

NOON BIBLE STUDY: MATTHEW 6 (PART 3)

THE FIRST HALF OF MATTHEW 6 SPEAKS TO WHAT MANY WOULD CONSIDER "SPIRITUAL LIFE" ADDRESSING RIGHTEOUS ACTS LIKE PRAYING AND FASTING. THE SECOND HALF OF THE CHAPTER ADDRESSES WHAT SOME WOULD CALL "PRACTICAL LIFE" AS IT SPEAKS ABOUT MONEY AND POSSESSIONS. BUT AS WE WILL DISCOVER, BEING A DISCIPLE OF JESUS CHRIST PREPARING FOR AND LIVING IN LIGHT OF GOD'S COMING KINGDOM, ALL OF LIFE IS SPIRITUAL.

MATTHEW 6:19-21 - TREASURE

- HOW DO YOU KNOW YOU TREASURE SOMETHING?
- WHICH REWARD ARE WE LIVING FOR?
- HOW DO YOU "STORE UP TREASURE ON EARTH?" HOW DO YOU "STORE UP TREASURE IN HEAVEN?"
- WHAT ARE THINGS THAT WILL LAST FOREVER? WHAT ARE THINGS THAT WILL NOT?

WE HAVE MANY USAGES OF "REWARD" IN MATTHEW'S GOSPEL. JESUS IS SPEAKING ON SOMETHING THAT IS VERY COMMON IN THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE - REWARD, TREASURE, VALUE, GETTING SOMETHING OUT OF WHAT YOU'RE DOING ETC. HERE'S A FEW EXAMPLES:

MATTHEW 5:12 - "REJOICE AND BE GLAD, FOR YOUR **REWARD** IN HEAVEN IS GREAT; FOR IN THE SAME WAY THEY PERSECUTED THE PROPHETS WHO WERE BEFORE YOU.

MATTHEW 5:46 "FOR IF YOU LOVE THOSE WHO LOVE YOU, WHAT **REWARD** DO YOU HAVE? DO NOT EVEN THE TAX COLLECTORS DO THE SAME?

MATTHEW 6:1-4 - "BEWARE OF PRACTICING YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BEFORE MEN TO BE NOTICED BY THEM; OTHERWISE YOU HAVE NO **REWARD** WITH YOUR FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN. 2 "SO WHEN YOU GIVE TO THE POOR, DO NOT SOUND A TRUMPET BEFORE YOU, AS THE HYPOCRITES DO IN THE SYNAGOGUES AND IN THE STREETS, SO THAT THEY MAY BE HONORED BY MEN. TRULY I SAY TO YOU, THEY HAVE THEIR **REWARD** IN FULL. 3 - "BUT WHEN YOU GIVE TO THE POOR, DO NOT LET YOUR LEFT HAND KNOW WHAT YOUR RIGHT HAND IS DOING, 4 SO THAT YOUR GIVING WILL BE IN SECRET; AND YOUR FATHER WHO SEES WHAT IS DONE IN SECRET WILL **REWARD** YOU.

MATTHEW 6:5-6 - WHEN YOU PRAY, YOU ARE NOT TO BE LIKE THE HYPOCRITES; FOR THEY LOVE TO STAND AND PRAY IN THE SYNAGOGUES AND ON THE STREET CORNERS SO THAT THEY MAY BE SEEN BY MEN. TRULY I SAY TO YOU, THEY HAVE THEIR **REWARD** IN FULL. 6 "BUT YOU, WHEN YOU PRAY, GO INTO YOUR INNER ROOM, CLOSE YOUR DOOR AND PRAY TO YOUR FATHER WHO IS IN SECRET, AND YOUR FATHER WHO SEES WHAT IS DONE IN SECRET WILL **REWARD** YOU.

MATTHEW 6:16-18 - WHENEVER YOU FAST, DO NOT PUT ON A GLOOMY FACE AS THE HYPOCRITES DO, FOR THEY NEGLECT THEIR APPEARANCE SO THAT THEY WILL BE NOTICED BY MEN WHEN THEY ARE FASTING. TRULY I SAY TO YOU, THEY HAVE THEIR **REWARD** IN FULL. 17 "BUT YOU, WHEN YOU FAST, ANOINT YOUR HEAD AND WASH YOUR FACE 18 SO THAT YOUR FASTING WILL NOT BE NOTICED BY MEN, BUT BY YOUR FATHER WHO IS IN SECRET; AND YOUR FATHER WHO SEES WHAT IS DONE IN SECRET WILL **REWARD** YOU.

MATTHEW 10:41-42 - HE WHO RECEIVES A PROPHET IN THE NAME OF A PROPHET SHALL RECEIVE A PROPHET'S **REWARD**; AND HE WHO RECEIVES A RIGHTEOUS MAN IN THE NAME OF A RIGHTEOUS MAN SHALL RECEIVE A RIGHTEOUS MAN'S **REWARD**. 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**."

HEAVEN IS A SAFE STOREHOUSE:

ANY OF THE ETERNAL THINGS WE ARE ENTRUSTING IN GOD'S CARE ARE SAFE AND SECURE IN GOD'S HEAVENLY STOREHOUSE. IN SCRIPTURE, APART FROM THE DWELLING PLACE OF GOD, HEAVEN IS SPOKEN OF AS THE PLACE WHERE ETERNAL THINGS ARE KEPT, AWAY FROM EARTHLY TARNISHING AND CORRUPTION. THESE REWARDS AND TREASURES ARE REGISTERED AND KEPT IN HEAVEN AND THEN BROUGHT TO THE RESTORED EARTH AT THE RETURN OF JESUS. HERE IS HOW REVELATION ENDS:

REVELATION 22:12 - "BEHOLD, I AM COMING QUICKLY, AND MY REWARD IS WITH ME, TO RENDER TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO WHAT HE HAS DONE.

MATTHEW 6:22-23 - VISION

THIS SPEAKS TO ATTENTION, VISION AND WHAT A PERSON IS FOCUSED ON. IS WHAT YOU ARE FOCUSED ON IN LIFE BRINGING IN GOOD THINGS TO YOUR HEART OR EVIL THINGS? THIS VERSE BEING SPOKEN IN THE CONTEXT OF MONEY AND MATERIAL THINGS ADDRESSES THE HUMAN TENDENCY TO BE PREOCCUPIED WITH WORK, MONEY, WORLDLY GOALS, ETC. WHILE THESE THINGS HAVE THEIR PLACE IN LIFE, TO HAVE A MISORDERED PLACED LEADS TO EVIL HEARTS.

"MATERIALISM DOES NOT RELATE TO HOW MUCH WE ACTUALLY POSSESS, BUT TO WHAT OUR ATTITUDE TO MATERIAL THINGS IS." (CHARLES PRICE, FOCUS ON THE BIBLE: MATTHEW", PAGE 138)

MATTHEW 6:24 - MASTER

MOST OF US WOULDN'T HAVE ADMITTED THAT WE SERVE WEALTH AS A MASTER. THAT'S SOMEONE ELSE WE KNOW, THAT'S THE PROBLEM OF THE UBER WEALTHY OR HIGH POWERED CEOS. BUT THE TRUTH IS, JESUS TAKES HIS LISTENERS ON A JOURNEY WHICH LEADS TO HONEST ASSESSMENT. HE DOESN'T LEAD WITH "YOU ARE SERVING WEALTH AS A MASTER" - HE INSTEAD ASKS "WHAT DO YOU VALUE/TREASURE?" HIS FOLLOW UP IS, "WHERE IS YOUR FOCUS AND HOW IS THAT FOCUS AFFECTING YOU?" AND THEN HE LANDS WITH THE STRAIGHT FORWARD TRUTH - YOU CANNOT SERVE TWO MASTERS. WHAT BECOMES OUR MASTER BEGINS WITH WHAT WE TREASURE/VALUE.

THE PROGRESSION OF THIS SECTION IS *TREASURE* → *VISION* → *MASTER*.

SO WHAT IF YOU DECIDE TO MAKE JESUS OUR MASTER AND TREASURE AND FOCUS ON ETERNAL THINGS - HOW SHOULD WE FEEL ABOUT THE VERY REAL NEEDS WE HAVE IN THIS LIFE? JESUS ADDRESSES THIS IN THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT AS HE STARTS THE NEXT SECTION BY SAYING "FOR THIS REASON I SAY TO YOU..."

MATTHEW 6:25-34 - SEEK THE KINGDOM, DON'T WORRY ABOUT THIS LIFE

INSTEAD OF SEEKING THE THINGS OF THIS WORLD, SEEK GOD'S KINGDOM. INSTEAD OF WORRYING LIKE SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T KNOW GOD AS FATHER (GENTILES), TRUST THAT GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF YOU AND BE REMINDED OF THAT WHEN YOU SEE THE BIRDS, GRASS AND FLOWERS.

THERE ARE MANY CAUSES OF WORRY - BUT ONE QUESTION WE SHOULD ASK WHEN WORRIED IS "HOW CAN I TRUST GOD IN THIS AREA".

BELIEVING IN AND LIVING FOR GOD'S COMING KINGDOM IS NOT SOME TRIVIAL MORALE BOOSTER OR A WAY TO GIVE US SOME PEP IN OUR STEP - IT IS A PARADIGM CHANGING REALITY THAT RECOLORS AND REFRAMES AND REPOSITIONS ALL OF LIFE. THINGS THAT USED TO MATTER, DON'T AND THINGS THAT USED TO NOT MATTER NOW DO. IT AFFECTS OUR EMOTIONAL LIFE, OUR FINANCIAL BOTTOM LINE, OUR DAILY CHOICES AND OUR LIFE DREAMS AND GOALS. MAY WE SEEK FIRST GOD'S KINGDOM AND KNOW JESUS AS THE GOOD MASTER HE IS.