

*Sermon on the Mount: Jesus' Challenge to Authentic Discipleship – Week Twelve*

# ***Pursuing Spiritual Disciplines: Motives & Patterns***

## ***Matthew 6:1-18***

**Main idea:** In Matthew 6, Jesus moves from matters of daily obedience (in 5:21-47), to practicing daily spiritual disciplines (in 6:1-18). The primary issue he addresses in this section is motives. As we live out our relationship with Jesus, we should not be like the hypocrites who live for the approval of people. Rather, we should act with integrity before an audience of one: God.

### **1. THE COMMAND – Pursue daily authenticity before God. *Matthew 6:1***

- A. The wrong way – You can live out your Christian life merely to impress people.
  - 1. The word righteousness here refers to our “practical Christian life.”
  - 2. You can live out your Christian faith to be accepted by friends and neighbors.
  - 3. This is apparently a significant temptation because Jesus says, “Beware.”
  - 4. This is what the Pharisees (i.e. the hypocrites) were doing.
- B. The right way – Jesus has an implied command here that our audience should be *him* exclusively.
  - 1. Jesus will mention the three basic areas giving, fasting & prayer.
  - 2. The Rabbis used triads, and Jesus uses a triad here to refer to all areas of faithfulness.
- C. One motive – We should be authentic because authenticity leads to reward.
- D. Another motive – We should be authentic because of the nature of God.

### **2. 1<sup>ST</sup> AREA – The discipline of giving. *Matthew 6:2-4***

- A. The negative example – Hypocrites give to be noticed and esteemed by people. 6:2
- B. The positive example – We should give in secret with intent to honor God.
- C. Are there some exceptions to the secrecy principle?
  - 1. The example of Ezra.
  - 2. The example of Paul.

### **3. 2<sup>ND</sup> AREA – The discipline of prayer. *Matthew 6:5-15***

- A. The negative example – We can pray showy prayers (v. 5); we can use pagan techniques (v. 7).
- B. A positive example – We should pray in secret. 6:8
- C. Another positive example – Emphasize your personal love relationship with God. 6:9-15
  - 1. The structure and purpose of the Lord’s Prayer.
  - 2. The tone of the Lord’s prayer

### **4. 3<sup>RD</sup> APPLICATION – The discipline of sacrifice. *Matthew 6:16-18***

- A. The role of fasting in the ancient world and its application today.
- B. The negative example – You can make yourself *look* as if you’re making a sacrifice. 6:16

C. The positive example – Fasting and serving in secret. 6:17-18