



# **BEN WASHINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH**

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Wednesday Noon Bible Study

May 20, 2026

## **SERMON SERIES**

### **“Kingdom Living: The Sermon on The Mount”**

#### **Part 5 – “Law of Giving and Praying”**

Now Jesus speaks on clarifying the law as it concerns giving and praying

#### **Matthew 6:1-18 KJV**

1 Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. 2 Therefore when thou doest [thine] alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: 4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly. 5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites [are]: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 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. 7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen [do]: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. 8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. 9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. 10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as [it is] in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. 14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: 15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. 16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. 17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; 18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

Matthew 6 is part of the The Gospel of Matthew account of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7). In this section, Jesus addresses the issue of religious hypocrisy. He contrasts outward religion performed for public applause with genuine devotion done for the glory of God.

#### **The focus of Matthew 6:1–18 centers on three major spiritual disciplines:**

Giving  
Prayer  
Fasting

Jesus teaches that spiritual practices lose their value when they become performances for human recognition.

### **Jesus' warning against doing good to be seen by others. (Matthew 6:1)**

Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men: Charitable deeds is actually the word righteousness. Jesus tells us to not do righteous things for the sake of display or image (to be seen by them).

This does not contradict His previous command to let your light so shine before men (Matthew 5:16). Although the followers of Jesus are to be seen doing good works, they must not do good works simply to be seen.

**Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven:** The idea is when we do righteous deeds for the attention and applause of men, their attention and applause is our reward. It is much better to receive a reward from your Father in heaven.

- *God cares about how we do our good works, and with what motive we do them.*

### **Examples of the wrong kind of giving and the right kind of giving. (Matthew 6:2-4)**

**When you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet:** It was a custom for some in Jesus' day to draw attention to their giving so they would be known as generous. Today, people do not sound a trumpet to project the image of generosity, but they still know how to call attention to their giving.

- Yet the idea of doing a **charitable deed** - giving alms and charity - was deeply established in the Jewish mind. "To give alms and to be righteous were one and the same thing. To give alms was gain merit in the sight of God, and was even to win atonement and forgiveness for past sins." (Barclay)

**As the hypocrites do:** Such performers are rightly called hypocrites, because they are actors, acting the part of pious, holy people when they are not. It is not having a standard that makes someone a hypocrite; it is falsely claiming to live by that standard when you in fact do not, or when you have a double standard that makes one a hypocrite.

**Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward:** Jesus tells the one who gives so they can hear the applause of others that he should enjoy the applause, because that will be all the reward that they receive. There will be no reward in heaven for the one who did it for the motive of an earthly reward.

**Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing:** Instead, our giving is to be - if it were possible - even hidden from ourselves. Though we cannot really be ignorant about our own giving, we can deny ourselves any indulgent self-congratulation.

**That your charitable deed may be in secret:** If someone finds out that we have given something, do we automatically lose our reward? The issue is really a matter of motive. If we give for our own glory, it doesn't matter if no one finds out and we will still have no reward from God. But if we give for God's glory, it doesn't matter who finds out because your reward will remain because you gave for the right motive.

**Our Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly:** Jesus pointed out the great value of doing good deeds for the glory of God. It is much better to receive our return from God, who rewards much more generously and much more openly than men do.

- We should not miss the strength of the promise - these things done the right way will certainly be rewarded. We can be sure of that, even when it doesn't feel like it.

### **Main Idea**

Prayer is communion with God, not a stage performance.

### **Jesus Condemns**

Praying for attention  
Spiritual exhibitionism  
Public spirituality without private devotion

### **Jesus Encourages**

Private prayer  
Intimacy with the Father  
Authentic communication with God

### **Examples of the wrong kind of prayer and the right kind of prayer. (Matthew 6:5-6)**

**And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites:** Jesus assumed that His disciples would give, so He told them the right way to give (Matthew 6:1-4). He also assumed that His disciples would pray, and it was important that they not pray in the same manner as the hypocrites.

**For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets:** There were two main places where a Jew in Jesus' day might pray in a hypocritical manner. They might pray at the synagogue at the time of public prayer, or on the street at the appointed times of prayer (9 a.m., noon, and 3 p.m.). Remember, Jesus here taught the character of the citizens of His kingdom. We should expect that character to be different from the character seen in the world. There are many good reasons why more should be expected from Christians than others:

These hypocrites prayed not to be heard by God, but to be seen by men. This is a common fault in public prayer today, when people pray to impress or teach others instead of genuinely pouring out their hearts before God.

- Such prayers are an insult to God. When we mouth words towards God, while really trying to impress others we then use God merely as a tool to impress others.

**They have their reward:** Again, those praying to be seen of men have their reward, and they should enjoy it in full - because that is all they will receive. There is no reward in heaven for such prayers.

**But you, when you pray, go into your room:** Rather, we should meet with God in our room (or, "closet"). The idea is of a private place where we can impress no one except God.

- Jesus certainly did not prohibit public prayer, but our prayers should always be directed to God and not towards man.
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### **The right way to pray. (Matthew 6:7-8)**

**When you pray, do not use vain repetitions:** The right kind of prayer does not use vain repetitions, which is any and all prayer which is mostly words and no meaning; all lips and no mind or heart.

- The true God isn't impressed by the length or eloquence of our prayers, but the heart. "Prayer requires more of the heart than of the tongue. The eloquence of prayer consists in the fervency of desire, and the simplicity of faith."
- The NIV translates the phrase vain repetitions as "keep on babbling." That may be an accurate sense of the ancient Greek word *battalogo*, which may be a word that sounds like "babbling" and has the sense of "blah-blah-blah."

**Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him:** "Prayer is not designed to inform God, but to give man a sight of his misery; to humble his heart, to excite his desire, to inflame his faith, to animate his hope, to raise his soul from earth to heaven, and to put him in mind that THERE is his Father, his country, and inheritance."

**In this manner, therefore pray:** Jesus here gave His disciples a model for prayer, prayer marked by close relationship, reverence, submission, and trust and dependence. Since Luke 11:2-4 has much the same material, it is reasonable to believe that this was not the only time Jesus taught His disciples on this subject.

### **The Model Prayer (vv. 9–13)**

“The Lord’s Prayer”

#### **Structure of the Prayer**

1. Reverence

“Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name”

#### **God is personal yet holy.**

2. Submission

“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done”

#### **Prayer aligns us with God’s agenda.**

3. Dependence

“Give us this day our daily bread”

#### **God supplies daily needs.**

4. Forgiveness

“Forgive us our debts...”

#### **Forgiven people should forgive others.**

5. Spiritual Protection

“Lead us not into temptation...”

#### **Believers need divine guidance and protection.**

Teaching Emphasis

This prayer is a pattern more than merely words to repeat.

### **The Necessity of Forgiveness (vv. 14–15)**

#### **Main Idea**

A heart unwilling to forgive reveals spiritual inconsistency.

#### **Discussion Points**

Why is forgiveness difficult?

How does unforgiveness affect prayer life?

### **Fasting with Humility (Matthew 6:16–18)**

#### **Main Idea**

Fasting is an act of spiritual devotion, not religious drama.

### **Hypocritical Fasting**

- Looking miserable intentionally
- Drawing attention to sacrifice
- Seeking admiration

### **Proper Fasting**

- Done unto God
- Connected with humility
- Focused on spiritual renewal

### **Purpose of Fasting**

- Spiritual sensitivity
- Repentance
- Seeking God's direction
- Self-denial