

6--Giving, Prayer, and Fasting

Text: Matthew 6:1-18; Luke 7:7-12



1. In Matthew 6, how many times does Jesus say “*they have their reward.*” What is their “reward?”

2. When it comes to charitable giving, what are the possible motivations behind the deed (6:1-4)? In what ways might we “*sound a trumpet*” as we give? What kind of giving does Jesus encourage?

3. With regard to prayer, what bad habits did the “*hypocrites*” have as they prayed (Matthew 6:5, 7)? Does this mean it is wrong to pray publicly? What does Jesus encourage with our prayer habits instead of what was commonly seen among religious leaders (Matthew 6:6)?

4. Can you think of a few good reasons why it is good to “*shut our door*” when we pray?

5. The Lord’s Prayer is found in Matthew 6:9-13. As you read this prayer, what do you find distinctive and notable about this model prayer of Jesus?

6. Next to each phrase of the Lord's Prayer below, note some of the basic elements included in this prayer of Jesus...

- *"Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name"* —
- *"Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven"* —
- *"Give us this day our daily bread"* —
- *"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors"* —
- *"And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one"* —
- *"For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever"* —
- *"Amen"* —

7. In Matthew 6:14-15, how does our unwillingness to forgive affect our request to God to forgive us?

8. Turn to Matthew 7:7-12. What does Matthew 7:7-8 teach us about our attitude toward prayer? What does Matthew 7:9-11 tell us about God's attitude toward those who pray?

9. Go back to Matthew 6:16-18. Jesus discusses the topic of *"fasting."* What was the habit of some as they were *"fasting"* and why did Jesus feel the need to correct this practice?

10. In the following Scriptures, what were some of the purposes of *"fasting?"* Should we use this underutilized tool in our lives today? What are some of the spiritual benefits of *"fasting?"*

- 1 Samuel 1:7-8—
- 2 Samuel 12:13-16—
- Judges 20:26; 1 Samuel 7:6; Nehemiah 9:1—
- Exodus 24:15; Daniel 9:3—