



## **The Sermon on the Mount Matthew 6:1-8, 14-18**

“Take heed”- “Beware”- “Watch out!”

As the sixth chapter of Matthew begins, Jesus continues to focus on His disciples, that they would not fall into the trap the Pharisees fell into. The Pharisees’ wrong interpretation of the Law created a completely wrong reaction on their part. While fulfilling the law outwardly was important, they missed that connecting to God and His love is spiritual, and so they failed.

Jesus doesn’t want anyone to miss God’s presence.

[1 Timothy 2:3-4 NKJV](#)

Jesus goes on to enlighten His disciples with God’s truth, that His desire is a deep, spiritual connection with His children. [2 Corinthians 3:16-18 MSG](#)

**“The believing church is bending under the weight of its own rationalism,  
a modern worldview that would be foreign to the biblical writers,”**

Michael Heiser, *The Unseen Realm*.

### **Questions:**

Is a rational mind keeping me from connecting to God?

What are some ways to combat rationalism?

What does it mean to be spiritual?

Jesus compassionately warns that the wrong motives will lead to feeling self-satisfied, self-righteous and proud. [Romans 7:15-25 NLT](#)

### **Questions:**

Why do I do what I do?

Am I pleasing God or pleasing myself?

How can I know if my motives are pure?

As a child of God, my desire is to make God's glory more visible, which can only be done in humility, not in seeking admiration for myself.

*"Show when tempted to hide, and hide when tempted to show,"* is a good guide to align with pleasing God and avoiding impure motives.

Jesus invites me to clearly see the motives of my heart through giving, prayer and fasting. He speaks truth where lies have been sown about true righteousness, which is accounted to me from God because of my faith in the finished work of Christ, not because of anything I have done. In Philippians 3:8-9 Paul tells us how he has gladly left his old thinking of righteousness behind!

### **Questions:**

Am I glad like Paul, or do I continue to strive for more, feeling discontent with what God has given me?

Is something in the way of my repentance from believing my righteousness comes from what I do for God?

Giving, prayer, and fasting have been gifted to us from God to reveal to us who He is and for us to reciprocate our love to Him. It is not a to-do list.

...we give to remember everything comes from God.

...we pray to remember it's not our plan but His.

...we fast to remember our frailty.

Are these gifts a chore or a blessing that is strengthening my love for the Lord?

There can be a spiritual battle blocking a deep connection with the Father. Focusing on **scripture and worship music** with the Holy Spirit can inspire heartfelt prayer, and allow us to enter into God's presence.

*"...open the eyes of my heart Lord...I have to see You"*

[So Much Better \(I Yield\)](#)

[Psalm 23 NASB](#)

[Breathe/We](#)

[John 17 NLT](#)

[Isaiah 64 NLT](#)

....a few that I love :)

So, am I spiritual yet? I might look spiritual, but Jesus isn't concerned with looks...In all three (giving, prayer, and fasting) Jesus speaks about all of them being just between me and God. He warns against being a hypocrite, a show off, and He stresses that my actions will reflect the love that is in my heart. God sees everything, I can't fool Him!

### **Question:**

How can knowing that God sees everything be a comfort?

Jesus knows my humanness, and He knows I can think more highly of myself than I should. Alexander MaClaren said, "Pious souls are to shine and yet to be hidden, a paradox which can only be easily solved by the obedient." In verse 14 of chapter 6 Jesus highlights forgiveness from the prayer He uses to teach His disciples to pray. Forgiveness is the only part of the prayer Jesus expands on. When I am walking in forgiveness, I am walking with God.

### **Questions:**

What does it look like to walk in forgiveness?

Could forgiveness be more than forgiving another when they have wronged me?

Forgiveness is not of this world; it is a miracle that takes place inside my heart by the power of the Holy Spirit. When I ask God to enter into a miracle of forgiveness with me, I must be willing to receive it.

*".....Father, I am willing to change my mind about this situation. Please help me see this the way You see it. Help me see this with equal love for myself and all others."*

-Paul Ferrini, Love Without Conditions

There is a delicate balance in the life of a follower of Jesus. I can believe I have forgiven another, only to be reminded by Him that the posture of my heart must also ask them to forgive me.

### **Prayer:**

...Lord, I cannot do any of this walk without You. Thank You for loving me and never expecting that I could. Thank You Holy Spirit for leading me in Your way of forgiveness. Lord Jesus, You died on Calvary's cross, and through Your sacrifice I am surrendered to You in humility, submission, and love.

*Prepared by Jen Meter*