

Sermon On The Mount Part 7

The Gift of Giving

Matthew 6:1-4, 19-24

Memory Verses: Matthew 6:19-21

MANUSCRIPT

Introduction (Me, We, & the Struggle)

The sermon on the mount has already taught us so much about what the attitude of a believer must be and what our actions must look like. We've tackled some sensitive issues to be sure, and my prayer is that you wouldn't just hear these messages and read these words and easily dismiss them. We aren't hearing a sermon from Shevi, we are hearing the sermon preached from the mouth of Jesus Christ himself.

We've dubbed today as Neighbor Sunday for a couple of reasons. Yesterday we made and gave away 250 thanksgiving meals to our community. Thanksgiving is right around the corner. We want our neighbors to know that thanksgiving isn't just about thanking God for what we've been given, but it's about giving to those who God has placed in our lives. This is also why today's topic is so relevant. Again, we don't usually go out of our way to move around topics to fit the day. This is exactly where our reading for today's message fell in the sermon on the mount. Let's just say, God knows what he's doing right?

What does it mean to be a good neighbor? Does it mean that you simply stay off their lawn? Does it mean you keep the trees on your property from hanging over the fence? Does it mean simply being friendly? I think many people would say yes, that is what a good neighbor is. But I think it's more than that. I think it someone who goes out of their way to befriend you and then look out for you. **A true neighbor is genuine and they are generous.** They give and they are thankful for being able to give. They know that what they do for their neighbor is storing up treasures in heaven. With that in mind, let's read our passage today from the sermon on the mount; **Matthew 6:1-4, 19-24.**

There is a lot here to discuss but I want you to quickly look at **verses 22-23** again. The issue, as has been the issue for every issue we've discussed here in the sermon on the mount is... the heart! Our eyes desire stuff. We look upon things in this world and we want them. We want that new truck, those new shoes, that new house. Our eyes are very quick to want, but they aren't so quick to want to give, are they? The point is simple, if all you desire is to get more stuff then your body is full of covetousness and greed; basically darkness. But if your eye seeks to give then your whole body will be full of righteousness and light. **For your heart, your soul, and for your spiritual health, it is much more important to give than to get.**

Teaching (Expand on the Problem, God)

The first thing we should see today is this... **Giving Is A Gift When We Do It With The Right Motives.** The first thing we need to recognize is that our giving means little to nothing if not done for the right reasons. Let's be honest. People have become very adept at seeing through false hoods and manipulations. They know when you are genuine and when you are a fake. They can look at our worship team this morning and see if they truly believe the words they are singing or if it is just a show. And they know when what you are doing for others is truly done for them and God or if it's done for themselves. Look again at **Matthew 6:1-3.** The warning is clear. If you do what you do in order to be seen by people and rewarded by people and lauded by people then you will not receive a reward for what you've done from God. What reward from God? We will get to that in a bit. But the point is simple. **God gives better rewards than man does... so don't try to be rewarded by men.**

The example Jesus gives us is the pharisees. These phonies would give a small portion of their wealth to a carefully selected person and then they would make sure that it was noticed. Now, I doubt they were actually tooting their own horns, but in some way they had worked the situation so that others would see it and praise them for it. Now I'm not judging but it seems awfully suspicious when celebrities or athletes have their acts of giving documented on tiktok or instagram. I love Cam Newton, but I know Cam likes to live that high life. Was he really giving away those footballs every game to a kid because of the kid's enjoyment or his own fame. I love the Rock and every thanksgiving he gives away a truck or some really big gift to someone in his circle. And it's always a big think online. And that's cool, but let's be honest. The Rock could give everyone in Danville a new truck and it would hardly hit his bank account.

But I can't judge others right? So let's judge me. I remember as a kid, seeing a commercial about how someone went over and mowed their neighbor's yard and how that was such a thoughtful gesture and how everyone in the neighborhood lauded the kid that mowed their neighbors yard as some hero. So the next day after school I went over and mowed my next door neighbor's yard, and I waited for the praises to roll in. Guess what. No one every noticed, no one ever said anything, and I remember just sitting there thinking... this neighborly giving stuff isn't all that it's cracked up to be. Why? Because I didn't do it for my neighbor, I did it for myself. That's not what its about! That's why Jesus says, when you give don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Meaning, **think very little of yourself and the great thing you've done, and think only of the needs of others and how you can meet those needs.** There are plenty of people in need. So, first, can you meet that need? And secondly, can you do it for the right reasons? **For your heart, your soul, and for your spiritual health, it is much more important to give than to get.**

The second thing we should see here is that... **Giving Is A Gift When We Recognize The Merit Of God's Rewards.** 6:4 says that if we give in secret with the right motives then our father who sees what is done in secret will reward us with something far greater than the rewards of men. You say, what could be greater than fame and fortune? Interesting, let's just look at the value of fame and fortune. Look again at 6:19. The treasures of this world are worthless in eternity because after just a short while they get holes in them, they get dented, scratched, broken. And if they don't eventually someone will find a way to take them away from us. Two years ago we bought a brand new van. It was the nicest and newest thing we'd ever owned. No scratches, no dents, beautiful interior, lots of bells and whistles. Do you know how long it stayed that way? Not a week. I come home and see scratches all up and down the side from bikes or whatever. Then Lisa rams it into the garage door... more than once. Guess what, nice things don't stay nice in this world and that's just the way it is.

You may say, well, that's the common man's problem. The filthy rich don't see it that way. Again, I think that's a common misperception. You know what I see when I look at the rich? I see people who are always looking for something else to fill the void in their soul. Tom Brady, filthy rich, 6 Superbowl rings, can't stop searching for more. When interviewed about this they asked, what is the more you keep looking for? Why aren't you happy with what you have? He said, I don't know, but I'll keep looking for it. It was just announced that he and his wife are getting divorced. Nothing seems to make him happy. Which brings up another issue, why do the super rich never stay married? Again, they aren't ever satisfied. They have everything but it's never enough. Why are they always overdosing on drugs or killing themselves? Because it's never enough. Here's the point. You can seek riches, but they will never be enough in this life. They don't satisfy. They can't. Why? **Because we weren't made to be satisfied with stuff and money! We were made to be satisfied by God.**

So we can either use all of our strength and time to gather things that will only be destroyed or stolen or we can use our strength and time for something of greater value; the rewards of God. Look again at 6:20-21. In heaven, in God, our treasures last forever. They are never destroyed, they are never taken away. Yes, we will receive mansions in heaven, yes we will walk on streets of gold. But we aren't talking about stuff. The whole point of what we just said about worldly stuff is that it can't satisfy. We are talking about something even greater. Relationship.

Let's be honest, when you are on your death bed are you going to wish for more stuff or for more time with those you love? Are you going to be sorry for not acquiring more wealth or are you going to be sorry for not doing more for those you love? Are you going to regret not having

more power or are you going to regret not having more influence? This life is all about the people you touch... it's all about relationships. And there is no greater relationship than the one between you and your maker. So the gift of God is not more stuff, rather it is eternally satisfying relationships with your loved ones and with Him. **Eternity with your loved ones and with God is the only reward any of us should ever want, because it's the only one that will ever satisfy. For your heart, your soul, and for your spiritual health, it is much more important to give than to get.**

Application

The point this morning is that you should learn to give. Our hearts yearn for getting don't they? They want and they want and they want. Well, how much has all that wanting satisfied you? If you still want more, it hasn't. But when you love others and care for others, when you care for your neighbors with the right motives, it does something different doesn't it. I'll just be honest. My favorite thing I've done this whole year is going to Kentucky with Steve and working hard all week to rebuild someone's home that was destroyed by a tornado. My second favorite thing was making and handing out 250 meals yesterday for needy people in our community. Why? Because the only thing that really satisfies is what you do for others and for God. It is true... **For your heart, your soul, and for your spiritual health, it is much more important to give than to get.** Make this thanksgiving and this holiday season about giving rather than getting and see the difference it makes in you.

Conclusion

Verse 24 ends our passage. It clearly says, you can't live for money and for God. You must choose one or the other. The question is, how do I know which one I'm living for? The answer is simple... Is it easier to give or to get? How much you love money is determined by how easy it is for you to give it away. This morning we are going to test that theory, not by asking you to give to our church... that would be self-defeating I think. But we are going to ask you to give to the benevolence fund which is used to help the hurting and needy in our community. **For your heart, your soul, and for your spiritual health, it is much more important to give than to get.**