***The Sermon on the Mount***

**How to Give; Matthew 6:1-4**

**Background to Matthew 6:1**

* **Good works, public recognition, private acts**
* **Compared with Matthew 5:16**
* **Structure of Matthew 6:1-18**
  + **Giving to the Poor, Matthew 6:2-4**
  + **Praying, Matthew 6:5-15**
  + **Fasting, Matthew 6:16-18**

1. **Avoid Hypocrisy in the Practice of Spiritual Disciplines, Matthew 6:1**

* **The Spiritual Disciplines of Giving, Praying, and Fasting demonstrate a dependency upon God**

1. **Not the Way to Give, Matthew 6:2**

* **“It’s all about me” giving**
  + **Selfish giving is terminal; it lasts only as long as the good feelings last.**

1. **The Way to Give, Matthew 6:3-4**
   * **“It’s all about God” giving**
     + **God-centered is eternal; it lasts forever.**

**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.

**2**"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.

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

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden;  **15**nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.  **16**"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

***The Sermon on the Mount***

**How to Give; Matthew 6:1-4**

**Scripture Reading and Prayer**

* **Read Matthew 6:1-4 (Slides)**

**Exposition Matt. 6:1-4 (Slide 1 – Header Slide)**

**Background to Matthew 6:1**

1. **Good works, public recognition, private acts**
   * **Read Matthew 6:1 (Slide 2)**
   * Matthew 5:14-16 “You are the light of the world…”
   * **Read Matthew 5:16 (Slide 3)**
   * Two distinctions between Matthew 6:1 and Matthew 5:16
   * First, the motive of the good work – glorifying ourselves versus glorifying God
   * Second, the type of good work – works of spiritual discipline versus good works that involve direct ministry to others
   * It is impossible to hide certain good works, you cannot teach in AWANA without someone knowing it
   * **Structure of Matthew 6:1-18 (Slide 4)**
     1. **Giving to the Poor, Matthew 6:2-4 “When you give…” verse 2**
     2. **Praying, Matthew 6:5-15 “When you pray…” verse 5**
     3. **Fasting, Matthew 6:16-18 “Whenever you fast…” verse 16**
   * In this section of the sermon, Jesus is focused on personal acts of spiritual discipline – giving, praying, fasting
2. **Avoid Hypocrisy in the Practice of Spiritual Disciplines, Matthew 6:1**
   * The Spiritual Disciplines of Giving, Praying, and Fasting demonstrate a dependency upon God and a care for others
   * There is a way to give, pray and fast that demonstrates no dependency upon God and no care for others
3. **“Not the Way to Give,” Matthew 6:2**
   * **Read Matthew 6:2 (Slide 5)**

* “It’s all about me” giving
  + Why the concern over hypocrisy in giving to the poor or prayer or fasting?
  + What is hypocritical or two-faced or duplicitous in giving to the poor this way?
  + If the concern is for the poor, then giving should be about ministering to the poor
  + It is hypocritical to make giving to the poor about us
  + That is simply using the poor person as a means to our greater glory
  + Like the photo ops on mission trips into poor parts of the world
  + Selfish giving is terminal; it lasts only as long as the good feelings last.

1. **“The Way to Give”**
   * **“It’s all about God” giving**

* Instead of this hypocritical motive, we must give with proper motive
  + **Read Matthew 6:3-4 (Slide 6)**
  + Three major areas of giving: Support of the local church, I Timothy 5: pastors
  + For missions, Romans 15 and Paul’s desire for a missionary journey to Spain
  + For the poor, Galatians 2 and the early church counsel
  + In this case, the primary focus of giving was ministry to the poor
  + In this brief statement about giving to the poor, Christ gives us three motives or reasons for giving help those in need
  + **Three Primary reasons for giving:**
  + **Obedience, “When you give”**
  + There is a call for believers to faithfully, regularly, and sacrificially give to kingdom work
  + Failure to give faithfully, regularly, and sacrificially is a mark of great spiritual immaturity and robs the individual of God’s blessings
  + Holding tightly to what we have is as foolish as a farmer refusing to plant seed because he wishes to cling to the seed to meet his food needs
  + This approach last one season and then the farmer is in great need
  + Believers that cling to what they have deny this biblical principle that God provides for those who spread broadly
  + This is not the health and wealth gospel
  + I am not speaking about God making us rich
  + I am speaking of a biblical principle of God’s provision
  + When we live with our hands open, God provides for our daily needs and fills our hearts with joy
  + When we live with our hands open, God often provides even beyond our daily needs with the purpose of allowing us greater joy by giving more
  + **Encouragement and Support of others, “To the poor**”
  + These are individuals in need, they are hungry, they need water to drink
  + By giving to these individuals, the desire is to bring encouragement and support to them
  + In other words, our giving to the poor must be about meeting their needs and not assuaging our guilt or propping up our ego
  + Therefore, give to meet these needs in discrete ways
  + “Don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.” Clearly a proverbial statement, intended to be hyperbolic.
  + The point being, be extremely discrete, be careful to make this about meeting the needs of others and not making a name for yourself
  + Our policy here at Matthew Road is complete discretion
  + I don’t know how much you give and I don’t want to know
  + **Reward from our Heavenly Father, “Will reward”**
  + There is a reward that is coming for acts of mercy done in the name of the Father, with the desire to encourage and support those in need, acts done without any motive of recognition from others
  + **God-centered is eternal; it lasts forever.**

1. **Practical conclusions (Header slide – slide )**
   * First, give regularly and faithfully for this reflects the condition of your heart
   * Second, give with a desire to encourage and support those in need
   * Third, give with a motive of receiving a reward from our Heavenly Father

Announcements:

1. Reading seminar at 5:00 on Seeing and Savoring Jesus by John Piper
2. Romans 12 study tonight.
3. Newcomers’ fellowship on August 22.
4. Prayer focus – 40 days of prayer begins August 22.