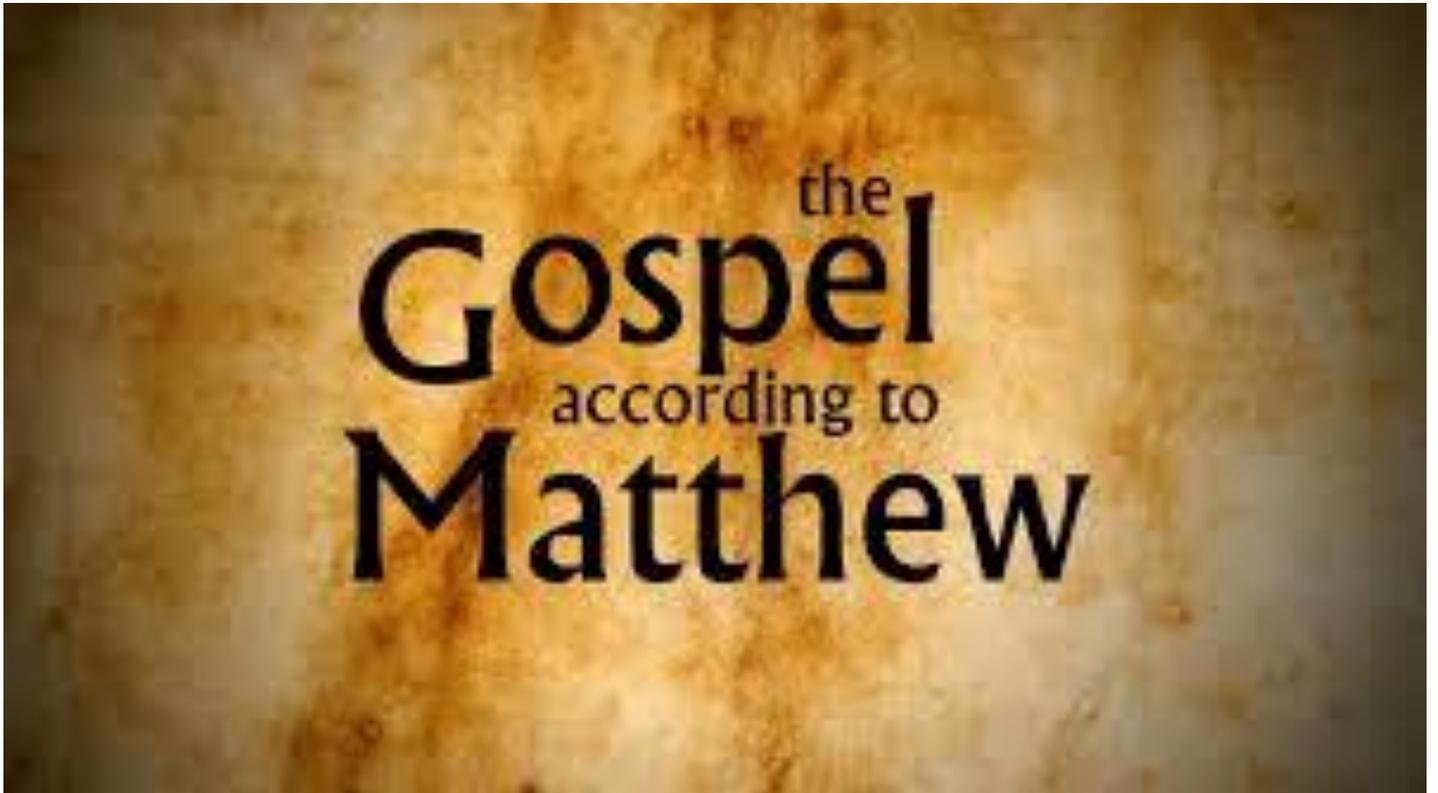


# The Book of Matthew



## Part 2

### 5 more studies in Matthew's Gospel

**Brief Outline of Matthew's Gospel**

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 1:1 - 4:16    | Introducing Jesus                                    |
| 4:17 - 16:20  | Public ministry in and around Galilee                |
| 16:21 - 18:35 | Private ministry in Galilee; preparing the disciples |
| 19:1 - 25:46  | Ministry in Judea                                    |
| 26:1 - 28:20  | The death and resurrection of Jesus                  |

**Confidentiality Reminder**

Just a reminder that sometimes in our *Growth Groups*, people feel comfortable sharing very personal and sensitive things about their lives. This information ***MUST BE CONFIDENTIAL and NEVER LEAVE THE GROUP.***

## Study 1 - True Worship - Our Giving- Matthew 6:1-4

*(Sermon on 11-Apr-21)*

### Re-read Matthew 5:1-48

1. Summarize the Sermon on the Mount thus far...

*Jesus begins the Sermon on the Mount by listing the attitudes (character) a Christian should have. They seem a tall order! And without Jesus they are a tall order.*

*And thus far, He doesn't mention the Law in the Old Testament.*

*Jesus told the people listening that they should be salt and light (influence) to those around them.*

*In the next section of His sermon (Matthew 5:17-20) - He reassures His listeners that He hasn't come to abolish the Law in the Old Testament, but to fulfil it. He also says that for someone to be truly righteous (that is: someone who is right with God and approved by God); that person must be more righteous than the Pharisees.*

*His listeners would have thought, if the Pharisees are not righteous enough, and they are considered the most religious people in the land; then who is righteous? Jesus explains this by tackling six Old Testament Laws - Murder, Adultery, Divorce, Oaths/Vows, Retaliation and Loving enemies; and He intensifies the teaching on each of these.*

*What He is trying to show is it's not a matter of keeping rules externally - it's a matter of what is in our hearts.*

2. Why is Jesus' teaching like this?

*Jesus teaches like this, so that people look at their hearts and examine their hearts for any sinful thoughts or intentions they may have.*

*It's not a matter of looking good - it's a matter of being good.*

*For example, the Pharisees kept all the rules; but inside they hated people; they showed little or no compassion; they thought themselves and not others. Jesus is saying, that's not being righteous. Righteousness comes from within!*

3. Before we look at the passage for this study, what is a hypocrite?

*A person who puts on a false appearance of virtue or religion*

*A person who acts in contradiction to his or her stated beliefs or feelings*

*Put simply - they don't do what they say they and others should do*

**Read Matthew 6:1-4**

1. What is the teaching in verse 1? (cf. Matthew 5:16; 23:5)

*Jesus is teaching about **showing off** when doing a good deed.*

*Jesus is questioning people's **motives** for doing a good deed.*

*The Pharisees in particular used almsgiving to gain favour with God and gain praise and attention from people, both of which were wrong motives. We can earn our salvation.*

2. Does verse 1 contradict Matthew 5:16? Yes/No? Why? Why not?

*Matthew 5:16 says: **In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.***

*Matthew 5:16 doesn't contradict Matthew 6:1.*

*In Matthew 6:1 - the intention is to gain praise from other people whereas Matthew 5:16 is to attract people to worship God and follow Jesus.*

*It boils down to motive - Matthew 6:1 is all about the person who is doing the good deed - Matthew 5:16 is about doing good to bring glory to God.*

*It amounts to the heart or motivation of the person doing the good deed.*

*Note also: In Matthew 5:16 Jesus is speaking against people's sin of 'cowardice' in not been willing to share their faith in Jesus. Whereas in Matthew 6:1, Jesus is speaking against people's sin of 'pride and vanity', in showing off when giving.*

*Note also: Both verses (Matt 5:16 and 6:1) are intended to ensure that God gets the glory and not the person!*

3. Remember the Pharisees were very religious; what is Jesus addressing about their behaviour?

*Jesus is addressing their heart or motivation for their "religious" acts.*

4. What does Jesus mean in verse 2 when He says: "**they have received their reward in full**"?

*Those who are doing good deeds so they are praised by the people or get a pat on the back; that's their reward; they won't get a reward from God, they've had in from people.*

5. What does Jesus mean in verse 3, "*do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing*"?

*It means if it were possible - we'd hide our giving from ourselves. As that is impossible; it means we are not to be "self-conscious" in our giving; it means we should deny ourselves any self-indulgence over our giving, either by receiving praise from God or by patting ourselves on the back. Instead, our motivation is purely to do it for the approval of God alone.*

6. What is Jesus' teaching in verse 4? (cf. Colossians 3:23, 24)

*Where possible give in secret. We don't need to go around broadcasting how good or how generous we are. Otherwise, we're back to verse 2 and we've already received our reward from those who praise us. No one needs to know what generosity we have shown, only God needs to know.*

7. **Ponder:** Does this mean that it is wrong to give openly?

*It doesn't mean we can't give openly. If someone asks for help in the presence of others, we may have to give openly and others see. But again, we must watch our motivation for doing so. There are ways that we can still, in public, give secretly by pulling someone aside or catching up with them later or putting something in an envelope.*

8. **Read Acts 4:32-37.** How does this case study relate to Matthew 6:1-4?

*The believers were of **one heart and mind**. They were not thinking purely of themselves but of the **greater good that could be achieved by sharing ALL they had, not just SOME**.*

*Their **desire** was that there would be no one in need in their community.*

*They gave what they felt in their heart and laid it at the apostles' feet. They did not know who their "offerings" were going to, so they were kind of in secret. This means they couldn't "show off" who they had actually helped.*

9. **Read Acts 5:1-11.** How does this case study relate to Matthew 6:1-4?

*In the context of Acts 4:32-37; Acts 5 implies that Ananias and Sapphira's intention was to give **ALL** the proceeds of their property sale to the Apostles for distribution.*

*But they held some back. Only God knew they had done this.*

*Through the power of the Holy Spirit; Peter gained knowledge of what they had done.*

*The lesson is - God knows what we do in secret; and God knows our hearts, our motives and our intentions. We can't hide anything from God and we can't fool Him.*

*Note: By holding back some of their money, Ananias and Sapphira were giving the false impression to others that they'd given all rather than only part of the proceeds. They gave the impression they were more spiritual than they really were.*

**10. Optional question:** Find some Old Testament teachings on giving to the needy?

*Psalm 9:18 - But God will never forget the needy; the hope of the afflicted will never perish.*

*Proverbs 19:17 - Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done.*

*Proverbs 22:16 - One who oppresses the poor to increase his wealth and one who gives gifts to the rich—both come to poverty.*

What's the **BIG IDEA** of **Matthew 6:1-4**?

*Examine our motivation for giving to the needy and where possible give in secret.*



Give a **light globe** moment you experienced in this passage?

➔ How does this passage **apply to your life**?

- *Are we being hypocritical in our giving?*
- *Are we "showing off our giving"?*
- *Examine our motivation for giving*
- *Examine how secret our giving is?*
- *Examine our giving in general - are we holding back?*
- *Where is there a need that we are ignoring; but could actually help?*

**Share the verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?

*Matthew 6:3-4*

**Finish in prayer:** Ask God to examine our hearts as to what we should give, not reluctantly or under compulsion; but willingly, because God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Corinthians 9:7)

## Study 2 - True Worship - Our Praying & Fasting - Matthew 6:5-18

*(Sermon on 18-Apr-21)*

### Before we begin, what is prayer?

*The dictionary says: a solemn request for help or expression of thanks addressed to God.*

*In the Bible; people spoke to God directly, praising Him, thanking Him, confessing to Him and asking for His help.*

*Prayer is like a direct wi-fi to God.*

### Read 2 Kings 4:8-37

#### 1. What does Elisha pray for? What happens?

*A Shunammite woman longed for a son. Elisha told her she would have a son, even though her husband was old. One day the son, complained of a sore head and lay on her lap and died. The woman was in great distress. So, Elisha prayed over the boy, in private, in the bedroom. Elisha, laid on the boy and he began to breathe. God answered Elisha's prayer, offered up in faith.*

#### 2. What do we learn from Elisha's prayer?

*He prayed in private. He prayed with faith, confident that God would help. Elisha prayed this way because he'd learnt from his mentor, Elijah who had also prayed over a sick child in 1 Kings 17:20-23. God answered Elisha's prayer.*

### Read Daniel 6:1-12

#### 3. What do we learn about prayer from Daniel?

*Daniel prayed **3 times per day on his knees**, even though King Darius (Persian King) had issued an edict that anyone who prays to any god or human being, other than to the King, will be thrown in the lion's den.*

*Daniel was confronted with a **test of loyalties**. Should he obey King Darius or the King of Kings?*

*So, Daniel He **obeyed God**.*

*He prayed in private in an upper room.*

*He prayed facing Jerusalem - **facing the place where sacrifices for sin were made** - even though at the time - no sacrifices were made because they were in exile.*

*When the temple at Jerusalem had been dedicated by Solomon - Solomon said this in 1 Kings 8:30 - Hear the supplication of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive.*

*Daniel had prayed as Solomon had prayed.*

*No one can stop us praying! No government, no law.*

*God wants and expects us to pray.*

*He prayed on his knees - just as Jesus did (Luke 22:41); as Stephen did (Acts 7:60), as Peter did (Acts 9:40), as Paul and as other church leaders did (Acts 20:26) and as Luke did (Acts 21:5) = begging posture - we must all come to God as beggars (Heslop)*

### **Read Matthew 6:5-8**

4. Remind yourself what a hypocrite is, from the last study?

*We said last time that the Greek word for hypocrite means someone who is acted a part. Last week the religious people were playing the part of being generous and making a show of what they gave to the needy, so they got praise from their "audience". The same thing is going on here, when they pray - they're saying "Look at me, how good am I at praying?"*

5. What do the hypocrites do in verse 5?

*They love to pray (nothing wrong with that).*

*They pray standing in the synagogues and on street corners (no problem with that - the normal posture for a Jewish person to pray was standing up)*

*The problem is their motive in verse 5 is "to be seen by others"*

*Jesus says - they will be seen - and they'll get the reward - which is praise from their "audience" - and no praise from God!*

6. What does Jesus say prayer looks like in verse 6?

*Pray in a room in private.*

*That we, no disturbance or distraction.*

*Basically, we are shut in with God.*

*We can feel His presence.*

*The prayer is done between us and the unseen God - in secret.*

*God is not interested in outward appearances but in the contents of our hearts as we pour out our prayer.*

7. **Ponder:** Are we allowed to prayer in public then?

*Yes, we are allowed to pray in public.*

*Jesus is referring to our **private prayers here**, as all the Greek words are in the singular - King James Version for verse 6 "But thou, when **thou** prayest, enter into **thy** closet, and when **thou** hast shut thy door, pray to **thy** Father which is in secret, and **thy** Father which seeth in secret shall reward **thee** openly".*

*If all prayer was in secret; we wouldn't pray in church worship services, prayer groups & meetings or have family prayers.*

*The emphasis on secret here, is to make sure our motives are pure.*

*We are praying from the heart and not out of self-piety or self-righteousness.*

8. How should we pray according to verses 7 and 8?

*V7 - No babbling or repetitions - thinking many words will make their prayers more effective.*

*As Spurgeon says: "Christians' prayers are measured by weight, and not by length. Many of the most prevailing prayers have been as short as they were strong."  
(Spurgeon)*

*V8 - God the Father knows what we need before we ask Him.*

*We don't pray to tell God things that He didn't know before we told Him. We pray to commune with Him and appeal to a loving God who wants us to bring every need and worry before His throne.*

*Prayer is not designed to INFORM God, but to give us an idea of where we are hearts are at; to humble our hearts before God; to show our desires to God; to inflame our faith in God; to animate our hope in God; to raise our hearts from Earth towards Heaven; and to remind us that there is a FATHER in Heaven who cares about us.*

**Read Matthew 6:9-15**

9. How does Jesus say we should pray?

*Note this is how (not what) we should pray (Don Carson)*

*Jesus says we must:*

*Speak to our Father in Heaven directly; it's a personal relationship we have with Him.*

*The prayer is short and simple and to the point*

*The prayer acknowledges who God is and what He can do and what we have done wrong.*

*Note the prayer begins with God - and not us.*

10. One format that can be used in prayer is A.C.T.S. - where A=Adoration; C=Confession; T=Thanksgiving and S=Supplication (Shopping List). Which elements of the Lord's prayer are:

#### Adoration

- *Our Father - denotes a personal relationship where God is our Father and we are His children*
- *In Heaven - denotes God's holiness and glory*
- *Hallowed be your name - denotes His holiness compared to our sinful nature*
- *Your Kingdom come - acknowledges Him as King and we are His subjects*
- *Your will be done - acknowledges that it's will and purpose on Earth that come to pass - and not what we want*

#### Confession

- *Forgive us our debts - we are confessing our sin and rebellion to God and asking for forgiveness*

#### Thanksgiving

- *This model prayer - doesn't directly thank God - but by acknowledging Him as Father and acknowledging His holiness and relying on His daily provision - the prayer is also thanking God in anticipation of who He is.*
- *Also, we are thanking God that He has forgiven us and so we are able to forgive others*

#### Supplication

- *Your will be done - In Heaven there is no disobedience or obstacles to God's will - we're asking the same for on this Earth*
- *Give us today our daily bread - we are asking for God's daily provision. We're asking for our needs - not our greeds. We're trusting God one day at a time*

- *Lead us not into temptation (better word is test) - we are asking for God's protection from any temptations that might come our way*
- *Deliver us from the evil one - we are asking for God's protection from Satan and his dark forces*

11. **Ponder:** Is Jesus' commanding us to recite the words of the Lord's Prayer or to pray in a certain manner? What do you think?

*Jesus is showing us HOW to pray - not WHAT to pray. As verse says in NIV "how you should pray" KJV "After this manner therefore pray ye".*

*The Lord's Prayer gives the ingredients of a prayer.*

*However, there is nothing wrong with memorizing the Lord's Prayer and reciting it, as long as our hearts are in it and we truly mean the words we pray.*

12. What do you notice about **personal pronouns** in the Lord's Prayer? Is that significant?

*Our Father = corporate - we are God's children in His family*

*"Give us" and "forgive us" and "as we forgive" and "lead us not" and "deliver us" = not just praying for ourselves - it is not a selfish prayer.*

13. What is the **purpose** of prayer?

- *It is the way we communicate with God*
- *It is praising and worshipping God - we acknowledge who He is and what He has done and continues to do*
- *It is how we submit to the Father's will for our lives and for others' lives*
- *And it is the way we asking God for His help*
- *To bring glory to God*

14. Is there an **order** to the Lord's Prayer (i.e., who is addressed first, who is addressed second...)?

*Yes, the Father is addressed first - then us!*

15. Verse 13 says "**lead us not into temptation**", does that mean God tempts us? (cf. James 1:13-17)

*A better translation is "test" rather than temptation.*

*James 1:13-17 says that God does not tempt us nor is He tempted by evil.*

*What we are praying here is for God's protection.*

16. What do we learn about **forgiveness** from the Lord's Prayer?

*That God is forgiving and we too must be forgiving.*

17. Matthew 6:8 says God knows what we need, so why bother praying? (cf. James 4:1-3)

*God knows what we need; but He also wants to commune with us and one major way of us doing this is in prayer. We cannot have a relationship with someone if we never talk to them!*

18. **Optional Question:** Write a prayer for our family service. Our Family Service has two types of prayers: a) Adoration & Confession; and b) Pastoral Prayer, which is Thanks & Supplication (Shopping List). Give your prayer to Paul and it will be used at one of our services.

**What is fasting? (cf. Leviticus 23:27)**

*Fasting is the total abstention of food for a specific amount of time.*

*Even our first meal of the day - break-fast - talks in terms of breaking the fast of no food to have breakfast.*

*On the Day of Atonement (the day the High Priest made animal sacrifices to atone for the sin of all the people) in the Old Testament, fasting (denying oneself of food) was commanded. The idea was to deny oneself and humble oneself before God and focus on Him.*

*In Jesus' time the Pharisees fasted twice per week (Luke 18:12)*

**What is the purpose of fasting? (cf. Acts 13:2; 14:23; Luke 2:37; 5:33)**

*In Acts 13:2 - the church of Antioch prayed and fasted to receive the Holy Spirit's guidance*

*In Acts 14:23 - Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in each church with prayer and fasting - again looking for the Lord's wisdom and guidance*

*Luke 2:37 - Anna never left the temple by worshipped day and night in prayer and fasting. Here, fasting was used to focus on worshipping God*

*Luke 5:33 - A reference to John the Baptist's disciples fasting and Jesus' disciples not fasting. If the idea of fasting is to feel closer to God - Jesus replies in v34 and following - that His disciples have Him (the bridegroom and fully God) with them, so they don't need to fast to be closer to God, as He's with them already!*

*The purpose of fasting then:*

- a. An expression of repentance for sin (Nehemiah 9:1-2)*
- b. As an expression of dependence and self-humbling before God - for a great need or mercy (e.g., Jehoshaphat in 1 Chron 20:3 commanded a fast when Israel was in danger; Queen Esther ask the Jews to fast before she approached the King in Esther 4:16)*
- c. As a way of increasing self-control as Paul describes in 1 Cor 9:24-27.*
- d. A deliberate doing without to share with others (Isaiah 58)*

### **Read Matthew 6:16-18**

19. What does Jesus say about fasting here?

- V16 - Don't put on a show - so it's obvious you're fasting - so that people either feel sorry for you or give you praise. The reward for such behaviour is the praise you get from your "audience"*
- V17 - Jesus is instructing that we take care of ourselves when fasting - so it's secret between us and God. Our appearance should not give away that we are fasting - that's what Jesus means by putting oil on your head and washing your face*
- V18 - It shouldn't be obvious we are fasting.*

### **Read Isaiah 58**

20. What does God say true fasting is?

*The true fasting God wanted from the Israelites wasn't religious piety but that they make sacrifices in their lives so that:*

- People being treated unjustly was stopped*
- People being oppressed or unfairly treated were freed and treated fairly*
- People who are hungry are fed*
- People who have no clothes - are clothed*

## What's the **BIG IDEA** of **Matthew 6:5-18**?

*Jesus is contrasting 2 types of behaviour - Pharisaic or Christian*

- a. *Pharisaic behaviour is motivated by self-righteousness, pride, vanity, and wanting to be praised or rewarded by their "audience"*
- b. *Christian behaviour is mostly in secret, from the heart, motivated by humility and a genuine heart for God and for others; and rewarded by "God"*

*Dr. Lloyd Jones says "our reason for pleasing others around us is that we may please ourselves"*



Give a **light globe** moment you experienced in this passage?

*The whole sermon on the mount is addressing the same problem - the motivation for doing something. Is it for praise from others? Is it so we can feel great about ourselves? Or is it about a genuine love for others and a genuine desire to love and please God?*

➔ How does this passage **apply to your life**?

- *We have to become so focused on God that we cease to focus on ourselves.*
- *Who is our audience? Others? Or God?*
- *Remember God looks on the heart*
- *Beware of hypocrisy*

**Share the verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?

**Finish in prayer:** Praise God for who He is and what He has done; Confess your thoughts, words and actions which have brought dishonour to God this week; give thanks for all that God has done this week for you, your family, your church, your community; and ask God to help with the needs of family, friends and community.

### Study 3 - True Worship - Our Wealth - Matthew 6:19-24

*(Sermon on 25-Apr-21)*

#### Before we begin, what is your treasure?

*Of course, the correct answer should be God and His Son, Jesus.*

*However, humanly speaking I have:*

*My wife, my children, my grandchildren and rest of family; plus, my Church Family.*

#### Read Ecclesiastes 5:8-20

##### 1. What "pecking order" do we see in verses 8 and 9?

*In the fallen world we live in, we should not be surprised that there are poor people who are oppressed, with justice and rights denied.*

*There will always seem to be someone who is over you, and above your boss, will be another boss, until you get to the top.*

*But even with a complex bureaucracy everyone depends on what comes from the farmers' fields. Even the King.*

##### 2. What observations are made about the accumulation of wealth in verse 10?

*The person accumulates and loves money, a) never has enough and is b) never satisfied with their income.*

*Solomon (assuming he is the writer of Ecclesiastes) of all people knew the gathering of riches (and wives for that matter) was futile; as he says it's meaningless (vanity)*

##### 3. What uncertainties are there in wealth in verses 11 to 17?

*V11 - as wealth increases - so does expenses. Many people flock to the rich for help too.*

*V12 - Solomon envied the working man who slept well after a fair day's work whereas a rich person has so much stuff to worry about, they can't sleep. (e.g., Rene Rivkin - often stayed up all to watch the stock markets in different countries.*

*V13-14 - Solomon observed that a rich man hoarded more wealth than is good for him, only to lose it all in some poor business deal or stock market crash - and there is nothing to leave to his children as an inheritance*

*V15 -16- We came into the world with nothing - and leave with nothing. All that work and toil - and we leave with nothing*

*V17 - Even the rich experience loneliness, sorrow, frustration and anger.*

4. What conclusions about wealth are made in verses 18 to 20?

*The best we can expect in our life under the sun*

*Is - v18 - It is right and fitting for us to do an honest day's work - and enjoy the fruits of this labour - be fed and satisfied with our lot*

*V19 - Whatever wealth God gives (and remember it all comes from Him and belongs to Him) - He gives us the ability (and privilege) to enjoy them; and we should accept that that is our lot - and be happy with our work. It's all a gift from God.*

*V20 - Solomon's advice is that a wealthy person who accepts this is all a gift from God - doesn't think too much about it - but God keeps them busy (occupied) and they will have a gladness in their heart.*

**Read Matthew 6:19-21**

7. What two types of treasures does Jesus talk about here?

- i) *There are treasures on earth - which are destroyed by moths or rust or stolen from us - that is corruptible - temporary.*
- ii) *There are treasures in Heaven - which are not destroyed by moths or rust and are not stolen from us - that is incorruptible - permanent.*

*Note: Jesus is not banning us being wealthy - He's not banning having property - or saving for a rainy day. He's tackling the heart again - He's tackling selfish accumulation of goods - the hardheartedness which fails to see the need of those underprivileged in the world and continues to accumulate wealth. Key word is "yourselves" in verse 19.*

8. What does Jesus mean by 'storing up treasures for yourself in Heaven'?

*Note: Jesus is not saying do good deeds so we get a reward in Heaven - as that undermines the gift of grace and being saved by Jesus, not ourselves. What Jesus is referring to:*

- a. *Developing a Christlike character - through time with God in prayer, time in His Word and with His people - this will equip us to do the following*
- b. *Through prayer, God's Word and the Holy Spirit - introduce others to Jesus - by showing the love of Jesus to them. Then they too will be in eternity.*
- c. *Invest our wealth in helping others in need - again they save the love of Jesus in a practical way - and may come to the Lord.*

9. According to verse 21, what is involved when we deal with our treasure? (cf. Luke 12:34)

*Our heart is involved. Where our heart is - that's where our treasure is also. So is our heart for eternal permanent things or earthly temporary things*

**Read Matthew 6:22-23**

10. What is being compared in verses 22 and 23?

*The comparison is between a sighted person and a blind person.*

*That is a comparison between light and darkness.*

11. What problem is being addressed in verses 22 and 23?

*Often the eye in scripture is equivalent to the heart.*

*For example, to 'set my heart' on something is the same as 'fix my eye' on something. So, in Psalm 119:10 - I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.*

*So here in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus passes from the importance of having our heart in the right place (v21) to the importance of having our eyes sound and healthy (vv22-23)*

*So, Jesus' point is: just as our eye affects our whole body; so, our desires/ambition (where we fix our eye and heart) affect our whole life.*

*If we have good physical vision, we can see what we are doing and where we are going. If we have good spiritual vision, we will live our lives for God and not for ourselves*

**Read Matthew 6:24**

12. What 2 masters are mentioned?

*God and mammon.*

*Note: Having 2 masters is not like having 2 jobs.*

*Jesus is talking about a master/slave relationship.*

*Just like Ancient Israel struggled with idolatry - they thought they could serve both the Lord God and Baal. God constantly reminded them - that they could not serve both - to be loyal to one is to be disloyal to the other.*

*In the scheme of slavery - a slave could not belong to 2 masters.*

*Mammon = material things; treasure, riches, wealth = riches personified and opposed to God. In other words, making riches a god or idol and worshipping it.*

**Read Matthew 19:16-30**

13. What "one thing" does the young man lack?

*He loved his possessions and wealth so much. So, he lacked proper devotion to God - he loved his wealth more than God*

14. How does the young man react to Jesus' suggestion?

*He was very sad. Better translation: sorrowful, grieving. Losing his possessions, for him, would be like someone dying.*

15. What is Jesus' observation about the rich and the kingdom of Heaven?

*It is difficult for the rich to enter the Kingdom of Heaven - easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. This seems impossible.*

16. What problem do the disciples perceive in verse 25? Why is there thinking wrong?

*They can't see how anyone can be saved.*

*Their thinking is the wealthy and rich are blessed by God - and if they can't be saved, then who can.*

*Their thinking is wrong because it is only those who believe in Jesus, who are saved - not those who appear blessed by God!*

17. What encouragement is there in verse 26?

*Anything is possible with God*

18. What observation does Peter make in verse 27?

*Peter makes the observation that they have left everything to follow Jesus - and they haven't got any wealth to love and depend on, like the rich man in the story had.*

19. What 'reward' is there in verses 28 to 30?

a. *The 12 disciples will sit on 12 thrones*

b. *More family and homes - a hundredfold what we may have left behind*

c. *Eternal life*

d. *Many who were first will be last and many who were last will be first - Jesus saying there will be surprises in the final assessment...it may be that those who were humble on earth will be great in heaven, and that those who were great in this world will be humbled in the world to come. The parable in chapter 20 explains it further...*

20. How might verses 29 relate to us in our church family?

*We may have lost family to follow Jesus (some of our family might not want to know us because of our faith) - but in our church family we will have many extra mums and dads; brothers and sisters; and sons and daughters. We may not have our own home but we can share in the homes of our church family.*

What's the **BIG IDEA** of **Matthew 6:19-24**?

*Where our treasure is - there is our heart.*

*What is our heart for?*



Give a **light globe** moment you experienced in this passage?

➔ How does this passage **apply to your life**?

*Examine our "Hearts" - is our heart on the temporary or the permanent; on the Earthly or the Heavenly.*

*Use of our wealth to bring glory to God and help others; and not to glory ourselves*

*Serve God - not mammon - we can't serve two masters.*

**Share the verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?

*V21 and V24*

**Finish in prayer:** Ask God to examine our hearts to see where our true treasure is and to see if we are trying to serve two masters.

## Study 4 - True Worship - Daily Living - Matthew 6:25-34

*(Sermon on 02-May-21)*

### Read Matthew 6:25-30

1. Why are we not to worry, according to verse 25?

*We're told not to worry about our life - about food and drink and what clothes we'll wear - because life is more than food and body more than clothes! These is an extension on last week's passage about our wealth; Jesus is saying once we start get anxious and worried about "stuff" we are becoming covetous.*

2. What example is given in verse 26?

*The birds in the sky; they don't plant or harvest; they don't have barns to store their stuff in; but the Heavenly Father takes care of them and provides for them. Jesus says as humans are worth more than birds. If God takes care of the birds, He will take care of humans.*

3. What argument is given in verse 27?

*As well as worrying being sinful; Jesus is saying worrying is dangerous to our health. Instead of anxiety helping us to live longer, anxiety only makes life shorter. Too much worry can make us ill. Jesus argues - worry can't add an hour to our lives - some translations say "worry can't add a single cubit to your height"*

4. What example is given in verse 28?

*Jesus says don't worry about what clothes you will wear. Look how wild flowers grow and they don't work hard for their clothes.*

5. What example is given in verse 29? Why?

*Jesus uses rich and wealthy, King Solomon, and says even he wasn't as well clothed as the wild flowers.*

6. What argument is given in verse 30?

*If God gives such beauty to everything that grows in the fields, even though they are here one day and thrown in the fire the next; He will surely do even for you. Jesus says worrying and anxiety is showing we have "little faith"*

### Read Matthew 6:31-34

7. What important truth are we told in verses 31 and 32?

- *To worry about material things is to live like a pagan (those who don't believe in the one true God) [Greek is actually ethnos which is Gentiles - non-Jews].*
- *Our Heavenly Father knows what we need (see Matthew 6:8)*

8. What are we to do instead in verse 33?

*Instead, we are to put God's will and God's righteousness first in our lives; living a life that is pleasing to Him; He will take care of everything else. It is a great testimony when a Christian dares to practice Matthew 6:33.*

9. **Ponder:** What testimony would we give to those around if we heeded the advice of verse 33?

*We would be a great witness; as people would see that we love God and His Son Jesus; and that that is a priority in our lives. It would also show people our faith and trust in our Heavenly Father. Hopefully, that we attract others to follow suit.*

10. **Ponder:** What are we losing if we **don't** heed verse 34

*If today, we are worrying about tomorrow; it robs us of effectiveness today. Which means we will be even less effective tomorrow. Someone said worrying about tomorrow is like a person crucifying themselves between two thieves: the regrets of yesterday and the worries of tomorrow.*

*It is right to plan for the future and even to save for the future as in:*

*2 Cor 12:14 - Now I am ready to visit you for the third time, and I will not be a burden to you, because what I want is not your possessions but you. After all, children should not have to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.*

*1 Timothy 5:8 - Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

*But it is a sin to worry about the future and permit tomorrow to rob today of its blessings!*

**Read Philippians 4:4-9**

11. What advice is given in verse 4, which is the opposite of worry?

*Rejoice in the Lord always; Rejoice!*

*Notice what we are rejoicing "in". It is the Lord. He is the same, yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8); so, it is easy to rejoice in Him; rather than focus on the worries of tomorrow.*

12. What advice is given in verse 5? Why?

*That we should be gentle to all.*

*The Greek word for gentleness describes a person who will let the Lord fight their battles; that gentle person knows that the Lord is near and by their side; they know that the Lord says "vengeance is mine" (Romans 12:19). The word describes a person who is really free to let go of their anxieties and all things that cause them stress; because they know that the Lord will take up their cause.*

13. What are we to do instead of being anxious, in verse 6?

*In every situation by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, we are to present our requests to God.*

*Prayer is general communication to God; it can be praise, confession, thanks or petitions.*

*Petitions - aka supplication - aka shopping list = the concerns we have, that we would like God to help with*

*Notice: prayer is done with a thankful heart - not in a complaining spirit.*

14. What will that give us, in verse 7?

*We will receive a peace from God - that transcends all understanding.*

*Spurgeon describes that peace as: the unruffled serenity of the infinitely-happy God, the eternal composure of the absolutely well-contented God.*

*This peace from God is so powerful - it guards our heart (our innermost being) from worry - and guards our minds, which can get carried away with many worst-case scenarios.*

*The idea of "guards" here is like a soldier or fortress protecting our hearts and minds from worry.*

15. How do the things listed in verse 8 counter worrying?

*Things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent or praiseworthy - are things that we would not worry about - but things we would rejoice in and praise.*

*Paul telling us to think about "positive" stuff and not "negative" stuff.*

*Elsewhere, in Romans 12:2 Paul speaks about people being "transformed by the renewal of your mind" - basically rewiring our minds to not worry and not thing about troublesome things.*

16. What final advice is given in verse 9? What does that bring?

*Paul says to imitate him (as of course he is imitating Jesus - 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1).*

*This brings the God of peace beside us in life.*

**Optional question: Read Luke 10:38-42**

17. What was Martha unnecessarily worried about?

*All the preparations that had to be made for the visitors, Jesus and His disciples. All these preparations "distracted" her from spending time with Jesus and cause her to worry (v41).*

*Martha had become crabby and irritable in her service to the Lord, as many do today. It is easy for us to look at all we do and to criticize those who don't seem to do as much. Martha complained about Mary; but Martha's real problem wasn't Mary; it was Martha herself. She had become distracted and had taken her eyes of Jesus.*

18. What lesson are Martha and we meant to learn here?

*The lesson here is to keep our focus on Jesus. Martha's frustration and worry are typical of those who diligently serve with good intentions but forget the "one thing" (v42) that is needed and that is to sit at Jesus' feet.*

*Spurgeon again says: "The Martha spirit says, if the work is done, is not that all? The Mary spirit asks whether Jesus is well pleased, or no? All must be done in his name and by his Spirit, or nothing is done"*

**What's the BIG IDEA of Matthew 6:25-34?**

Three words point the way to victory in this passage:

- a. Faith (Matthew 6:30) - trusting God to meet our needs
- b. Father (Matthew 6:32) - knowing our Heavenly Father cares for His children
- c. First (Matthew 6:33) - putting God's will first in our lives so that He might be glorified.

If we put faith in our Father and put Him first; He will meet our needs!



Give a **light globe** moment you experienced in this passage?

➔ How does this passage **apply to your life?**

- a. *Confess our sin of worry and repent of it*
- b. *Focus on God and His Kingdom*
- c. *Keep our eyes focused on Jesus*
- d. *Hold on to God's promises*
- e. *We must live in God's grace for today - that is enough*

**Share the verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?

*Matthew 6:33*

*Phil 4:7*

*Luke 10:41-42*

**Finish in prayer:** Ask God to help us with the things in our lives that we worry about; ask God to give us His peace that surpasses all understanding.

## Study 5 – Judging Others – Matthew 7:1-6

*(Sermon on 09-May-21)*

### Read Matthew 7:1-6

1. What is Jesus' teaching in verse 1?

*Jesus is teaching if we judge others - remember will also will be judged.*

*As msg version says: Don't pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults—unless, of course, you want the same treatment. That critical spirit has a way of boomeranging.*

2. Is He saying we **can't** judge people?

*No - Jesus is not saying we can't judge people; He's saying remember that we will be judged (by God and by others), so be careful if you judge others. The Pharisees were keen to judge others but didn't consider that God would one day judge them.*

3. What principle is in place in verse 2?

*Any judging we do is like a boomerang coming back at us. We will be judged with the same kind of judgement and with the same measure of judgment, that we judge others.*

4. What illustration does Jesus give in verses 3 to 5?

*Jesus uses the example of a person pointing out a speck in another person's eye when all the time there is a plank in their own eye. How can they see clearly the other person's problem, when they've got a bigger problem! This is hypocritical judgment. The person needs to look at their own problem, before pointing out the problem with the other problem.*

5. What is Jesus' teaching in verse 6? Does this contradict Matthew 5:13-16?

*Jesus is teaching that once we have removed the plank from our eyes so we can see people for what they are, we may come across people who, though they have been presented with the Gospel (the sacred and the pearl in this verse) many times and they have treated it with contempt, to the point where they get rude and angry about it; Jesus says don't continue offering them these sacred things/pearls (the Gospel). It is equivalent to His teaching to His disciples about "shaking the dust off your feet" (Matthew 10:14).*

*This is an exceptional circumstance and therefore does not contradict Matthew 5:13-16 about us being salt and light.*

### **Case Study - Read John 8:1-11**

6. What does this passage tell us about judging? (cf. John 8:7)

*Before judging others in their sin; we need to confess and repent of our own sin. Paul says this in Romans 2:1: You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge another, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. See also Romans 2:22.*

### **Case Study - Read 1 Samuel 16:1-7**

7. What does this passage tell us about judging?

*The Lord sends Samuel to Jesse of Bethlehem to anoint one of Jesse's sons as a replacement King for King Saul.*

*Samuel looked at Jesse's son standing before them and when he saw Eliab, Jesse's first-born son, he thought this was the "one" that God would choose/anoint as King. But God had other ideas. Samuel had judged Eliab to be the preferred one by his appearance; but God said in v7: Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart*

*You see, God judges by what's in the heart not by the exterior of a person. This is what Jesus has been talking about in the Sermon on the Mount; it's always about our heart (our innermost being); that's what matters to God.*

*When we judge people by their appearance or their actions; we don't necessarily know what's going on inside for them. It's often very difficult for us to determine and therefore judge, a person's motives.*

### **Read Romans 14:10-23**

8. What does this passage tell us about God's judgment?

*V10 - We will all stand before God's judgment seat (of Christ). See 1 Cor 5:10.*

*V11 - As quoted in Isaiah 45:23 and Philippians 2:10-11, we will all bow and kneel before God one day.*

*V12 - We will all have to give an account of ourselves to God.*

9. What does this passage tell us about judging?

*V13 - 16 - Paul says don't pass judgment on what people regard as unclean (food and drink) - just because we think it's clean or unclean - don't enforce that on others and become a stumbling block to them. If what we are going to eat or drink causes a brother or sister to become distressed, we should refrain for their sake. We shouldn't let our right to eat or drink something bring shame to Jesus Christ, who died for us.*

*V17 - 18 - The Kingdom of God isn't a matter of what we put in our stomachs, it's what God does with our life when He gives us righteousness, peace and joy, by believing in Jesus. Our job is to serve Jesus and in doing so we will kill two birds with one stone, we will please God above and prove a worthy example to the people around us.*

*V19-21 - We need to make every effort to get along with people and living in peace and mutually edifying people, rather than judging people on what their food or dietary requirements.*

*V22-23 - It's much better to cultivate our relationship with God than to impose our preferences on other people. We need to be consistent in what we believe. And not a hypocrite.*

*Bottom line - we shouldn't be judging people on things that are a matter of taste or are subjective. (current example: might be flu/covid19 vaccine or no-vaccine?).*

**Read Revelation 20:11-15**

10. What does this passage tell us about God's judgment?

*Everyone standing before a great white throne and was judged.*

*Everyone was judged by what was written in the Book of Life.*

*Those whose name was not written in the Book of Life was hurled into the Lake of Fire.*

*As Hebrews 9:27 says - we are all destined to die once and after that to face judgment.*

What's the **BIG IDEA** of **Matthew 7:1-6**?

*Judge ourselves before we judge others - and remember we all must appear before God for judgment.*



Give a **light globe** moment you experienced in this passage?

➔ How does this passage **apply to your life**?

- a. *Examine our hearts and repent of any sin or faults before we judge others*
- b. *In judging others, we should only be identifying sinful practices and not preferences nor subjective faults.*
- c. *Consider if our behaviour or preferences might cause others to stumble*
- d. *Apply wisdom when sharing the Gospel, if it is being rejected in an offensive insulting way, then it is okay to move on and stop sharing the Gospel with such people.*

**Share the verse** that had a special meaning to you in this study?

V5

**Finish in prayer:** Ask God to help us examine our hearts and faults before pointing the finger at others.

**Studies prepared by Paul O'Rourke**  
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**Resources:**

The MacArthur Study Bible

New Bible Commentary (Carson, France, Moyter & Wenham)

Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible (G. Campbell Morgan)

The Message of Matthew (Michael Green)

Focus on the Bible: Matthew (Charles Price)

Matthew Volume 1 (Barclay)

Be Loyal Following the King of Kings NT Commentary on Matthew (Warren W. Wiersbe)

**Notes/Prayer Points**