates with thanksgiving And His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name."

Mat 6:10 'Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

- Our heart speech must declare His priority and focus
 - His Kingdom and His will must be first place in our lives

Mat 6:11 'Give us this day our daily bread.

- Then (after refocusing on His priority) we can ask concerning our felt needs.

Mat 6:12 'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

Mat 6:13 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]

- Then after our felt needs, Jesus reminds us to pray concerning our real needs.
 - Forgiveness - ourselves and that we forgive others
 - Deliverance - from evil. We do have an enemy
- And lastly a return to Praise and refocusing on His priority. His Glory and Honor.

Mat 6:14 "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

Mat 6:15 "But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

- Jesus declares an "imperative" for the disciples of the kingdom of heaven.
- A disciple of Jesus does not have an option concerning forgiveness. We cannot be forgiven for our sins and then hold on to bitterness and anger towards others.

Mat 6:16 **3) Prohibiting Hypocrisy in Fasting** vs 16-18

"Whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance so that they will be noticed by men when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

Mat 6:17 "But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face

Mat 6:18 so that your fasting will not be noticed by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

- Jesus was speaking to 3 fundamental practices of the Jews spiritual life. These were the practices of the Jew in Jesus day. Today it is 3 of the Five Pillars of Islam.
- Jesus assumes that his disciples Fast. He said "Whenever you fast"
- Fasting speaks of a temporary sacrifice for the purpose of refocusing on God. We have a tendency to use it as a manipulative tool to get God to do something for us. This is because we only fast when we are in crisis and really are in desperate need. But our fasting should be regular and it should be a tuning and refocusing on God.
- Again, Jesus returns to an everyday example of the hypocritical Pharisee. The Pharisee needs to make sure everyone knows of his sacrifice and how hard and difficult it is to minister. The gloomy face, the neglecting of their appearance.
 - They have their reward in full. -- People noticed. That is all they get.
 - Compare that to the true purpose of fasting. To draw closer to God verses having people notice you.
- Jesus says to wash your face, anoint your head. Look good while you minister especially if it involves sacrifice. Look so good that people don't even notice. Make your ministry look natural. Even better let it be natural.
- And once again. God knows and sees all these difficult sacrificial ministries and He rewards them.

Mat 6:19 **4) Contrasting Two Kingdoms** vs 19-24

Two Treasures - Accounting

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

Mat 6:20 "But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;

Mat 6:21 for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

- Jesus contrasts the treasures of the two kingdoms

<u>Kingdom of the Earth</u>	<u>Kingdom of Heaven</u>
Stored up for self on Earth	Stored up for self in Heaven
- Instant Gratification	- Preparing for Future
This treasure is temporary It does not last.	This treasure lasts and satisfies
- In 1992 a study was done asking people what income would provide contentment. Those who earned \$25,000 said \$54,000 would provide them satisfaction. People who earned \$100,000 said \$192,000 would work for them. It seems that about double their current income would provide contentment for most people.
- 1 Timothy 6:6 "godliness with contentment is great gain."
- Proverbs 13:7 NKJV "There is one who makes himself rich, yet has nothing; And one who makes himself poor, yet has great riches."
- Riches paid forward are deposited into the most secure reserve system with the greatest return.
- The context is the HYPOCRITES. They are praying and giving to receive their reward in this earth. They think they are rich yet they have nothing. But those who give, pray, minister for the sake of others might seem poor in this yet they have great riches.
- Jesus is not saying that having wealth in this life is evil. What Jesus is saying is that striving for wealth in this life is futile. It will not last. You cannot take it with you.
- Verse 21 "Where your treasure is there your heart is also"
 - It is interesting that your treasure directs your heart. What do you treasure?
 - It is not that your Heart finds your treasure.

Mat 6:22 **Two Visions - Attention**

"The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.

Mat 6:23 "But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

- Jesus contrasts the man's attention (focus) on the two kingdoms
- This is about our focus. What has our attention? Jesus says the eye is the lamp to the body. (shining into the body not that it shines out from the body.)
- While this applies to the physical eyes it may just as well apply to the eye of the heart.
- What is your Heart focused upon?
- This is concerning the gate of your heart. Does your gate allow the light of the kingdom of heaven into your life or is your gate bad?

Good Eye (good gate)

Your whole body is affected.
- It will be given light
It will be FULL of light

Bad Eye (bad gate)

Your whole body is affected.
- It will be in darkness
It will be FULL of darkness

- Verse 23 "If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!"
 - That darkness is great by seeing what is being missed.
- Psalm 27:1 "The LORD [is] my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD [is] the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"
- John 8:12 "Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, 'I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.'"

Mat 6:24 **Two Masters - Authority**

"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

- Jesus contrasts the authority of the two kingdoms
- Both are served. You and I are serving one kingdom or the other. This is not an option.
- Bob Dylan sang, "You've gotta serve somebody. It may be the devil or it may be the Lord but you've gotta serve somebody."
 - Jesus declares an absolute law. A person cannot have two masters. We already see that we are serving someone. The truth is we will only serve one.
 - No man can slave for two masters. It requires love and devotion.
 - Jesus is speaking about God or Money.
- If one is served, the other will be despised. If money, pleasure, or self then God will be despised. Both cannot be served.
- Luke 6:43-46 "For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit, nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. For each tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a briar bush. **The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart. Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"**
 - Some people think that can serve two masters. (God and wealth or God and themselves) They live in a world of compromise and self justification. They are living in direct opposition to the Lord's teaching.

Mat 6:25 5) The Kingdom of Heaven Relieves Anxiety vs 25-34

Because the disciple has paid forward his treasure,
Because his eye gate gives him light and salvation,
Because they serve, love and are devoted to the ONE Lord, ...they need not WORRY.

"For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, *as to* what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?"

- "DO NOT BE WORRIED" It is important that Jesus is speaking about anxiety, not about thoughtful consideration. The KJV uses the word "take no thought". This is a poor translation and is more accurately translated "worry" in most every other translation.
 - Jesus is not saying that we should not go to the grocery store, or not go shopping for clothes. He is speaking about worry. Of course we should shop and eat. But we should not have a troubling fear concerning these things.
 - Why do we go to work? So we can eat. Is it wrong or fear that causes us to go to work? No it isn't wrong. It is the way things are provided.
 - 2 Thessalonians 3:10 "if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either"
 - 1 Timothy 5:8 "But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."
 - What about health or life insurance? Is this worry? They can be but these things should be like food and clothes. They are a very good idea as a tool to provide for future expenses and provision for others. These expenses are going to happen. Insurance is a great tool to meet these expenses. It is the fear of the future Jesus is referring to in this passage.
- It is used in the same manner when Martha complained about Mary not running around serving like she was. Jesus said, "And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, **you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.**" NKJV Luke 10:41-42
- Jesus says not to be worried about two things,
 - What we will eat and drink
 - What we will wear.

Isn't it odd that these are what concerns folks the most. Watch TV commercials. Food and Clothing. We are consumed with these two things and advertisers know it.
- Linking this to the context of Two Masters, worry about food or clothing is a clue that one may be serving the wrong master.

Mat 6:26 **Example 1 - The Birds (God Feeds Us)**

"Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?"

Mat 6:27 "And who of you by being worried can add a *single* hour to his life?"

- The Birds of the Air.
- They do not sow or reap nor gather in barns. They do not work as man does. But they also do not just sit with their mouths open for God to feed them. They perform the work necessary for their food. Birds do not get ulcers worrying about their food.
- VERY IMPORTANT NOTE: Notice that within the realm of an Almighty, All Powerful, Holy God, one of the tasks He performs is that He feeds the birds.
 - God feed the birds. - Jesus said you are more (much more) important then birds.
- Worry accomplishes nothing. In fact it is counterproductive.
 - **Worry Erodes Faith** it does nothing to strengthen faith.
 - **Worry Causes Medical Problems** stress and tension activates a wonderful defense mechanism in our body called adrenalin. While adrenalin heightens physical and mental capability to get out of stressful situations prolonged adrenalin causes detrimental effects on our body.
 - **Worry can be Addictive** due to the change in our body chemistry
 - **Worry is a Waste of Time** it captures thoughts and imaginations
 - **Worry is a Thief** it takes away time of today with anxiety of tomorrow
- Worry cannot add to your life. Jesus said it cannot add an extra hour to your life.

Mat 6:28 **Example 2 - The Lilies & Grass (God Clothes Us)**

"And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin,

Mat 6:29 yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these.

Mat 6:30 "But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of little faith!"

- The Lilies and Grass
- They do not toil or spin. They are not in a fretful frenzy as to what they will look like to others.
- Again, see the task of an Almighty, All Powerful Holy God. He cloths the lilies and grass. And he does it right and beautifully.
- If God clothes them HOW MUCH MORE will He clothe you.
- To not grasp this is to be walking in little faith. Great faith knows that God will take care of these matters.

Mat 6:31 "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?'"

Mat 6:32 "For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

- Children of the Kingdom of Heaven DO NOT NEED TO WORRY for one very special reason:
"Your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things."
- We DO need these things. Jesus is not saying we should go without, but that we do have a heavenly Father who loves us more than birds and grass and will take care of us more than He does those things. We need to trust His as our Father.
 - A good lesson for us fathers.
We are to be providing for those who are dependent upon us.
- The unbeliever "*eagerly seeks*" worries over these. We should not behave like the unbelievers.
- We should be different than the unbeliever. We should not be seeking as they do but we should be providing them with hope.
 - 1 Peter 3:15 "*sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a *defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you*"

If we are not to worry then...
How should we act?

Mat 6:33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

Mat 6:34 "So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

- *Seek First* - We should not first seek to satisfy our bellies or our backs.
- *Seek First His kingdom and His righteousness* - We are taught exactly what to seek
- *All these things will be added to you.* - Trusting our Father will take care of us.
- Jesus is saying REPLACE worry of these things with thoughtful attention on things of God.

- Today has enough cares of its own. Worry being a thief is stealing from today about things concerning tomorrow and sometimes worrying about the past.
- It is biblical to remember the past and plan for the future but God desires us to live today.
- *Philippians 4:6-7 "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

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