

The Sermon on the Mount
(Lesson 11)

Introduction:

1. In Matthew 6:1-18 Jesus turned His attention to 3 Jewish religious activities, including doing alms [benevolence], prayer, and fasting.
2. Jesus used the same method as He dealt with these activities.
 - a. He first warned His followers against the mistakes made by the hypocrites of His day [they participated in these activities for the purpose of being seen of men].
 - b. He then taught His followers how to participate in these activities correctly.
3. As we study these verses we must remember the Lord's warning in Matthew 5:20.
4. This lesson is a study of Matthew 6:1-4 where Jesus addressed "doing alms."

Discussion:

- I. (vs.1) JESUS ISSUED A STRONG WARNING
 - A. He tells us to "*take heed*" [beware] that we avoid doing alms for the wrong reason.
 1. "Doing alms" refers to acts of mercy or benevolence, as illustrated in Acts 3:1-5.
 2. The Lord did not say that we are to avoid doing alms.
 3. He was teaching the importance of having the right motive when we do alms.
 - B. The motive that Jesus warns us against is doing alms for the purpose of being seen of men.
 1. The scribes and Pharisees had a serious problem with this (Matthew 23:5a).
 2. The Lord wants us to avoid their mistake.
 - C. We must use caution to avoid misunderstanding what Jesus taught.
 1. (Matthew 5:16) Jesus said that our good works are to serve as a positive influence.
 2. Also, several givers are commended in the Bible, including:
 - a. the widow (Mark 12:41-44)
 - b. Barnabas (Acts 4:36-37)
 - c. the Christians in Macedonia (2 Corinthians 8:1-2).
 3. The Lord did not say that:
 - a. our good works are to be done in complete secrecy [they are to be seen by others]
 - b. we should not commend those who do good works.
 4. Jesus was teaching us to have the right motive when we do good works.
 - D. The Lord tells us why we must avoid doing things to be seen of men -- "*ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.*"
- II. (vs.2) JESUS EXPLAINED THIS MATTER IN MORE DETAIL
 - A. We must not sound a trumpet before us ["toot our own horns"] when we do good works.
 1. This is what the hypocrites did.
 2. When they did good works they bragged about what they did in public places.
 3. They did this so they could receive the glory of men.
 4. Illustration: people taking advantage of photo opportunities.
 - B. (vs.2b) Those who do things to be seen of men have a reward.
 1. Their reward is that they are seen of men.
 2. (vs.1b) The Father gives no reward for such.
- III. (vs.3-4) THE LORD SHOWS US THE RIGHT WAY TO DO GOOD WORKS
 - A. Jesus said that we are not to let our right hand know what the left hand does.
 1. We are not to broadcast to others what we have done.
 2. Attention is to be given to the good work rather than to the one who does it.
 - B. God will openly reward those who do good works properly.

Conclusion:

1. Not only must we practice the right acts in Christianity, but we must also have the right motives for doing what we do.
2. The Lord condemns doing things for the purpose of being seen of men.
3. Love is the proper motive for serving God and doing good works (1 Corinthians 13:3).
4. (1 Corinthians 13:4) True Christian love does not "vaunt itself" [brag or boast].