

MATTHEW

Heirs of the Kingdom

Matthew 6:1-18

Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. ² Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ³ But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Matthew 6:1-18

⁵ And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

⁶ But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. ⁷ And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words.

⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

Matthew 6:1-18

⁹ Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
¹⁰ Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in
heaven.¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread, ¹² and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from evil. ¹⁴ For if you forgive others their
trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, ¹⁵ but if you do
not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your
trespasses.

Matthew 6:1-18

¹⁶ And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷ But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Outline

1. Righteousness

2. Hypocrisy

3. Reward

1. Righteousness: The Practices of Religion

"practicing your righteousness" (v. 1)

Righteousness in Matthew 5 & 6

“Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” (5:20)

Torah Observance		Pillars of Judaism
Six Case Studies (5:21-48)		Three Practices (6:1-18)
Murder	Oaths	Giving
Adultery	Retaliation	Prayer
Divorce	Enemies	Fasting
The realm of ethics		The realm of spirituality

1. Righteousness: The Practices of Religion

Application

- These practices are assumed – “when” not “if”

1. Righteousness: The Practices of Religion

Application

- These practices are assumed – “when” not “if”
- If someone followed you for a week, would they see any embodied practices of devotion — generosity, prayer, self-denial — or is your Christianity mostly an idea?

2. Hypocrisy: The Danger of Theatricality

Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them.” (v. 1)

Matthew 6:2, 5, 16

v. 2: Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

v. 5: And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

v. 16: And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

2. Hypocrisy: The Danger of Theatricality

Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them.” (v. 1)

2. Hypocrisy: The Danger of Theatricality

Application

- Theatrical religion seeks the spotlight. True devotion seeks the Father. So again the question is: who is your audience?

3. Reward: The Gaze of the Father

"Your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (vv. 4, 6, 18)

3. Reward: The Gaze of the Father

Explanation

- The language of reward is not inconsistent with the theology of grace. The language is familial, not commercial. It is relational, not transactional.

3. Reward: The Gaze of the Father

Explanation

- Why does Jesus appeal to reward? Because he as a wise sage, he is showing us the way to human flourishing in the kingdom of God.



 CULTURAL LITURGIES
VOLUME 1

Desiring the Kingdom

WORSHIP, WORLDVIEW,
AND CULTURAL FORMATION

James K. A. Smith

To be human is to desire 'the kingdom,' some version of the kingdom, which is the aim of our quest. Every one of us is on a kind of Arthurian quest for 'the Holy Grail,' that hoped-for, longed-for, dreamed-of picture of the good life—the realm of human flourishing—that we pursue without ceasing. Implicitly and tacitly, it is such visions of the kingdom that pull us to get up in the morning and suit up for the quest.



 CULTURAL LITURGIES
VOLUME 1

Desiring the Kingdom

WORSHIP, WORLDVIEW,
AND CULTURAL FORMATION

James K. A. Smith

However, to say that all humans desire the kingdom does not mean that we all desire the same kingdom . . . there are very different versions of what 'the kingdom' looks like. The shape of the kingdom is contested, generating very different stories and thus different kinds of peoples, citizens who see themselves as subjects of rival kings. There are many roundtables.

3. Reward: The Gaze of the Father

"Your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (vv. 4, 6, 18)



If there lurks in most modern minds the notion that to desire our own good and earnestly to hope for the enjoyment of it is a bad thing, I submit that this notion has crept in from Kant and the Stoics and is no part of the Christian faith... Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that Our Lord finds our desires not too



strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased.

—C. S. Lewis,
“The Weight of Glory”

3. Reward: The Gaze of the Father

Application

- What we reward am I actually seeking? Who is my audience?

3. Reward: The Gaze of the Father

"Your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (vv. 4, 6, 18)

MATTHEW

Heirs of the Kingdom