

They Have Their Reward

Matthew 6:1-8

We live in a world where people love to receive recognition and praise from man. People are obsessed with likes, followers, and applause.

Think about that. God is the creator of the universe. He has Infinite power. He can speak life into existence, He has the power to give everlasting life, yet people care more about what mortal men and women think about them than what the Almighty God thinks about them. That's very sad.

A Warning From Jesus Christ

Jesus is giving us a warning here in the beginning of Matthew chapter 6. He says...

Take heed (that means to watch with caution. Pay Attention.) that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them:

So this is a very strong warning from God himself. These are not the words of a motivational speaker on tiktok, these are the Words of God IN the flesh. He says to not do your alms before men. You might be wondering what that means. Alms are basically a donation that is given to the poor and needy. We see an example of this in Acts 3

""Acts 3:1-6

Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being* the ninth hour. **2** And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to **ask alms** of them that entered into the temple; **3** Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple **asked an alms**. **4** And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. **5** And he gave heed unto them, **expecting to receive something of them**. **6** Then Peter said, **Silver and gold have I none**; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

""

There are times when we come across someone who is homeless when we are out preaching the gospel. Very often they ask for money, or in other words they are asking for alms. It's the same thing.

Is it a good thing to give to the poor and needy? Yes. It is good to give alms to the poor...

""Proverbs 28:27

He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.""

The problem is when we do it for the wrong reasons. This is what Jesus is warning us about...

""Matthew 6:1

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.""

Jesus is warning us not to be like the hypocrites that sound a trumpet when they give alms. Their sole purpose of giving alms was to be seen of men. Why? So they can be applauded, praised, and lifted up. "Look at that great man over there... look at that great woman. They give so much money to the poor!" The rich and wealthy do this all the time.

The World Loves Praise From Man

For example, Celebrities and famous individuals give tens even hundreds of millions of dollars to universities, hospitals, museums—but ONLY if a building, or program is named after them. There is an expectation to receive some sort of honor for giving that money.

Many celebrities often put out a press release letting everyone know they just donated a large amount of money.

Famous Youtubers, like Mr. Beast, post videos of themselves handing out money to strangers, buying people houses, helping the homeless while amassing millions of views and dollars at the same time. It's self-promotion disguised as kindness. They want to be seen of men.

Jesus says "They have their reward". They seek their reward from man, and that's exactly what they get—A moment of recognition. They could have an eternal reward from God in Heaven, but they would rather have 5 minutes of fame here on earth. You don't want to be like that in your life.

It Starts With Pride

Where does that desire to be seen by men start? It's starts with pride, love of the world, and covetousness.

""1 John 2:15-16

Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. **16** For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ""

The pharisees in that day loved the world and the praise of men more than they loved God.

Today in your life, you might see celebrities, actors and musicians, and think to yourself, "I wish I had what they have" They have money, they have power, people look up to them. People praise them. I want that...

I promise you, you do NOT want that. Those people have their reward, and they are not taking it with them when they die.

""Proverbs 29:23

A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.""

Pride is when you elevate yourself above everyone else and you think yourself to be better than others. When you're prideful, you have a desire to be seen and be thought highly of by others.

We have presidents that love to talk about themselves all the time. Everything is about me, myself, and I. They constantly must sound the trumpet when they do something that they think is so great. What does God think about this kind of behavior?

Proverbs 16:5 Every one *that is* proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: *though* hand *join* in hand, he shall not be unpunished—If you are proud in heart, if you think that you are better than other people, God despises and hates that attitude. For example, racism is absolutely wicked in the sight of God. Thinking you are better than someone else because of your skin color. It's an abomination, yet it continues to be a problem even among Christians.

""Proverbs 16:18

Pride *goeth* before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.""

""Psalm 12:3

The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, *and* the tongue that speaketh proud things:""

We are warned over and over again throughout the Bible to avoid being prideful. Jesus is saying don't be like the hypocrites. Don't be lifted up and have a desire to be seen of men. They have their reward.

Examples In Everyday Life

You might be thinking, "I don't really have that problem because I don't go out into the streets and give alms." But there are other areas of our lives where we try to be seen and recognized. This doesn't just apply to giving alms. This problem can affect all of us if we are not careful.

Posting Good Deeds On Social Media

For example, people can post good deeds or Bible verses on social media to appear spiritual and to see how many likes and hearts they can get on a post.

"Today I was able to help an elderly man cross the street #WalkingWithJesus" or "Just wrapped up a 3-day fast. Feeling so close to God! #PrayerWarrior"

Are helping elderly people across the street and fasting good things to do? Yes, those are good things. But when you do them to bring honor to yourselves, you will have your reward, but it won't be from God.

""Matthew 6:16-18

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.""

Doing those good deeds and posting on social media for attention is the same thing as doing your alms before men. Those likes that you get on that post, that is your reward. We have to be careful not to be doing those things for the wrong reasons. I'm not saying it's always bad to post things on social media, but when we do, we need to make sure we are always pointing people to Jesus Christ and not ourselves.

Serving In Church To Be Noticed

Another area that can become a problem is serving in church for the purpose of being noticed by others.

Volunteering, singing, preaching, or leading—not out of love for God, but to **gain attention, influence, or status**.

""Galatians 1:10

For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.""

Josh is not here to please us and receive praise. He is here to serve the Lord. Likewise, all of us are not here to please Josh and receive praise, we are here to serve the Lord. And when all of us serve the Lord together because we love Him, that's what makes a good pastor happy. Not flattering him, and acting spiritual.

But there are churches all over with pastors who only care about their status, and image among the people. And many members in those churches only care about their status and image in the eyes of the pastor.

""Matthew 6:5

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..."

""Matthew 6:7 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.""

If you are "serving" in church to be recognized; if you are praying in a public setting, using elegant words and fancy speech to impress others, you are not really serving God, you are

actually putting on a performance for man and you have your reward. But it's not coming from God.

Using Testimonies as Self-Promotion

Another area where we might be tempted to be seen of men is in Sharing a testimony to show people how spiritual we are.

For example, if someone came up here and shared a story about their past and said something like...

"Before I got saved, I was deep into drugs and crime. But now look at me—I lead five ministries, I sing in the choir every week, I've been going to church now for 30 years.."

And we hear that a lot when we go out soul winning. You can ask someone "Are you sure you're going to heaven when you die?" and often times the response is "I'm a pastor, my dad is a pastor, I've been going to church for 20 years" It's all about them and their status.

They are using that testimony as a stage to talk about themselves, and to receive the glory of man.

""Jeremiah 9:23-24

Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches: **24** But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD.""

Our testimonies should always be pointing 100% to Jesus Christ and what He has done for us, not what we do for Him. All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.

Loving Titles and Positions

One more area that is a problem for a lot of people, is loving titles and positions. Someone that has a position of authority and has a fleshly desire to be seen and recognized by man often demand to be addressed by their title. "Pastor," "Bishop," "Prophet", "Apostle", "Reverend", "Evangelist", the list goes on and on. What does Jesus say about this type of attitude?

""Matthew 23:1-2;5-8

Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, **2** Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: **5 But all their works they do for to be seen of men:** they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, **6** And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, **7** And greetings in the markets, and to be called

of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. **8** But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even* Christ; and all ye are brethren. ""

Notice how Jesus is saying to not be like the pharisees. "**all their works they do for to be seen of men**"

They love to be greeted in the markets. They love the flattery. They love being called Rabbi, which means master. But Jesus says don't be called Rabbi. For one is your Master, *even* Christ. But notice what he says next..."and all ye are brethren. We are all brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus. The leaders of the church should never be lifted up above anyone. We are your brothers, we are your servants.

""**Matthew 23:9-12** And call no *man* your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. **10** Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ. **11** But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. **12** And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.""

Abased means to be brought low. If you exalt yourself and lift yourself up with titles and positions, that will come true for you. You will be brought low.

""**Luke 16:14-15**

And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. **15** And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. ""

There are pastors and leaders that love to be highly esteemed among men. That is an abomination.

""**Philippians 2:4-8**

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. **5 Let this mind be in you**, which was also in Christ Jesus: **6** Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: **7** But **made himself of no reputation**, and took upon him **the form of a servant**, and was made in the likeness of men: **8** And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. ""

How arrogant you have to be to think as a pastor or a leader that you are above the rest of the people. God made himself of no reputation. Are you higher than Jesus Christ? These men think they can't be touched. They think God is with them. You better read Philippians Chapter 2 and lower yourself before God does it for you.

""**Philippians 2:9-11**

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: **10** That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; **11** And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. ""

Love The Praise of God More Than of Men

Posting good deeds on social media, serving in church to be noticed, using testimonies as self-promotion, loving titles and positions...

These are all things that we can find ourselves doing if we're not careful. Yes, born-again believing Christians can fall into this snare.

""John 12:42-43

Nevertheless among the chief rulers also **many believed on him**; (were these chief rulers saved? Acts 16:30-31) but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: **43** For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.""

If you walk in the flesh, you're going to love the praise of men more than the praise of God. Don't walk in the flesh. Don't settle for that temporary reward. Hopefully these chief rulers later repented and chose to love the praise of God rather than the praise of men. We all have that choice. You can be saved, but if continue to seek the praise of men, you're losing out big time.

So we see what not to do. What should we do instead...

Give and Serve in Secret

""Matthew 6:2-4

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.""

So this is the complete opposite of doing things outwardly for the purpose of being seen by men. We are to give in secret, "let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth". This is a figure of speech similar to what Jesus stated in the previous chapter. "And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off". It's not literal but it's extreme language to show how serious this is.

""Matthew 6:6

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.""

We should not glorify ourselves even internally in our thoughts for our giving or service. If Jesus said not to let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, how much more should your giving and service stay hidden from others. We want to stay humble and do all things heartily, as to the Lord.

When you choose to stay humble, be discreet in your service, not sounding that trumpet seeking the praise of men, then your Father in heaven will reward you openly.

""Revelation 22:12

And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.""

Always Give God the Glory

If you give and do service for the Lord, and someone praises you and speaks highly of you, the first thing you should do is give God the glory. Even if it's only internal. It's best if do it outwardly and point back to Jesus Christ, but at the bare minimum you need to glorify God in your thoughts when you receive praise so you don't get lifted up with pride. The moment you take that praise and allow it to puff you up, you lose out on rewards from the Father.

""2 John 8

Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.""

We want to receive a full reward for our work. Don't let pride take that from you. Look what happens when you choose to receive that glory from man and not give it to God...

""Acts 12:21-23

And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. **22** And the people gave a shout, *saying*, *It is the voice of a god*, and not of a man. **23** And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, **because he gave not God the glory**: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.""

God will receive glory whether you choose to give it to Him or not. Don't wait to be brought low. Humble yourself before it's too late, like it was for Herod.

""1 Corinthians 1:27-31

But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; **28** And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: **29 That no flesh should glory in his presence. 30** But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: **31** That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, **let him glory in the Lord.**""

We need to give all praise, honor, and glory to God. Nothing that we do should be done to promote ourselves or to be seen of men. It should only be done for the Glory of God.

Prevent This Attitude in Your Life

So how do we prevent this attitude of wanting to be seen of men in our own lives?

1. Know Who You Are Serving

Colossians 3:22-24

Servants, obey in all things *your* masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: **23** And whatsoever ye do, do *it* heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; **24** Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

2. Remind Yourself: Man's Praise Is Temporary

That reward you receive from man fades quickly, but the reward we receive from God lasts forever.

1 Peter 5:4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

3. Humble Yourself Daily

Pride is the root of this sin to seek recognition from men. We need to remember our place.

Luke 22:26-27 But ye *shall* not *be* so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. **27** For whether *is* greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? *is* not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.

4. Love And Raise Children with God's Approval in Mind

Many people seek attention from man because they did not receive proper attention and love as a child. This is why it's very important to love your Children and teach them early to seek the praise of God and not of man.

Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

5. Put On The Mind of Christ

Philippians 2:5-8 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: **6** Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: **7** But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: **8** And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

A true servant does not serve with expectation to receive. They don't do things to be seen or recognized. They serve because they love obedience.

Final Thoughts

If you are doing good deeds in your life,
If you are serving in church,
If you are sharing a testimony,
If you are a pastor or leader,
Make sure you are doing all those things to bring glory to God, not to yourself. Not to be seen of men. Remember, they have their reward. Don't trade eternal rewards for temporary applause. Serve in secret and receive eternal blessings from God the Father. Let's Pray.