

Part 9: Religious Robbery and Righteous Rewards

Matthew 6:1-18

January 21th, 2018

Sermon Reflection

What did you find helpful or meaningful from the sermon this weekend? What stood out to you? [Note this is a question we are not putting in the bulletin, but we feel could be a good practice for groups do start with on a weekly basis. It gets people talking and helps bring people who missed up to speed.]

1) How has social media shaped the expectations you have for praise and acceptance before man? Where are other places you worry about practicing our righteousness before other people" (Matthew 6:1)?

Give time for your group to answer these questions. Remember not everyone in your group is on social media or an active social media user, so remember to find things outside of media where we run into similar demands. Often we can be concerned about how our parents view us, how our friends think of our parenting, or our professors/bosses think of our work. But also address issues which stem around the specific "practice of righteousness" in an honest assessment are there any acts of worship which your group wrestles with in a similar way Jesus illustrates?

2) What from the sermon helped you have a higher view of God and a smaller view of man? How are you tempted to believe that what you can get from man is greater than what you are given by God?

The sermon used the prayer in Matthew 6:9-13 to show how God is able to do things which men could never do. Jesus exposed for us the fleeting rewards of men and highlighted the greater reward of the Father. The last question asked *where* you wrestle with seeking the rewards of men. This question asks *why* you seek the rewards of men. What do you hope to get out of your performance? How does God promise us something better?

3) Read through Matthew 6:7-15. Which parts of Jesus' teaching here are freeing? Which are challenging? Which aspects of this model are present in your prayer life, and where can you improve?

This passage should be freeing because Jesus is "demystifying prayer." He has given us a pattern for what prayer looks like so we no longer need to worry about the issues Jesus presented (being heard by men, or sounding wordy for the sake of being heard by God). Prayer is something God wants us to do, so the burden of performance is lifted and we can honestly seek to pray to him without unsure agendas. Looking at Jesus' prayer ask your group which elements do they most often include. Examples could be prayers that God would be glorified, prayers of repentance, prayers for provision...etc. Which parts are often neglected?