



THE JOURNEY THROUGH THE  
**SERMON** *on THE* **MOUNT**  
SESSION 6: MOTIVES OF THE HEART



**LifeGroups**  
Do Life Together

# New Hope Church

THE JOURNEY THROUGH SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

SESSION SIX: MOTIVES OF THE HEART

MATTHEW 6:1-18

## FOLLOW ALONG

Give to honor \_\_\_\_\_, not \_\_\_\_\_.

The Father knows \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_, you \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Him.

Prayer \_\_\_\_\_ our \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_.

## INTRODUCTION:

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 6:1-18.

What are some ways we can give to the needy, time or financially, that glorifies God and not ourselves?

What are some ways we can be real, and not wear that mask like the hypocrites?  
By breaking down the Lord's prayer, what stands out to you?

What is prayer & why do we do it?

Just like exercising takes time to build up strength, what are some ways we can get better at praying; In length and quality of conversation with the Lord?

How can we proactively prepare ourselves for when we fast and what things can we put in place to help?

## Going Deeper

In what ways can our actions reflect our true beliefs?

Can you provide instances where individuals contradict their statements through their conduct? Have you personally experienced this?

It is imperative for the followers of Christ to exercise genuine righteousness by obeying God solely for His sake. A considerable number of people perform good deeds without acknowledging the glory of Christ. However, the seasoned and devoted Christian has abandoned such a superficial approach to good deeds. As a Christian grows in their faith, they acknowledge their past hypocritical deeds and seek only to please God, rather than receiving admiration from others.

## Understanding

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATTHEW 6:5-15.

What is the type of prayer that Jesus instructed His audience to steer clear of? How can we recognize this kind of prayer in our lives?

In what way does the model prayer offer insight into the true nature of prayer?

Do your prayer sessions revolve around your personal desires and needs, or do they center on God and His magnificence?

The grace and mercy bestowed upon Christians through Christ Jesus are not only the basis of their giving, but also the foundation and support of their praying. Prayer is an invaluable blessing that serves as the main means by which Christ's disciples communicate with God. Through His Spirit, God conveys His message in His Word, and through His Spirit, His people respond to Him in prayer.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATT. 6:16-18.

To what extent are you acquainted with fasting? Do you include this in your routine or not? In what way does Jesus' instruction on this matter inspire you?

What are some incorrect ways of fasting that we may engage in today? What is the prize that Jesus assured in His teaching?

What are the particular blessings and advantages that you desire the most from God? What modifications do you need to implement based on what we learned today?

In Christian churches, many members give regularly and pray regularly, but fasting is practiced very little, if at all. We ought not turn fasting into a law that is forced upon the consciences of Christians. However, fasting is a good gift that is useful in the Christian's process of sanctification. When properly understood, Christians will be attracted to it because they will see it as a means to grow in godliness and worship of the one true and living God. In this passage, Jesus recaptured these useful disciplines that had been corrupted, abused, misused. They were originally intended for the good of man to draw near to God, but they were being used for self-promotion.

## **APPLICATION**

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Do you find yourself more worried about impressing those around you with your religious devotion than you are about pleasing God? What needs to change that you might be focused on God?

How does a focus on God over other people lead us to better relationships with others in the church?

How might living in a way that is focused on pleasing God and not other people give you opportunities to have gospel conversations with others?

# PRAYER

Close in prayer asking God to lead you to practice giving, prayer, and fasting not for the approval of men but for the glory of God. Thank God that He has given these practices as a means of communing with Him in daily life.

# COMMENTARY

## MATTHEW 6:1-18

6:1 Jesus did not prohibit public acts of righteousness, but he warned that the motivation for such acts is more important than the bare fact of performing them. All such deeds must be done for God's glory, not human reputation. Those who seek human acclaim when performing good works will receive no heavenly reward. In Mt 6:2-18, Jesus supplies general principles for performing righteous acts.

6:2-4 The words whenever you give assume that disciples will regularly assist needy people. The prohibition don't sound a trumpet stems from the fact that the offering chests in the temple (shofar chests or trumpet chests) were trumpet-shaped with a wide opening where coins were deposited and a winding, ever-narrower funnel that, at its narrowest point, exits into the chest. This arrangement prevented thieves from sticking their hands into the chest (Sheqal. 2:1; 6:1,5). Thus, "sounding the trumpet" is likely a reference to tossing coins noisily into the trumpet-shaped coffer and thereby calling attention to one's generosity. Jesus described such conduct as hypocritical. The word hypocrites (Gk hupocrite-s) originally referred to actors who performed in Greek or Roman theaters. The hypocrites to whom Jesus referred are spiritual actors who pretend to have piety in order to win human approval. The instructions about the left hand and the right hand prohibit a person from celebrating personal acts of righteousness. Give liberally, but never dwell on the fact that you do so.

6:5 Standing in the synagogues (gathering places for Jewish worship) or on the street corners when praying ensured that many people saw the hypocrites praying, but Jesus taught that God has no regard for such actions.

6:6 A private room (Gk *tameion*) was a room that did not have doors or windows to the building's exterior. Closing the door granted total privacy. Since the true disciple prays for a heavenly rather than a human audience, privacy is ideal for genuine prayer. Jesus described the Father as the one who is in secret. God is ever-present. The disciple can encounter him in the most obscure locations. Jesus's words do not prohibit public prayers—which are encouraged in the church (see 1Co 14:26).

6:7 The babbling of Gentiles may refer to the meaningless gibberish that appears in Greek magical papyri. Like the familiar "abracadabra," these formulas were nonsensical combinations of sounds that were believed to have special power. Ancient texts show that Jews sometimes embraced these practices.

6:8 Genuine and effective prayers don't need to be long prayers.

6:9 By commanding his disciples to pray like this rather than simply "pray this," Jesus demonstrated that this prayer was offered as a model rather than a mantra to be recited. The first person plural pronoun *Our* implies that Jesus intended this prayer to be a model for corporate prayer, i.e., a prayer for when disciples gather as a group. This confirms that Mt 6:5 was not intended to prohibit disciples from praying together publicly in the synagogue or other gatherings but instead prohibited prayers that were motivated by religious showmanship. *Your name be honored as holy* suggests that Jesus expected his disciples to live righteous lives that honor rather than profane God's name (5:16; Lv 22:31-32). This is an important precondition for successful prayer.

6:10 In light of parallels with contemporary Jewish prayers and Jesus's teaching that the kingdom of God is a present reality but also awaits a fuller future consummation, the petition *your kingdom come* has a present and a future focus. The petition asks that disciples submit more fully to God's will as subjects of his reign through Jesus. We should daily pray for the future consummation of God's rule in which he will reign fully and completely over the world.

6:11 Daily bread was the amount of bread necessary to survive for a day. The request is reminiscent of Pr 30:8-9. Jesus wanted his disciples to live in a state of constant dependence on God and his provision.

6:12 The Greek grammar indicates that the disciple prays for forgiveness from God only after having first expressed forgiveness to others.

6:13 Do not bring us into temptation. As James makes clear, God does not tempt anyone (Jms 1:13). Moreover, God certainly permits his people to undergo temptation. The idea is "do not let us fall to temptation" or "do not abandon us to temptation." According to Paul, though believers experience temptation, they do not have to yield to it. For God provides "a way out" (1Co 10:13).

6:14-15 God forgives those who are truly repentant. True repentance results in a willingness to forgive others.

6:16-18 They make their faces unattractive refers to the Jewish practice of smearing ashes on the face and wearing grim expressions during times of fasting. Although these acts originally expressed true repentance, hypocrites adopted them as a mask of false piety.



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