

THE WAY OF THE KING

A STUDY OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

**PRACTICING
RIGHTEOUSNESS
RIGHTEOUSLY**

— MATTHEW 6:1-6, 16-18 —

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“Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

— vs 1

“There may be a special temptation to which those who are zealous for holy living can fall prey: retaining the outward shell of spiritual life; emphasizing the importance of certain supposed ‘marks of grace,’ but lacking the power and grace of God. Many Christians begin well in their quest for holy lives, as the Pharisees did, but become ensnared by their desire to have a reputation before men rather than God.”

— Sinclair Ferguson

“We tend to think of sin as we see it in rags and in the gutters of life. We look at a drunkard, poor fellow, and we say, there is sin. But that is not the essence of sin. To have a real picture and a true understanding of sin, you must look at some great saint, some unusually devout and devoted man, look at him there on his knees in the very presence of God. Even there self is intruding itself, and the temptation is for him to think about himself, to think pleasantly and pleasurable about himself and to really be worshiping himself rather than God. That, not the other, is the true picture of sin. The other is sin, of course, but there you do not see it at its acme, you do not see it in its essence.”

— Martin Lloyd-Jones

*“Thus, when you
give to the needy,
sound no trumpet
before you, as
the hypocrites do
in the synagogues
and in the streets,
that they may be
praised by others.*

— vs 2

“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the LORD your God.”

— Leviticus 19:9-10

“For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield, but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat.”

— Exodus 23:10-11

“Take care lest there be an unworthy thought in your heart and you say, ‘The seventh year, the year of release is near,’ and your eye look grudgingly on your poor brother, and you give him nothing, and he cry to the LORD against you, and you be guilty of sin. You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.’”

— Deuteronomy 15:9-11

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*“And when you
fast, do not
look gloomy like
the hypocrites,
for they disfigure
their faces
that their fasting
may be seen
by others.*

— vs 16

“We are tempted to wear a different mask and play a different role according to each occasion. This is not reality but play-acting, which is the essence of hypocrisy. Some people weave ‘round themselves such a tissue of lies that they can no longer tell which part of them is real and which is make-believe.”

— D.A. Carson

*Truly, I say to you,
they have received
their reward.*

— vs 2

*Truly, I say to you,
they have received
their reward.*

— vs 5

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they have received
their reward.*

— vs 16

*But when you
give to the
needy, do not let
your left hand
know what your
right hand is
doing, so that
your giving may
be in secret.*

— vv 3-4

“Self-consciousness can quickly become self-righteousness.
When you are self-conscious in doing what is right, you are in
danger of becoming smug — if not also obnoxious.”

— R.T. Kendall

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*But when you
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your room and
shut the door
and pray to
your Father
who is in secret.*

— vs 6

“The essence of the biblical teaching on sin is that it is essentially a disposition. It is a state of heart. I suppose we can sum it up by saying that sin is ultimately self-worship and self-adulation; and our Lord shows (what to me is an alarming and terrifying thing) that this tendency on our part to self-adulation is something that follows us even into the very presence of God.”

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— vs 6

*But when you
fast, anoint your
head and wash
your face, that
your fasting may
not be seen
by others but by
your Father
who is in secret.*

— vv 17-18

“Show what you are tempted to hide, hide what you are tempted to show.”

— F.F. Bruce

*And your Father
who sees in secret
will reward you.*

— vs 4

*And your Father
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will reward you.*

— vs 6

*And your Father
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— vs 18

“It is so easy to hide this hypocrisy, yet so difficult to deal with it. It is deep-rooted in the human heart. We recognize it in our own response to praise or criticism. We might modestly say all the right ‘spiritual’ things when people praise our service, but inwardly drink it in like thirsty men. We might receive criticism with apparent humility, yet inwardly seethe with resentment and determine never to forget the hurt we have received. In either case, we forget that the only thing that matters is what God thinks.”

— Sinclair Ferguson

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