

SERMON *on the* MOUNT

The Why Behind the What

Matthew 6:1-4

The Heart of the Matter

“Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 6:1

You _____ what you _____ after.

Giving from the Heart

“So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

Matthew 6:2-4

Jesus _____ that we will be giving, praying & fasting...

- *“When you give...”* (v. 2, 3)
- *“When you pray...”* (v. 5, 6, 7)
- *“When you fast...”* (v. 16, 17)

Two tests to check our motives:

1. Ask yourself: Why am I doing this... _____?
2. Show when tempted to _____, hide when tempted to _____ (A. B. Bruce).

A Word on Rewards

“Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

Matthew 6:4

“The proper rewards are not simply tacked on to the activity for which they are given, but are the activity itself in consummation.”

C. S. Lewis

Sermon on the Mount: The Why Behind the What

Matthew 6:1-4

Questions from Sermon on May 10, 2026

Getting to Know Me

1. Tell about a time you did something generous or kind and were hoping someone would notice or you'd get some reward. What were you hoping for?
2. Has anyone ever done something unexpectedly kind for you subtly or anonymously? How did it feel not knowing who to thank?

Digging Deeper

3. What point, question, or observation most hit home for you from Sunday's sermon?
4. Read Matthew 5:14-16 and 6:1-4 in tandem.
 - How do these passages seem to contradict one another?
 - What do you think Jesus is getting at by making both statements?
 - What is a key phrase in each passage that tips you off to Jesus' true point?
5. Before Jesus, *hypocrite* referred to an actor, someone playing a role. How does knowing that change the weight of what Jesus is saying about those who act righteous to be noticed by others?

6. Read Jeremiah 17:9-10 and Ephesians 2:10. What do these passages reveal about the tension between our heart's motives and God's intention for us to live righteously?
7. Jesus doesn't say *if*, but *when* you give and pray and fast. What does that assumption tell us about what he expects of his followers?
8. What do you think it looks like practically when a spiritual practice becomes so natural that it is second nature? How have you seen this in someone you know?

Making it Personal

9. If it's the *why* behind the *what* that Jesus is driving at here, what are some of the reasons why you do things (good or bad)?
10. Of the three practices Jesus describes in Matthew 6 – giving, prayer, and fasting – where do you sense the most room to grow? And how do we make sure all of these actions grow out of God's grace in our lives rather than trying to earn something?
11. Where is there a gap between the *you* that others see and the *you* that God sees. Share what you're comfortable sharing.

Prayer

Close by reading Ephesians 2:10 as a blessing over the group – that they are God's handiwork, created for good works he prepared in advance.

Pray that those works would flow from a pure heart rather than a need for applause and point others to God.

We exist to glorify God by guiding people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

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Matthew 6:1

You **GET** what you **GO** after.

Giving from the Heart

“So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

Matthew 6:2-4

Jesus **ASSUMES** that we will be giving, praying & fasting...

- “When you give...” (v. 2, 3)
- “When you pray...” (v. 5, 6, 7)
- “When you fast...” (v. 16, 17)

Two tests to check our motives:

1. Ask yourself: Why am I doing this... **REALLY?**
2. Show when tempted to **HIDE**, hide when tempted to **SHOW** (A. B. Bruce).

A Word on Rewards

“Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

Matthew 6:4

“The proper rewards are not simply tacked on to the activity for which they are given, but are the activity itself in consummation.”

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