

Lesson 11: The Sermon on the Mount (II)

Objective: To know that we Christians should make it our heart's desire to see the will of our heavenly Father done on earth.

Background: The Jews were taught, as their religious duties, to help the needy and to pray three times daily at 9 a.m., 12 noon, & 3 p.m.. In addition, the Pharisees fasted twice a week (Luke 18:9-14).

The Pharisees were the religious leaders of the Jews who made the keeping of every detail of the law the goal of their lives. But they failed to understand *the intent* of God's laws and the purpose of religious activities; thus, they led the Jews astray. (Matthew 23: 1-36)

Instruction: Read over Matthew chapter 6 until you are familiar with its content.

Let's Think: Imagine you are one of the disciples listening to Jesus.

Mt 6:1-6 & 16-18, Jesus warns the disciples against "hypocrisy."

1. What is a "hypocrite"? (Consults a dictionary) How does one's act of piety become hypocritical? How do you keep your life and religious practice free from hypocrisy?

Mt 6:7-15, Jesus gives a "model" prayer for the disciples to pattern after.

2. How are we to address God? (Mt 6: 9a) Will it encourage you to pray if you know whom you talk to? Explain.
3. What are the three concerns ("Thou" petitions) which *come first* in the prayer? (Mt 6: 9b-10) Which area(s) do you need to focus more in your prayer?
4. What are the three personal petitions ("us" petitions) that follow? (Mt6:11-13) Which of the three do you pray most and which least? Why? What does each petition reveal about the relationship we sustain with God?

Mt 6:19-36, Jesus warned the disciples against "anxiety."

5. What does it mean to "lay up treasures in heaven"? (Mt 6: 19-21; also Luke 12:21) How can you "lay up treasure in heaven"? Do you think Jesus condemns "personal saving"? Why or why not?
6. Who are the two masters in your life that you must choose from in light of Mt 6: 24: God and ___? Which one has been a *driving force* in your life? And how do you describe your life? By the way, do we have to be rich to be *possessed by* mammon/money? Why or why not?
7. What other worries and anxiety would you like to include in Mt 6:25-36? What prescription does Jesus give to overcome anxiety? Does Jesus encourage "idleness" and discourage "foresight"? Explain (Read also 2 Thes.3: 6-13)

For Prayer and Meditation: Is it my heart desire to see God's will done on earth? And done by me? Am I keeping Him first in life?

Let's Remember: But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well. (Matthew 6:33).