

Recognition & Rewards

Review/Intro

- **5:1-19**
 - The mission of a rabbi was to become a living example of what it means to apply God's word to one's life.
 - The task of a disciple was to become as much like the rabbi as possible.
- **5:20-48 Relationships and Reputation**
 - Love for God is not demonstrated by just not being bad, but by going above and beyond, by being completely given over to Jesus.
 - Agape is a love that is completely given over. It goes above and beyond. Like Jesus on the cross, it should be that which drives and empowers us.
 - Are you a believer because you have had a head encounter or a heart encounter with Jesus?
- **Chapter 6** gets into recognition and rewards. Carries the same theme of motivation, head or heart, law or love.

Matthew 6

6:1 The point

- **practice** - connected to "to make." When you practice an instrument you make music.
- **righteousness** - as last time, not positional but practical, living out of God's righteousness in you as you are in Jesus.
- **reward** - get what you are due for what you have done. Reward, wages, due, etc.
- Doesn't say to not do things in front of others, just don't let that be your motivation.
- What is your motivation; to be seen and rewarded by men or by the Lord? What kinds of rewards from men or from the Lord?
 - From men - recognition, position, material.
 - From the Lord - recognition, position, material. Surprised? (slide) **Matthew 25:21 Well done... 1 Cor. 3:10-15 wood, hay, straw... Rev. 22:12 coming with reward...**
 - Paul speaks of different crowns we will receive. Contest winner medals.
 - **Very important distinction - don't confuse salvation with rewards.**
 - Hitchens quote. **Once you assume a creator and a plan, it makes us objects in a cruel experiment whereby we are created sick and commanded to be well.**
 - This is how people think of God, His Son, His word.
 - **Salvation is not our reward because a reward is earned. Salvation is a free gift. Gospel.**
 - What do we do with these rewards? I don't know. Don't roll around in them, don't spend them, don't pat ourselves on the back. **Perhaps reflect on God's faithfulness?**
- It is as important to not try impress the Lord as it is people. "Look what I can do!" **Don't impress, instead please.**

6:2-4 Giving to impress

- **hypocrites** - Greek actors who used the big masks. This concept illustrates the point. (slide with picts)

- Actors/performers and their need for praise, recognition.
- My experiences as yoyo man. Me at this Thanksgiving.
- **The Lord is not looking for good actors, He's looking for bad ones.**
- Giving to the needy, different from giving to the Lord. Above and beyond, but also expected.
- God has a special place in His heart for the materially needy. Child homelessness.

6:5-15 Praying to impress

- 6:5-6 Sincerity in prayer
- 6:7-13 Simplicity in prayer
- 6:14-15 Sympathy in prayer, as in sympathetic vibration

6:16-18 Fasting to impress

- Pretty self explanatory.
- Riff on fasting. Doesn't get the Lord to be a part of our plans, but us a part of His.

6:19-24 Collecting to impress

- 6:19-21 The treasure-heart test. Where is your treasure? Where do you invest? Time, talent, treasure.
- 6:22-23 Flesh or Spirit goggles?
- 6:24 Who do you work for?
- In all of these, **Who are you trying to impress? You can fool people, but you can't fool the Lord.**

6:25-34 Stressing to impress

- Flows from the previous bit about money, provision. Who do you rely on for your needs?
- People across the economic spectrum worry about these things. Keeping up appearances.
- Put first things first. **seek** - keep on seeking.
- Not advocating irresponsibility, but priorities.
- **Whose kingdom are you seeking? Whose are you trying to build?**

Wrap up

- **Be a bad actor for the Lord. This isn't a show, it's the real deal.**
- **Who are you trying to impress? You can fool people, but you can't fool the Lord.**
- **Whose kingdom are you seeking? Whose are you trying to build?**
- In other words, who are you trying to please; yourself or the Lord? Need Jesus.