

# The Gospels Part 07

## Salt and Light Matt 6:1 >> The Sermon on the Mount Trilogy of worship

### MATT 6

Three times (**MT 6:4, 6, 18**) Jesus discusses the subject of God rewarding those who serve Him as He desires.

Often we think and are even taught that we should love God and be obedient expecting nothing in return.

While this is the highest motive for Christian life and living, Jesus teaches His followers that

- the right kind of giving,
- the right kind of prayer and
- the right kind of fasting

will all bring a rewarding response from God.

### MATT 6

Jesus often taught this principle:

Right living and obedience brings reward.

**Mt 5:12** To suffer insult without bitterness brings great reward in Heaven

**Mt 10:42** To give a cup of cold water (something that required extra effort in Israel; water was scarce and often had to be bought from a distance

- cold water had to be freshly drawn from a well, insures your reward is not lost

**Mt 25:14-30** To be a good steward, to be a faithful servant brings added authority and responsibility  
- high position in the kingdom of God.

**Mt 25:31-46** We will receive reward and punishment based on our reaction and response to the needs of our fellow man. ..

### MATT 6 – SO WHAT –

Any action which achieves nothing is futile and meaningless. Goodness is rewarded, both to the recipient and the provider.

In Christianity there are rewards and punishments.

Goodness is to be and will be rewarded.

A lack of Goodness (not necessarily the same as doing evil) is and will be punished.

Rewards can be gained and lost.

**(1Co 3:13-15 ESV)**

*...each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.* ..

## MATT 6

When Jesus spoke of reward, he was not limiting himself to thinking in terms of the material world.

Neither should we.

In the Old Testament the thought was that if a man had wealth and was prosperous, he was a good man.

History clearly destroys this thinking.

Remember that God's Kingdom is in the hearts of men.

It is in those internal regions, those parts of man that deal with his soul and spirit that God most frequently moves.

This is not to exclude the body and material, physical blessings/punishments.

Be careful not to exclude or limit God to any one partial area of life.

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## MATT 6

As long as your focus is on strictly material rewards, you will miss the truly valuable rewards God provides the obedient.

- Satisfaction – peace and contentment
- Usefulness – challenge, more to do for the Lord
- A clear vision of God
- God's presence with joy and without fear

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## MATT 6

It is a Christian paradox that the highest rewards never come to those who are seeking them.

Once we live our lives with the motive of earning God's rewards, we lose them.

God is not obligated to us, we are obligated to Him.

We must stop thinking of life in terms of law and rather focus on life in terms of love.

The truth is this:

**THE PERSON WHO LOOKS FOR REWARD,  
AND WHO CALCULATES THAT IT IS DUE TO HIM,  
DOES NOT RECEIVE IT;  
THE PERSON WHOSE ONLY MOTIVE IS LOVE, AND WHO  
NEVER THINKS THAT HE HAS DESERVED ANY REWARD,  
RECEIVES IT IN ABUNDANCE.**

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### Blessed are...

- (3) *the poor in spirit,*  
 (4) *those who mourn,*  
 (5) *the meek,*  
 (6) *those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,*  
 (7) *the merciful,*  
 (8) *the pure in heart,*  
 (9) *the peacemakers,*  
 (10) *those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,*

### For...

- theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*  
*they shall be comforted.*  
*they shall inherit the earth.*  
*they shall be filled.*  
*they shall obtain mercy.*  
*they shall see God.*  
*they shall be called sons of God.*  
*theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*  
 11) *you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. (12) Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*  
 (13) *"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.*  
 (14) *"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. (15) Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. (16) Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*

### Matt 5:3-16

## Giving to God .... MATT 6:1-4

*[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.*

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## Giving to God .... MATT 6:1-4

To the Jew there were 3 great works in religious life that a man could do:

Almsgiving  
Prayer - and –  
Fasting

Jesus did not dispute this belief.

What Jesus had trouble with was that so often these finest things in life were being done from the wrong motives.

**ALL THESE THINGS WERE TO BE DONE PRIVATELY**

**IN SECRET !!!**

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## Giving to God .... MATT 6:1-4

- A man may give alms, not to help the person to whom it is given but to demonstrate his own character and generosity, to earn the admiration and praise of his fellow men.
- A man may pray in such a way that his prayer is not addressed to God but to the other men in his hearing.

It may be to deliver to them his opinion and message (that's the role of preaching).

Or it may be to impress them with his piety and spiritual stature, to lift himself up in their eyes and esteem never really speaking with God at all.

- A man may fast not to humble himself in God's sight or for the good of his own soul but to show the world how self disciplined he is

**Jesus condemned any actions designed to show others how good we are, to increase our prestige or to win the praise of other men.**

If your aim is to get the world's rewards - you will.

If your aim is to live as God directs - you will receive the rewards He alone can give.

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## Giving to God .... MATT 6:1-4

Almsgiving was the most sacred of all religious duties.

The Jews used the same word - **tzedakah** - for both righteousness and almsgiving.

To give alms and be righteous were the same thing in their minds.

The Rabbi's said:

- Greater is he who gives alms than he who offers all sacrifices.
- He who gives alms in secret is greater than Moses - and -
- The alms giving that saved from death was "when the recipient does not know from whom he gets it and when the giver does not know to whom he gives it.

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## Giving to God .... MATT 6:1-4

Often our excuse for not giving is we cannot see it being put to proper use. So we withhold our giving.

This is a lie and trick of Satan but it sounds good – it sounds like we are being good stewards, but ---

When this happens we are not being stewards at all.

When this happens we are at best warehouse foremen.

If you don't trust the place where you are or should be giving to use your offering to God properly either get involved and change the place or find and support and attend a place that you do trust is using your offering and tithe properly.

**YOU ARE NOT GIVING YOUR TITHE AND OFFERING TO  
"BETHEL CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE".**

**YOU ARE GIVING IT, RETURNING IT TO GOD.**

**IF THOSE CHARGED WITH IT'S PROPER USE AND DISPOSITION ARE  
NOT USING IT PROPERLY THEY WILL ANSWER TO GOD.**

**YOU ONLY WILL ANSWER TO GOD FOR NOT GIVING AND NOT BEING  
COMMITTED AND INVOLVED ENOUGH TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE. ☹**

## Giving to God .... MATT 6:1-4

In the temple there was a room called the "**Chamber of the Silent**"

People who wished to make atonement for some sin placed money there – quietly, privately...

The poor people from good families who had come down in the world were secretly helped by these contributions.

Practice fell far short of principle.

During the Synagogue services, offerings were taken specifically for the poor.

Many took great care to insure they were noticed in their giving.

This type of hypocritical giving is what Jesus is condemning.

## See a need?

## Meet the need if you are able to do so!

Silently, quietly, secretly, as anonymously  
as possible....

## Giving vs Generosity

Generous people do not assume that God's blessing is theirs to consume.

We are God's distribution centers,  
not His storage warehouses and  
We are certainly not the owners.

*Mat 6:33-34*

*(33) "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*

*(34) "So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

### Malachi 1:14 Who do you think you're fooling

*(14) "But cursed be the deceiver Who has in his flock a male, And takes a vow, But sacrifices to the Lord what is blemished-- For I am a great King," Says the LORD of hosts, "And My name is to be feared among the nations.*

In **1Ch 21**, when David wanted to buy Ornan's field, Ornan said:

'No, I'll give it to you because it's for the service of the Lord, and it's for the King, I'll give it to you free and clear'.

David replied:

'I will not take what is yours for the Lord. I will not offer burnt offerings of that which doth cost me nothing'.

The priests in Malachi's day lost sight of the fact that God measures the value of the offering by its worth to the offerer.

**If it doesn't cost you anything to give - it's not worth anything in the sight of God!**

### Acts 5 – Ananias / Sapphira

**It is not how much you give  
but how much you held back  
and why you hold onto it that matters in the sight of God!**

**What are you not willing to part with ???**

### Giving to God .... MATT 6:1-4

**Mat\_10:42** "And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."

In the east, water was scarce. It often had to be bought.

When a man sought blessing for himself or his family he went to a water carrier and in a loud voice instructed him, Give the thirsty a drink.

The water carrier would fill his water skin and take it to the market place shouting,

O thirsty ones come to drink this offering. The giver would stand close by saying, Bless me, [Praise me, Glorify me] who gave you this drink.

### Giving to God .... MATT 6:1-4

**[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.**

The Greek word **hupokrities** (hypocrite) means an actor

The well to do or influential would often have a band or trumpeter to announce their arrival or coming to the Temple to deposit their offering.

They took care to insure the trumpet announced their presence at the alms pot.

## Giving to God .... MATT 6:1-4

Men give for many reasons.

- **Out of a sense of duty** - not because he wishes to give but because he feels he must - he has no choice.  
While he gives generously of his material possessions, he never really gives of himself.
- **For prestige** - if no one would see or notice, he wouldn't give.  
But to gain the approval and admiration of those around him, he buys their praise with his "offering".  
He is not giving for God's glory but his own.
- **He must give** - a sense of love and kindness, concern and involvement force him to give.  
He accepts responsibility for the needs around him.

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## Giving to God .... MATT 6:1-4

**2 Cor 8:9** *Jesus though he was rich for our sake became poor so that by his poverty we would become rich* (paraphrase)

Giving is to be an instinctive out flowing of a loving heart.

A heart that gives as Jesus gave to us.

We can only give to God by giving to others.

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## Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

**[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.*

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## Your Convictions About Prayer

Are you convinced that God will answer your requests?

Having a conviction is being so thoroughly convinced something is absolutely true that you will take a stand for it regardless of the consequences.

The Bible is the foundation for our convictions about prayer.

If we believe and practice what it says, we can be confident that the Lord will hear and answer our prayers.

**Mat 7:7-8** *“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.”*

**Mat 21:22** *“And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.”*

**1 Jn 5:14-15** *“This is the confidence which we have before Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.”*

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## Your Convictions About Prayer

The bottom line of all prayer is that access to God is only available through Jesus Christ, the one mediator between God and man.

**1 Tim 2:5-6** (5) *For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, (6) who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.*

Jesus came to open the door for us to have a relationship with the heavenly Father and access to Him through prayer.

The promises regarding answered prayer only apply to those who have been forgiven and reconciled to and have the right of access to enter into the presence of the Lord.

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## Your Convictions About Prayer

**“Make your requests in accordance with God’s will**

**1 Jn 5:14-15** *“This is the confidence which we have before Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.”*

We should ask for those things that are consistent with His character, nature, desires, purposes, and plans for our lives or the lives of those for whom we intercede.

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## Your Convictions About Prayer

**“Make your requests in accordance with God’s will**

**Jas 4:3** *Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.*

He will not give us anything that:

- Is motivated by selfishness,
- exalts our pride,
- contradicts His Character,
- contradicts His Word,
- will lead us into sin.

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## Your Convictions About Prayer

**Ask in faith, believing and expecting Him to answer.**

**James 1:5-7** *“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord.”*

God’s promises in His Word are the basis for our confidence in His willingness to answer our requests.

If we rely on our feelings or a sense of unworthiness, doubts will soon overtake faith.

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## Your Convictions About Prayer

Ask in faith, believing and expecting Him to answer.

**1Jn 3:19-24 ESV**

- (19) *By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; (20) for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything.*
- (21) *Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; (22) and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.*
- (23) *And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.*
- (24) *Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.*

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## Your Convictions About Prayer

Ask in Jesus' name.

**Joh 14:13** *"Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*

Oftentimes, the phrase "in Jesus' name" is tacked onto the end of our prayers as if it were a magic formula guaranteeing an answer.

But that is not at all what it means to pray in Jesus' name.

It actually means that our prayers align with Christ's nature, teaching, and will.

Rather than trying to persuade God to answer our requests according to what we desire, prayer in Jesus' name seeks His will and glory above our own.

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## Your Convictions About Prayer

Ask with a pure heart.

If we tolerate or ignore known sin and disobedience in our lives, we have no reason to expect God to hear and answer our prayers.

**Isaiah 59:1-2** (1) *Behold, the LORD'S hand is not so short That it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull That it cannot hear. (2) But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear. >>>> 1 John 1:9 <<<<*

It's important to confess and repent of sin when it happens.

Having a pure heart means we are committed to being obedient to Christ in every way and living a holy life.

Holiness as applied to mankind doesn't mean perfection, but that we have separated ourselves to God and are sensitive to the Spirit's conviction and are willingness to deal with sin immediately.

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## Your Convictions About Prayer

Mistakes Made in Prayer

**We want to help God answer our prayers, our way....**

After laying our petitions before the Lord, we don't leave them with Him, trusting that He will answer them in the best way at the right time.

If the answer doesn't come as soon as we'd like, our faith in Him begins to waver, and we try to fix the situation ourselves.

Feelings of helplessness are often good for us because they remind us that God alone has the power to intervene and the wisdom to know what's best.

The acid test of faith is being willing to keep our hands off the situation until God deals with it.

Our attempts to help Him only result in confusion and compounded problems.

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# Your Convictions About Prayer

## Mistakes Made in Prayer

### We focus on our requests rather than on God.

Sometimes, in our deep concern over the issues we bring to the Lord, we lose sight of Him.

Our thoughts are focused on the needs and not on the One who can meet them.

We must remember that we are talking to almighty God and should therefore center our thoughts on His character, power, and promises, expressing our confidence, gratitude, and praise to Him.

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# Your Convictions About Prayer

## Response

- How confident are you that the Lord will answer your prayers?
- Look back at the four basic convictions regarding answered prayer.
  - Which ones do you need to make your regular practice in order to pray more effectively?
- Now review the three mistakes made in prayer.
  - If you have followed any of these patterns, what changes can you make to correct your approach?

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# Your Convictions About Prayer

## Mistakes Made in Prayer

### We pray without the Word of God.

**Joh 15:7** *"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.*

When Scripture fills our hearts and minds,

our thoughts and prayer requests align with God's will, and our faith grows strong.

If we neglect God's Word, there is no light to guide our path or to give us understanding and assurance

**Psalms 119:105** *Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.*

Prayer inline with the Word of God should be our priority.

As we open the Word, we find guidance regarding how to pray, and as we pray, our understanding of Scripture increases.

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# Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

No nation ever had a higher ideal of prayer than the Jews.

No religion ever ranked prayer higher as a priority than Judaism.

The Rabbi's said:

Great is prayer, greater than all good works.

He who prays within his house surrounds it with a wall that is stronger than iron.

Again practice fell short of principle.

Note: This could only occur in a place, among a people where prayer was taken with the greatest of seriousness

Prayer became formalized.

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## Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

The **SHEMA** was adopted.

**"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord".**

Based on 3 short passages - **De 6:4-9, 11:13-21** and **Nu 15:37-41**

### **Deu 6:4-9**

- (4) *"Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!*
- (5) *"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.*
- (6) *"These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart.*
- (7) *"You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.*
- (8) *"You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.*
- (9) *"You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.*

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## Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

### **Deu 11:13-21**

- (13) *"It shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the LORD your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul, (14) that He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early and late rain, that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil.*
- (15) *"He will give grass in your fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied.*
- (16) *"Beware that your hearts are not deceived, and that you do not turn away and serve other gods and worship them.*
- (17) *"Or the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and He will shut up the heavens so that there will be no rain and the ground will not yield its fruit; and you will perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is giving you.*
- (18) *"You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead.*
- (19) *"You shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up.*
- (20) *"You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, (21) so that your days and the days of your sons may be multiplied on the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens remain above the earth.*

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## Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

The **SHEMA** was adopted. *"Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord".*  
It consisted of three short passages - **Deu 6:4-9, 11:13-21** and **Nu 15:37-41.**

### **Num 15:37-41**

- (37) *The LORD also spoke to Moses, saying, (38) "Speak to the sons of Israel, and tell them that they shall make for themselves tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and that they shall put on the tassel of each corner a cord of blue.*
- (39) *"It shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the LORD, so as to do them and not follow after your own heart and your own eyes, after which you played the harlot, (40) so that you may remember to do all My commandments and be holy to your God.*
- (41) *"I am the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt to be your God; I am the LORD your God."*

**Shema** is the Hebrew word for "hear".

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## Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

The **SHEMA** was recited by every Jew every morning and every evening.

It must be said before the third hour: 9 AM.

In the evening it must be repeated before 9 PM.

It had to be spoken as early as possible which was defined as soon as there was enough light to tell blue from white or blue from green.

If that hour was approaching a man must stop what ever he was doing, where ever he was and he must repeat it.

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## Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

Some loved it and understood what it meant and was intended to do.

Others just ran through it as rote memory out of duty and obligation, mumbling through the words.

Like we sometimes tend to do with the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles Creed, or songs like the Doxology or like our grace before meals:

“Good food, Good meat, Good Lord; let's eat”.

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## Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

As with the Shema, some understood and truly prayed the Shemoneh 'esreh.

Others repeated it thoughtlessly.

Compare the Eighteen to Jesus' outline for prayer in [Matt 6:5-13](#)

**All asked for something but only along side a declaration of God's word and His character.**

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## Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

Another "prayer duty" for the Jews was the **SHEMONEH 'ESREH** which means "**the Eighteen**".

It was 18 prayers and is still part of many synagogue services.

Over time a 19th prayer was added but the name did not change.

(Like 12 teams in the Big 10 conference).

There are few liturgies more beautiful than **Shemoneh 'esreh**.

It too was repeated 3 times a day, morning, afternoon and evening.

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## The Amidah (Shemoneh Esreh or 18 Benedictions)

1. Blessed are you, O Lord our God and God of our fathers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob, the great, mighty and revered God, God most high, generous and kind, owner of all things. You remember the pious deeds of the patriarchs, and in love will bring a redeemer to their children's children, for your name's sake, O King, Helper, Saviour and Shield. Blessed are you, O Lord, the Shield of Abraham.
2. O Lord, you are for ever mighty. You bring back the dead to life. You have the power to save. Out of loving kindness you sustain the living; with great compassion you revive the dead. You support the falling, heal the sick, free the captives, and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust. Who is like you, Lord of mighty deeds, and who may be compared to you, O King, who brings death and life, and causes salvation to spring forth? You are to be trusted to bring the dead back to life. Blessed are you, O Lord, who revives the dead.

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## The Amidah (Shemoneh Esreh or 18 Benedictions)

3. You are holy, and your name is holy, and holy beings praise you every day. Blessed are you, O Lord, the holy God.
4. You favor mankind with knowledge, and teach mortals understanding. Favor us with the knowledge, understanding and discernment that come from you. Blessed are you, O Lord, gracious Giver of knowledge.
5. Turn us back, O our Father, to your Torah; draw us near, O our King, to your service. Bring us back in perfect repentance to your presence. Blessed are you, O Lord, who delights in repentance.
6. Forgive us, O our Father, for we have sinned; pardon us, O our King, for we have been disobedient; for you pardon and forgive. Blessed are you, O Lord, ever gracious and ready to forgive.

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## The Amidah (Shemoneh Esreh or 18 Benedictions)

7. Look on our misery, champion our cause, and redeem us swiftly for your name's sake, for you are a mighty Redeemer. Blessed are you, O Lord, the Redeemer of Israel.
8. Heal us, O Lord, and we shall be healed; save us and we shall be saved; for it is you we praise. Send us complete healing for all our ills, for you, O divine King, are a trustworthy and compassionate Physician. Blessed are you, O Lord, who heals the sick of his people Israel.
9. O Lord our God, bless this year and all its varied produce for our good. Send a blessing on the earth; satisfy us with your goodness, and make this year as blessed for us as former good years. Blessed are you, O Lord, who blesses the years.

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## The Amidah (Shemoneh Esreh or 18 Benedictions)

10. Sound the great horn for our freedom. Raise the banner to rally our exiles, and gather us in from the four corners of the earth. Blessed are you, O Lord, who gathers the dispersed of his people Israel.
11. Restore our judges as at first, our counsellors as in former times. Remove from us sorrow and sighing. Rule over us, O Lord, you alone, in kindness and compassion, and vindicate us in judgment. Blessed are you, O Lord, the King who loves righteousness and justice.
12. For slanderers may there be no hope. May all wickedness perish in an instant. May all your enemies be swiftly cut off. Uproot, smash, overthrow and humble swiftly in our days the arrogant kingdom. Blessed are you, O Lord, who breaks the enemies and humbles the arrogant.

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## The Amidah (Shemoneh Esreh or 18 Benedictions)

13. Towards the righteous and the pious, towards the elders of your people, the House of Israel, towards the remnant of their scholars, towards the righteous proselytes, and towards us also may your compassion be stirred, O Lord our God. Grant a rich reward to all who sincerely trust in your name; set our portion with them for ever, so that we may not be put to shame; for we have trusted in you. Blessed are you, O Lord, the support and security of the righteous.
14. To Jerusalem, your city, return in mercy, and dwell in it, as you have promised. Rebuild it soon in our days as an everlasting structure, and swiftly establish in it the throne of David. Blessed are you, O Lord, who rebuilds Jerusalem.
15. Cause the scion of David your servant to spring up swiftly, and let his horn be exalted through your saving power, for we wait for your salvation all day long. Blessed are you, O Lord, who makes the horn of salvation to flourish.

48

## The Amidah (Shemoneh Esreh or 18 Benedictions)

16. Hear our supplication, O Lord our God. Spare us and pity us; receive our prayers with compassion and favour; for you are a God who listens to prayers and petitions. O our King, do not turn us out of your presence empty-handed, for you hear with compassion the prayers of your people Israel. Blessed are you, O Lord, who hears prayer.
17. O Lord our God, receive with pleasure your people Israel and their prayers. Restore the service to the sanctuary of your House. Accept with love and approval the fire-offerings of Israel and their prayers, and may the service of your people Israel be ever pleasing to you. May our eyes witness your return in mercy to Zion. Blessed are you, O Lord, who brings back his Shekhinah to Zion.

49

## The Amidah (Shemoneh Esreh or 18 Benedictions)

18. We give thanks to you, for you are the Lord our God and the God of our fathers for ever and ever; you are the Rock of our life, the Shield of our salvation in every generation. We will give thanks to you and praise you for our lives that are held in your hand, for our souls that are in your care, for your miracles that are with us every day, and for your wonders and your benefits that we experience every moment - morning, noon and night. You are all-good, for your mercy has no end; you are all-compassionate, for your kindness knows no limit: we have always put our hope in you. For all this, O our King, may your name be continually blessed and exalted for evermore. May all that lives give thanks to you and praise your name in sincerity, O God, our salvation and our help. Blessed are you, O Lord, whose name is All-Good, and to whom it is proper to give thanks.

50

## The Amidah (Shemoneh Esreh or 18 Benedictions)

19. Grant peace, well-being, blessing, grace, loving kindness and compassion to us and to all Israel, your people. Bless us, O our Father, all of us together, with the light of your face; for by the light of your face you have given us, O Lord our God, the Torah of life, love and kindness, righteousness, blessing, mercy, life and peace. May it be good in your sight to bless your people Israel at all times and at every hour with your peace. Blessed are you, O Lord, who blesses his people Israel with peace.

51

## Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

Jewish liturgy developed and supplied 'proper' prayers for all occasions.

There were very few circumstances that developed that were not covered.

To make up your own prayer by just talking to God became rare.

All one had to do was know or learn the appropriate prayer, recite it, and ABRA CA DABRA, God heard and moved.

They became allot like magic incantations.

It's like how many of us close our prayers with the phrase, "In Jesus name, Amen."

Prayer is not really a matter of the words you use to 'sign off' when talking with God, but your basis for being able to talk with God at all.

52

## Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

Devout Jews set certain times for prayer (3rd, 6th and 12th hour of the day - 0900, 1200 and 1800).

Work and schedules were built around these times of prayer.

Work was not to invade these times and prayer generally didn't invade the rest of the day.

Prayer began to be viewed as a necessary, irritating interruption of the days events.

Prayer is not talking to God, it is fellowshiping and talking with God...

53

## Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

Prayer had become associated with certain places, especially the synagogue.

There developed the thought that you should be in a place of prayer in order to pray.

Peter and John going up to the temple at the hour of prayer ??? To pray or to preach ???

**Act 3:1** *Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.*

God is not, never has been, and never will be confined to any time or place.

54

## Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

The Jews began to tend towards long prayers.

The Rabbi's taught that

"Whoever is long in prayer is heard" and

" Whenever the righteous make their prayer long, their prayer is heard".

The thought became that the longer men beat on God's door, the sooner he will answer.

The more we talk the easier it is to get God to condescend to our our wishes and requests.

Wiser Rabbi's taught against this tendency.

**Ecc1 5:2** *Let a man's words before God be few, as it is said, 'Be not rash with your mouth, and let not your heart be hasty to utter a word before God; for God is in Heaven, and you upon the earth, therefore let your words be few.*

Often the best adoration is keeping silence. **Hab 2:20**

55

## Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

Eastern cultures had a habit of 'hypnotizing' themselves by endless repetition of one phrase or word. **1 Kings 18:26, Acts 19:34**

Jewish prayer used repetition by attempting to pile up every known and possible title and adjective in the address of the prayer to God.

One prayer actually began by using 16 adjectives attached to God's name. Things like:

"Blessed, praised, and glorified, exalted, extolled and honored, magnified and lauded be the name of the Holy One, our loving and gracious Father and God, creator, redeemer and friend."

Uttered not as true praise and adoration but to show off and impress....

56

## Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

When we think more of how we are praying than what we are praying and who we are speaking with, we've stopped praying.

The Jew prayed standing with his arms stretched outward, palms up and head bowed.

Three times a day he would pray no matter where he was or who he was with.

Often men would be certain they were in a public place and often made themselves a nuisance by being in a doorway or gateway or public square or intersection at the appointed time, praying loudly so all could take notice of their piety.

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## Praying .... MATT 6:9-15

Matthew places these events on the teaching mount north of the Sea of Galilee.

Luke's accounts says that a disciple asks Jesus to how they should pray.

God is always willing to explain and teach if we are willing to listen, hear and obey.

*[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.*

59

## Praying .... MATT 6:5-8

Jesus established here two guidelines (there are more) for prayer:

### 1) All true prayer is to be offered to God. *Joh\_16:23*

He would emphasize this later instructing his disciples to ask of God in his name.

We are not to pray to or for the benefit of the people listening.

It is our conversation with God.

Preaching and teaching is not prayer no matter how well it is disguised as prayer.

### 2) God is more ready to answer our prayer than we are ready to pray. *Mat\_6:8 6:32 Luk\_12:30 Jas 1:17; 4:2-3*

God is a god of love and is not withholding any good thing from those who approach him.

He does not need to be forced or convinced or coerced in answering our prayers.

58

## “Disciples Prayer”

### “Disciples Prayer” .... MATT 6:9-15

We know this to be 'The Lord's Prayer'.

Actually it is the disciples prayer.

It is a prayer that only a disciple committed to Jesus can pray.

Only a true disciple of Christ can understand what it says and comprehend its meaning.

- [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.*

61

### “Disciples Prayer” .... MATT 6:9-15

The first three petitions or statements have to do with God and the Glory of God.

- [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.*

The second three deal with our needs and necessities.

When we remember and view God in His rightful place, we can see and understand our own needs, wants and necessities and adjust them as necessary.

- [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:...*

God is given first His supreme place and position.

Only when we acknowledge and view God as Supreme can we express the faith and confidence that he can and will meet the needs we bring and leave to Him.

- [13] ... *For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.*

62

## “Disciples Prayer”

### MATT 6:9-15

[9] *After this manner therefore pray ye:*

*Our Father [G3962 pater, progenitor] which art in heaven, Hallowed [G37 acknowledge and venerate separate from profane things; pure] 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, [G3783: that which is morally due] as we forgive our debtors.*

[13] *And lead us not into temptation [G3986 an enticement to sin, temptation, whether arising from the desires or from the outward circumstances] ,*

*but deliver us from evil: [G4190 pressed and harassed by labors; toils, annoyances of a time full of peril to Christian faith and steadfastness; causing pain and trouble]*

*For thine is the kingdom, [G932 royal power, kingship, dominion, rule]*

*and the power, [G1411 inherent strength, power, ability by virtue of the nature of its source] and the glory, [G1391 splendor, brightness, magnificence, excellence, preeminence, dignity, grace, majesty]*

*for ever. Amen. [G165 an unbroken age, perpetuity of time, eternity]*

[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.*

+++++ See PRAYER notes +++++<sup>63</sup>

### Fasting .... MATT 6:16-18

[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.*

+++++ See FASTING notes +++++

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## Fasting .... MATT 6:16-18

**Fasting ....** Going without food or drink voluntarily, generally for religious purposes.

- Abstaining from food and liquid either completely or partially.
- Others include any form of temporary self denial as being a fast.

Self denial may not be fasting but may simply be a method of self discipline.

To include all forms and instances of self denial as fasting weakens the purpose and meaning of fasting in our thoughts.

**Note that Jesus said 'When' not 'If' you fast...**

8

## Fasting .... MATT 6:16-18

Fasting is not an extreme form of 'dieting'.

- A fast is between God and you.
- A fast has a specific spiritual purpose behind it; intended to achieve a spiritual goal.
- It is to focus on God, his word, to worship, glorify and/or minister to God.

It is one part of God's plan for an "Abundant life" - victorious Christian living - achieving a Spirit led walk

Fasting is not intended to replace any other part of God's provision for Christian living.

Fasting cannot be replaced by any other part of God's provision for Christian living. (e.g.: prayer, giving, witnessing, armor, serving, spiritual gifts, etc.).

- It is not a gimmick cure all
- It is not a hunger strike to force God to action
- It is not a magic formula of rules to manipulate God (ie: ritual)

8

## Fasting .... MATT 6:16-18

Fasting is a focusing/concentrating of spiritual power to achieve a specific spiritual end.

- It realigns our focus
- It renews our human spirit
- It strengthens and feeds our human spirits
- It focuses intercession

God may direct us to fast to reveal something to us in advance - to get our attention.

Paul - impending shipwreck [[Acts 27.20-25](#)]

God disquiets our spirits leading us to fast to focus on and listen to Him to warn us and provide direction.

We may fast to receive a greater anointing with and from God in order to minister and work for his Kingdom on Earth.

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## Fasting .... MATT 6:16-18

### Fasting references:

Zechariah's day

4th, 5th, 7th and 10th month [[Zech 8.19](#)]

in 10th month - Commemorate the siege of Jerusalem [[2 Kg 25.1](#)]

in 7th month - the murder of Gedaliah and his Jews

in 5th month - the destruction of the temple [[2 Kings 25.8-9](#)]

in the 4th month - the capture of Jerusalem [[Jer 52.6-7](#)]

Anna served God with fasting [[Lu 2.37](#)]

Pharisee fasted twice a week [[Lu 18.12](#)]

John the Baptist's disciples fasted but Jesus disciples did not (while He was with them anyway)

[[Mt 9.14-15](#)][[Mk 2.18-19](#)][[Lu 5.33-35](#)][[Acts 13.3](#)][[Acts 14.23](#)]

Fasting was proclaimed at/during periods of calamity [[Je 34.9](#)][[Joe 1.14](#)]

To chasten the soul [[Ps 35.13](#)][[Ps 69.10](#)]

To make our voice heard in heaven' [[Isa 58.3-4](#)]

8

## Fasting .... MATT 6:16-18

Going without food or water was not automatically effective in accomplishing the desires of those who fasted.

In the prophet Isaiah's time, people complained that they had fasted and that God had not responded favorably <Is. 58:3-4>.

Isaiah delivered God's response declaring that their external show was futile.

The fast that the Lord requires is to loose the bonds of wickedness, undo the heavy burdens, feed the hungry, shelter the poor, and clothe the naked <Is. 58:5-7>.

8

## Fasting .... MATT 6:16-18

Spiritual awareness increases during fasting - both of God's kingdom and Satan's realm

Public fasts signified a load of guilt resting on the people for which they humbled themselves before God [1 Sam 7.6] [1 Kings 21.9-12]

The Fast refers to the Day of Atonement [Lev 16.29]

Voluntary fasting mentioned [Lu 2.37][Acts 14.23]

A common practice among the Jews that was continued among Christians

[MT 4.2][Mt 6.16-18][Mt 9.14-15]

[Mk 2.18-20]

[Lu 5.33-35][Lu 18.12]

[Acts 13.2-3]

Involuntary fasting (perhaps voluntary) - lack of food

[2 Co 6.5][2 Co 11.27][Mt 15.32][Mk 8.3][Acts 27.21]

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## Fasting .... MATT 6:16-18

### Kinds of fasts

#### Physical fast - voluntary

Diet - to lose weight - has only physical benefit.

Should be done under a doctor's care if your goal is to lose weight.

May have spiritual impact good and harmful.

God's established spiritual truths, the laws of the spiritual realm, His system of operation, can't be neutralized

They work whenever and for whomever they are operated by.

#### Spiritual fast - voluntary

May be acceptable to God or not.

Done unto God - Focused on Him and his purposes

To minister to the Lord [Acts 13.2-3][Eph 5.18-19]

You minister to God when you go to Him with something to give rather than get something from Him

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## Treasures .... MATT 6:19-21

[19] *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:*

[20] *But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:*

[21] *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

We save money in banks or buy stocks or other investments or sometimes collect things we believe will increase in value over time.

There were 3 ways in which men of Jesus day stored their wealth.

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## Treasures .... MATT 6:19-21

[19] *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:*

Expensive, elaborate, high quality clothes and cloth - which moths can destroy - check your closets.

These were often purchased not to wear but for investments.

They would carefully pack them away assured they had a 'little something to fall back on' stored away.

Clothes if not worn and cared for regularly allowing air to circulate through them and the fibers to be exercised would rot, and no matter how securely packed away moths would get at them.

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## Treasures .... MATT 6:19-21

[19] *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:*

Grain and food commodities - the phrase rust is literally 'eating away'

The word rust is Gk: **brosis** => lit: eating away.

Nowhere else is it used to mean rust.

Men would store away corn and grain in great barns.

The amount stored was a measure of a mans wealth and security for the future. **Lu 12:16**

Rats, rodents, worms, rot and all sorts of other calamities would infest these great stores regularly if they were not rotated and checked regularly.

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## Treasures .... MATT 6:19-21

[19] *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:*

Gold, precious stones/metals and money stored and hidden at home. – thieves

The phrase dig through is Gk: **diorussein**.

In Palestine, most houses were built of baked clay.

Most money, gold, etc. was hidden in the home, there were no banks or money changers to be trusted.

The Romans couldn't find out how wealthy individuals were (like our IRS).

To break into a house a thief simply had to literally dig through a wall to gain entry to a home.

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## Treasures .... MATT 6:19-21

[19] *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:*

[20] *But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:*

[21] *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

### SO WHAT:

If you are trusting God you will not trust in material things for security.

You are then free to use them as God directs with no fear of losing them.

Spiritual principle: **Use it or lose it!**

**What we lock away we lose, what we use we have.**

It is a wise person who builds their happiness on things they cannot lose and which are independent of chance and the changes of this life.

## Treasures .... MATT 6:19-21

[20] *But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:*

The phrase 'treasures in heaven' was a familiar phrase to the Jew. It identified 2 things in their minds:

1) **Deeds of kindness** which they believed became a man's treasure in heaven.

Both Jesus and the Rabbi's taught that what was selfishly hoarded is lost but what is generously given away and used for God's purposes brought treasure and value to be repaid over and over in heaven.

2) **Character** - The Jews believed and taught that the only thing a man could take with him out of this world was himself.

The better and finer self he carries with him into heaven, the greater his treasure in heaven will be - the treasure he brings is a better self. **1 Co 3:11-15**

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## Treasures .... MATT 6:19-21

[20] *But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:*

**1Co 3:11-15 ESV**

(11) *For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

(12) *Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw--*

(13) *each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.*

(14) *If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward.*

(15) *If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.*

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## Treasures .... MATT 6:19-21

[21] *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

Jesus said that where a man's treasure is, his heart will be there also.

If everything of value to us in the here and now and our minds, motives and purpose for living will be to better ourselves now,

We will not consider or have any interest in the world beyond the one in which we now live.

It is not that this world is unimportant. It is vital.

But not for the successes and comforts we experience here.

It is important because it is here and now that we can be obedient to God, fulfill His purposes and store up for ourselves treasures that do not wear out, go out of style, get polluted, break down, or get stolen and taken from us.

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## Treasures .... MATT 6:19-21

[21] *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

**2Co 4:13-18 ESV**

(13) *Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak, (14) knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence.*

(15) *For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.*

(16) *So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.*

(17) *For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, (18) as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.*

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## Treasures .... MATT 6:19-21

[21] *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

**Mat\_16:26** *"For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"*

**Mar\_8:36** *"For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?"*

**Luk\_9:25** *"For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?"*

**Joh\_10:10** *"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."*

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## Treasures .... MATT 6:19-21

[21] *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

**Luk 12:15-21**

(15) *Then he told them, "Be careful to guard yourselves against every kind of greed, because a person's life doesn't consist of the amount of possessions he has." (16) Then he told them a parable. He said, "The land of a certain rich man produced good crops. (17) So he began to think to himself, 'What should I do, since I have no place to store my crops?' (18) Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and I'll store all my grain and goods in them. (19) Then I'll say to myself, "You've stored up plenty of good things for many years. Take it easy, eat, drink, and enjoy yourself.'" (20) But God told him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded back from you. Now who will get the things you've accumulated?' (21) That's how it is with the person who stores up treasures for himself rather than with God."*

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## Treasures .... MATT 6:19-21

**Mat\_6:20** *"But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; [21] For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."*

**Mat\_13:44** *"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."*

**Mat\_19:21** *Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." **Mk 10:21 Lu 12:33 18:22***

**Mat\_13:52** *And Jesus said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household, who brings out of his treasure things new and old."*

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## A Single Eye .... MATT 6:22-24

[22] *The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*

[23] *But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*

[24] *No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

The eye was regarded as the window by which the light gets into the whole body.

If that window is clouded or colored or distorted or blocked the light entering in is hindered and blocked.

If the window is clean, clear and undistorted, the light floods into the room illuminating every area.

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## A Single Eye .... MATT 6:22-24

*[22] The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*

*[23] But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*

*[24] No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

How we view people and things, the attitudes that color how we see and view life affect our ability to relate to others and fulfill God's purpose for us.

Prejudice  
Jealousy  
Selfishness  
Pride

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## A Single Eye .... MATT 6:22-24

*[22] The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*

*[23] But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*

*[24] No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

The phrase '**if therefore thine eye be single**' and '**if thine eye be evil**' are not clear translations in our day.

The word for single is Gk: **haplous**.

Elsewhere it (and it's other forms) are translated as generous, generosity, liberality.

**Js 1.5      Ro 12.8      2 Cor 9.11**

It is a generous eye Jesus is commending.

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## A Single Eye .... MATT 6:22-24

*[22] The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*

*[23] But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*

*[24] No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

The phrase '**if therefore thine eye be single**' and '**if thine eye be evil**' are not clear translations in our day.

The word for **evil** is Gk: **poneros**.

Elsewhere it is regularly translated niggardly, ungenerous or grudging.

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## A Single Eye .... MATT 6:22-24

*[22] The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*

*[23] But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*

*[24] No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

There is nothing like generosity for giving you a clear undistorted view of life and others.

There is nothing which will distort your view and ability to understand and see clearly as a narrow minded selfish attitude.

We will be unable to live with ourselves, with others or with God.

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## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

**Keep a single eye – focus on the eternal.**

**Worry – focusing on things I fear I will lose.**

- [28] And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:*
- [29] And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*
- [30] Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?*
- [31] Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?*

88

91

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

- [25] Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?*
- [26] Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?*
- [27] Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?*

90

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

- [32] (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.*
- [33] But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*
- [34] Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. (KJV)*

92

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

“Take no thought for tomorrow: is Jesus teaching about worry.

Don't do it !!

Worry is not an excuse to not plan ahead.

Concern leads to Planning which lives in the present.

Worry lives in the unknown future.

- Worry comes when we do not have a plan for the future...
- Worry is a lack of trust in God's word – His promises
- Worry focuses on disaster, not blessing...
- Worry is a choice I make – I choose to do it.
- Worry does not mean you do not have concerns...but where there are concerns, we establish plans inline with God's word

93

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

Worry over 'me and my stuff' always focuses on what I might lose.  
It will keep me from generosity, prayerful trust, and sacrificial fasting.

Worry applies tomorrow's problems,  
which may or may not come,  
to my agenda today.

Planning settles my preparation for tomorrow  
by trusting God for my future  
and taking action today that pleases Him today.

When I trust Him for my tomorrow it frees me to obey Him today.  
When I worry about tomorrow, I lose today's opportunities because I  
am focused on problems that might come tomorrow.

Planning is playing on the offense.  
Worry is playing defense.

94

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

The Gk: **merimnan** literally means **'to worry anxiously'; 'anxiety'**

- Jesus is not saying be careless about how you do things.
- Jesus is not saying do not prepare for tomorrow.
- Jesus is not saying to not be diligent, take precautions or let yourself or the things God has given you become slovenly, sloppy and not well kept.

The wording **'Take no thought'** or **'be not careful'** is literally **"be not full of care"**.

Jesus is forbidding worry !

Don't worry....Obey God and be happy !!

Don't fret about, filling your mind with what has not yet happened.

95

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

***[25] Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?***

God gave us life.

If he gave it to us, we can trust him for the lesser things  
required to sustain it.

***[26] Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?***

No one works harder than the birds to sustain life and make a living.

The example they set of hard work is only exceeded by  
their apparent total lack of worry over the future.

96



## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

**[27] Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?**

A cubit is 18-25 inches depending on the times and who was king.

It was the distance from his elbow to finger tip.

It was eventually accepted to be 18 inches.

No one through worry can add an inch to his height or a day to his life.

He can however shorten both by being burdened with worry and stressing himself into an early grave.

97

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

**[28] And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:**

**[29] And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.**

**[30] Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?**

Scarlet poppies and anemones bloomed for one day all over Palestine.

On that day the countryside is decorated and adorned with an unmatched beauty.

Following their day of glory they were gathered and used in the ovens.

These baking ovens were made of bricks of clay.

When the women needed to raise the heat in the oven quickly, a handful of the dead flowers would be thrown on the flame.

If God would clothe these short lived flowers that were burned as kindling how much more does he care and provide for us when we learn to trust Him.

98

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

**[32] (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.**

Worry is a common characteristic of the heathen godless peoples.

Distrust in their gods was normal and expected

It is incomprehensible that distrust could be in one who has come to and meet the one true living God by faith and has claimed to trust Him.

99

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

**[33] But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.**

To defeat worry, concentrate on God's Kingdom

Commit your life to Jesus and God's faithfulness

Concentrate on the FACT that we are under God's rule and authority.

If God is truly in charge and rules over our lives what can we possibly have to legitimately worry about.

If we are in God's Kingdom - doing His will - we have God to depend upon.

Worry is banished when God is the dominating power, when doing God's will is the most important thing in our lives.

He will supply all our needs without fail...

**Psa\_37:25 I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.**

100

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

**[34] Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. (KJV)**

Worry is defeated when we learn to live one day at a time.

No one can determine what tomorrows outcome will be.

Looking forward to things that have not happened is foolish.

We must prepare for the future but we are not to sit and fret over what might or might not be.

Jesus tells us to live each day as God grants it to us, to respond to each challenge and opportunity as it is presented to us.

God today is yours. My life, my family, my job, my provision, my protection... Worry takes it all back from God...

101

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

**[34] Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. (KJV)**

Worrying about tomorrow creates all sorts of vain imaginations within us.

Many of these become 'self fulfilling prophesies' for our lives not because they are inevitable but because they become the things we expect

**Heb\_ 11:1** Now faith [confidence] is the substance of things hoped for [anticipated outcome], the evidence of things not seen.

Our vain imaginations displace our Faith and Hope, moving our focus off of trust in God's love and care and guidance.

**2Co\_ 10:5** Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

102

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

**[34] Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. (KJV)**

Worry accomplishes nothing!

There is no progress gained in worry.

It is needless, useless and injurious.

Only time, energy, and effort are lost while worrying.

It is motivated by FAITH IN SOMETHING OTHER THAN GOD'S GOODNESS TO US. It is an act of fear.

Fear is faith pointed in the wrong direction.

It is the expression of faith in the wrong thing!

Fear is the lie that there is something greater than God can handle or that God lied and really doesn't care about us after all.

103

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

**[34] Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. (KJV)**

Three typical physical conditions are actively caused and made worse by worry:

- Ulcers
- Coronary thrombosis - Heart attack
- Stress - Emotional distress and mental illness

Medical statistics seem to show that those who can laugh the most live the best and longest.

**Pro\_ 17:22** A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.

104

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

**[34] Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. (KJV)**

Both calm and worry come from the condition of the heart.

Worry causes us to forget God's past faithfulness and provision.

In the identical circumstance of two people  
one can be totally serene and calm  
while the other is tensed and literally worried to death.

The one on the throne of your life determines which person you are going to be like.

Who / What do you believe?

Who / What do you trust?

Where is your faith placed?

**Isa 26:3-4** *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. (4) Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength:* 105

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

**[34] Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. (KJV)**

**Deu 33:24-27**

(24) *And of Asher he said: "Asher is most blessed of sons; Let him be favored by his brothers, And let him dip his foot in oil.*

(25) *Your sandals shall be iron and bronze;*

**As your days, so shall your strength be.**

(26) *"There is no one like the God of Jeshurun, Who rides the heavens to help you, And in His excellency on the clouds.*

(27) *The eternal God is your refuge, And underneath are the everlasting arms; He will thrust out the enemy from before you, And will say, 'Destroy!'*

Days filled with worry and fear, you will be weak and defeated...

**Isa 26:3** *You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.* 106

## Worry.... MATT 6:25-34

**[34] Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. (KJV)**

**Psa 121:1-8** A Song of Ascents.

(1) *I will lift up my eyes to the hills.*

*From where does my help come? (2) My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth.*

(3) *He will not allow your foot to be moved;*

*He who keeps you will not slumber.*

(4) *Behold, He who keeps Israel Shall neither slumber nor sleep.*

(5) *The LORD is your keeper;*

*The LORD is your shade at your right hand.*

(6) *The sun shall not strike you by day,*

*Nor the moon by night.*

(6) *The LORD shall preserve you from all evil;*

*He shall preserve your soul.*

(7) *The LORD shall preserve your going out and your coming in*

*From this time forth, and even forevermore.* 107

## Judging .... Matt 7:1-5

**[1] Judge not, that ye be not judged.**

**[2] For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.**

**[3] And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?**

**[4] Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?**

**[5] Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.**

## Judging .... Matt 7:1-5

Rabbis often warned the people against judging others.

They said that there were 6 great works that brought a man credit in this world and in the world to come:

- Study
- Visiting the sick
- Hospitality
- Devotion to prayer
- Educating children in the Law and
- Thinking the best of other people.

They taught that if a man judged his neighbor favorably he would be judged favorably by God.

109

## Judging .... Matt 7:1-5

**Luk\_6:37** *Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:*

Strong's # 2919 **krino** (kree'-no); properly, to distinguish, i.e. decide (mentally or judicially); by implication, to try, condemn, punish:

KJV-- avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, esteem, judge, go to (sue at the) law, ordain, call in question, sentence to, think. (DIC)

**Jas\_4:12** *There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?*

110

## Judging .... Matt 7:1-5

Judging is not condemned outright. Judging rightly is commanded.

The church is to judge itself.

**Mat 18:15-17** *Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.*

Each Christian is to judge him or herself.

**1Co\_11:31** *For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*

Not judging is to ignore sin, wrongful acts and evil and to give the world up to it. Law breakers are to be judged by society.

111

## Judging .... Matt 7:1-5

The judging that Jesus condemns here relates to personal relationships

- the decisions I make within myself based on my own opinion and preconceived ideas about others.

No command of Jesus is broken more regularly and consistently.

As followers of Christ, in our daily walk and contact with others we are called to be gracious and merciful - as God has dealt with me - not condemning or judgmental.

I am to think the best of others in the absence of truth to the contrary.

112

## Judging .... Matt 7:1-5

Discerning is not the same as judging.

To discern is to identify and recognize.

To judge is to determine and assign a quality.

Fred is a man = discerning Fred's gender.

Fred is a good/bad man = judging Fred's character.

Good/bad according to whose standard ????

Many claim the right to be extremely vocal in their criticism of others and totally exempt from compliant action from others.

Judging a person is not permitted.

Judging (discerning) their fruit, the results of their actions and life is required.

We must discern (judge) the lives of our leaders before appointing and following them...

113

## Judging .... Matt 7:1-5

We cannot judge/should not judge another because:

- We never know the whole story or have all the facts; never know the whole person.
  - If we knew and understood what others had to go through we would often be amazed they did so well rather than judge them harshly.
    - Do not judge by the superficial - look for the underlying beauty and potential.
- We cannot ever be totally impartial.
  - When the Greeks had a difficult trial they would hold it in the dark so neither judge, jury or witnesses would be influenced by appearances but only by the facts presented.
- No man is good enough to judge/condemn another man.
  - Only those without faults have the right to look for faults in another. No man has the right to criticize another unless they are prepared to hold themselves to an even higher standard and live up to it successfully.

114

## Dogs, Pigs and Pearls .... Matt 7:6

*[6] Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.*

This was a saying that was used in two ways in the early church.

- 1) It was used by the Jews who felt the Gospel, God's gifts and grace were for Jews alone.
- 2) It was used to point out that God's truth, church doctrine and the purity of the faith needed to be guarded closely.

The early church (as today) is under attack from both outside and inside influences.

Outside - worldly immorality and reasoning.

Inside - speculation leading into heresy.

115

## Dogs, Pigs and Pearls .... Matt 7:6

*[6] Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.*

The early church was very particular, for example, regarding who should be permitted to participate in commemorating the Lord's Supper - taking part in church Communion.

Their communion service often began with the statement - Holy things are for Holy people.

The early church wanted to win everyone to the Lord but was very careful about protecting and maintaining the purity of the faith and the faithful.

116

## Dogs, Pigs and Pearls .... Matt 7:6

*[6] Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.*

Hebrew parallelism

*Mat 6:10 Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*

*Mat 6:6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs,  
neither cast ye your pearls before swine,*

give = cast  
dogs = swine  
holy <> pearls

Parallelism seems to break down

117

## Dogs, Pigs and Pearls .... Matt 7:6

*[6] Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.*

Hebrew parallelism

**Holy** = Heb: **Kadosh** (K D SH)

**ear-ring** = Aramaic: **Kadash** (K D SH)

Talmud proverb = ..an ear-ring in a swine's snout...

So the original may have read:

*Give not an ear-ring to a dog,  
neither cast ye your pearls before swine,*

give = cast  
dogs = swine  
ear-ring <> pearls

Making the parallelism correct.

118

## Dogs, Pigs and Pearls .... Matt 7:6

*[6] Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.*

If so the statement meant:

There are some who are unfit to receive the message being given so willingly.

They cannot and will not hear it or bear it anymore than a dog needs an ear-ring or swine can care for pearls.

We cannot talk of spiritual things to everyone - some will not receive it.

This does not mean they are to be abandoned - that would be judging them.

It is often impossible to talk to some people about Jesus Christ.

It is always possible to show men Christ.

What words cannot say a consistent walk and life often can.

If the Church has a weakness it is not in words or arguments but in its walk and lives.

119

## Asking and Receiving.... Matt 7:7-11

*[7] Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:*

*[8] For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.*

*[9] Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?*

*[10] Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?*

**Luke 11:12** adds "if a son asks an egg will his father give him a scorpion" to **Matthew 7:10**.

*[11] If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?*

120

## Asking and Receiving.... Luke 11:9-13

- 9] *And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.*
- 10] *For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.*
- 11] *If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?*
- 12] *Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?*
- 13] *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*

121

## Asking and Receiving.... Luke 11:9-13

Limestone rocks in Palestine looked just like the little loaves of bread baked at the time.

The serpent was certainly referring to an eel - an unclean animal, forbidden to be eaten.

The scorpion - a pale colored little lobster like creature grabbed its victim in its claws and stung it with its tail striking over its head and body causing great pain and often death.

When they curled themselves up, they looked like little eggs.

122

## Asking and Receiving.... Matt 7:7-11

Heathen religions all describe their gods as petty, vengeful, frivolous beings, playing with men.

God is not like this.

- If you ask of God (as God has directed), he will give.
- If you seek God, he will make Himself available to be found.
- If you knock on God's door, He will open and welcome you in.

**Rev 3:20** - God knocks on our door.

*Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.*

123

## Asking and Receiving.... Matt 7:7-11

These verses are in the present imperative that is they describe a continuous action.

Shut the door behind you is aorist imperative.

Always shut doors behind you is a present imperative.

Ask and always ask  
Seek and always seek  
Knock and always knock

Never become discouraged, knowing that your loving Father will hear and answer, be found and open the necessary doors for you.

124

## Law and Prophets.... Matt 7:12

**[12] Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.**

It is possible to quote rabbinic parallels to nearly everything Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount except this.

Whenever something like this is stated in the Law, it is always in the negative.

Jesus taught it in the positive.

125

## Law and Prophets.... Matt 7:12

**[12] Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.**

Negative: Refrain from doing to others what you don't want done to you  
- Passive - Isolating

Positive: Do to others what you want them to do to you. - Proactive - Aggressive

Negative requires nothing - Satisfied by doing nothing to or for others.

Positive requires everything - Satisfied by doing anything and everything to and for others.

Positive requires love as a motive.

Not that I must do no harm to others but I must do my best to help others.

Anyone can comply with the negative.

Only a Christian walking in God's love and power can comply with the positive.

126

## Straight Gates and Highways .... Mat 7:13-14

**[13] Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:**

**[14] Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.**

Everything we do is a matter of choice.

A decision is always required and a decision is always made.

God is always requiring and allowing us to choose

**Deut 30:15-20 Joshua 24.15 Jeremiah 21.8**

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## Straight Gates and Highways .... Mat 7:13-14

**Deu 30:15-20 ESV**

(15) "See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil.

(16) *If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.*

(17) *But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, (18) I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess.*

(19) *I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, (20) loving the LORD your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them."*

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## Straight Gates and Highways .... Mat 7:13-14

### Jos 24:15

*And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."*

### Jer 21:8

*"And to this people you shall say: 'Thus says the LORD: Behold, I set before you the way of life and the way of death.*

129

## Straight Gates and Highways .... Mat 7:13-14

***[13] Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:***

***[14] Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.***

Our choice is: the Strait and Narrow vs the broad and wide  
the hard vs the easy  
the long vs the short  
disciplined vs the undisciplined  
thoughtful vs the thoughtless  
the caring vs the careless

130

## Straight Gates and Highways .... Mat 7:13-14

***[13] Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:***

***[14] Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.***

**2Co 4:17-18** *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 18] While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

How a situation looks at the moment, the pressures of now must not allow us to lose sight of the eternal and how it will look then and what the pressures will seem like then.

Let the end decide not the beginning.  
Let eternity choose, not the moment.

131

## Sheep, Wolves, Prophets .... Matt 7:15

***[15] Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.***

There were many false prophets in Jewish history.

Often they were called and referred to as wolves.

***Ez 22.27 Zep 3.3 Act 20.29 Mt 10.16 Jn 10.12***

A shepherd could be identified by the fact that he wore a sheep skin inside out – wool side in - as a jacket or vest.

A man wearing a sheepskin was not always a shepherd.

If a thief did not want to be seen among the sheep he would wear a sheep skin also – wool side out.

The shepherd used it for protection, the thief as camouflage, so as not to be found out.

132

## Sheep, Wolves, Prophets .... Matt 7:15

*[15] Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

Prophets, special men that God raised up among the people to be His spokesmen to the people, were known to wear what was called a 'hairy coat' or 'mantle'.

Some believe that this hairy coat, the uniform of a prophet, was actually a sheepskin also.

**1Ki 19:13** *And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?".... 19 So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen in front of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and cast his cloak upon him.*

**2Ki 1:8** *They answered him, "He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."* 133

## Sheep, Wolves, Prophets .... Matt 7:15

*[15] Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

God's true prophet was generally held in great esteem and treated with deference and respect.

A false prophet could gain much honor and respect and wealth if he could fool the people.

A prophet did not usually tell the future. He delivered God's message to the people.

God sometimes revealed an event through His prophet that would authenticate that the message was actually from God and that the man was actually God's prophet.

If a predicted event, or if a messenger claimed to be from God did not occur, the prophet was immediately put to death by stoning. 134

## Sheep, Wolves, Prophets .... Matt 7:15

*[15] Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

Matthew was written about 85 AD. The early church had prophets.

Prophecy was a gift of the Spirit and it was a ministry within the church.

With the coming into the fellowship of the many Gentile influences, many false prophets found their way into the young churches.

About 150 AD the first 'little black book' of the church was written; a church manual setting down basic doctrine and conduct to be observed. It had much to say about prophet.

- If he stayed in one place more than 3 days he was false.
- If he asked for more than his bread, he was false.
- If his life didn't match his claim, (he didn't walk his talk), he was false. 135

## Sheep, Wolves, Prophets .... Matt 7:15

*[15] Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

### **DIDACHE Chapter 11.**

#### **Concerning Teachers, Apostles, and Prophets.**

Whosoever, therefore, comes and teaches you all these things that have been said before, receive him. But if the teacher himself turns and teaches another doctrine to the destruction of this, hear him not. But if he teaches so as to increase righteousness and the knowledge of the Lord, receive him as the Lord. But concerning the apostles and prophets, act according to the decree of the Gospel.

Let every apostle who comes to you be received as the Lord. But he shall not remain more than one day; or two days, if there's a need. But if he remains three days, he is a false prophet. And when the apostle goes away, let him take nothing but bread until he lodges. If he asks for money, he is a false prophet. 136

## Sheep, Wolves, Prophets .... Matt 7:15

*[15] Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

### DIDACHE Chapter 11.

#### Concerning Teachers, Apostles, and Prophets.

And every prophet who speaks in the Spirit you shall neither try nor judge; for every sin shall be forgiven, but this sin shall not be forgiven. But not every one who speaks in the Spirit is a prophet; but only if he holds the ways of the Lord. Therefore from their ways shall the false prophet and the prophet be known. And every prophet who orders a meal in the Spirit does not eat it, unless he is indeed a false prophet. And every prophet who teaches the truth, but does not do what he teaches, is a false prophet.

And every prophet, proved true, working unto the mystery of the Church in the world, yet not teaching others to do what he himself does, shall not be judged among you, for with God he has his judgment; for so did also the ancient prophets. But whoever says in the Spirit, Give me money, or something else, you shall not listen to him. But if he tells you to give for others' sake who are in need, let no one judge him.

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## Trees and Fruit .... Matt 7:16-20

*[16] Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?*

*[17] Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.*

*[18] A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.*

*[19] Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.*

*[20] Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*

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## Trees and Fruit .... Matt 7:16-20

*[16] Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?*

There was a Roman proverb, like root like fruit.

In Palestine there was a thornbush called the Buckthorn bush.

It had little berries that from a distance looked like grapes.

There was also a small shrub/tree that from a distance looked like a fig tree.

Jesus said we would know

(identify, discern; not personally judge or condemn)  
those who were true and those who were false by the fruit in their lives.

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## Trees and Fruit .... Matt 7:20

*[20] Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*

The false had self interest, personal gain, prestige as motive.

They would teach their own ideas.

They would foster a false religion

- focusing on external observance and prohibitions
- or one that was easy.
- or one that separated life from religion, that was arrogant and exclusive.

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## Trees and Fruit .... Matt 7:20

*[20] Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*

To check fruit, we need to know what good fruit is.

**Gal 5** details the fruit of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit.

What is growing in their lives?

What is the result of their 'ministry' among us?

Does it agree and confirm God's word and the standard God has set for those who are His?

Take care to use God's standard and not our personal moral, ethical, traditional ideas and standards.

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## Do You Know Me? .... Matt 7:21-23

*[21] Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

*[22] Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?*

*[23] And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

Many will do good things, miraculous things claiming to be God's servants, using the name of Jesus as their authority.

Satan will deceive even the doer as well as the receiver and the observer if we do not get past the deeds to the fruit.

Because someone claims Christ and does wonderful things in Jesus name does not make them Christians or messengers of God.

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## Hearing and Doing .... Matt 7:24-29

*[24] Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:*

*[25] And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.*

*[26] And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:*

*[27] And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.*

*[28] And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:*

*[29] For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. (KJV)*

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## Hearing and Doing .... Matt 7:24, 26

*[24] Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:*

*[26] And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:*

The key is hearing **and** doing. It is not hearing alone and it is not doing alone.

If I do without hearing, I am doing what seems right to me.

It may not be the thing God desires.

If I hear without doing, I may as well have not heard in the first place.

Knowing God's word is useless unless you change the way you live and do it also.

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## Hearing and Doing .... Matt 7:24-29

*Pro 10:25 When the whirlwind passes by, the wicked is no more, But the righteous has an everlasting foundation.*

The Palestinian topography was much like certain places in Arizona.

During the dry season there were many places where the land was smooth and soft, protected from the wind and weather being in cuts and gullies. Seemingly perfect homestead sites.

In the wet season, the rains would fill these arroyos and gullies sending flash floods roaring down them carrying away everything in their paths.

It may seem a blessing to find a smooth spot or soft soil on which to build but,

To work and dig down through the rough terrain of life until you find bed rock upon which to build your life is the only sure way to know you will be able to withstand the floods when the storms come.

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## Hearing and Doing .... Matt 7:24-29

*Mat 7:13 "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.*

Knowing where to build is pointless if you don't build there.

Going to the doctor is pointless if you don't take the medicine he prescribes as he directs.

Hearing and doing, Listening and obeying are required.

Both the wise and the foolish man went through the storm.

God promised that if we hear and obey His voice, he would see us through the storm.

The circumstances of life are not important.

How we respond to them and react is vital.

When I listen and do what I hear,  
then I am being obedient to the one speaking.

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## Down From the Mountain .... Matt 8:1

*[1] When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.*

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