

## YOU HAVE HEARD THAT IT WAS SAID: GIVING FREELY

Sunday message from September 11th, 2022

~ Notes & Reflections ~

[Matthew 6.1-4](#)

- **Beginning in chapter 6, Jesus shifts his focus to challenge not just what we think, but how we act. He challenges conventional religious living and practices.**
  - ❖ Read [Matthew 6.1-4](#). What conventional practices does Jesus challenge and how?
- **“Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them.” (Matthew 6.1)**
  - ❖ This verse is the thesis statement for this section of the Sermon on the Mount and all following teachings need to be read through this lens.
  - ❖ How might a warning against action for the purpose of being seen by others affect the teachings of giving, prayer and fasting? How might these practices look different when approached with differing motivations?
  - ❖ What is the importance of what Jesus didn't say (“Don't practice your righteousness,” “Don't practice alongside others” nor “Live as a hermit.”)?
- **Spiritual formation is “the process of being transformed in the image of Christ for the sake of others.”**  
~ M. Robert Mulholland, Jr. in [Invitation to a Journey](#)
  - ❖ Our spiritual practices (like giving, prayer and fasting) help us to be formed in the image of Christ, through a deep heart transformation.
- **Jesus moves us away from the superficiality of religious morality and behavior modification to deep movements of the heart.**
- **Going deeper is not learning Greek verbs or memorizing the Pentateuch. Going deeper is slowing down and opening our hearts to let God do his work inside of us.**
  - ❖ How would you describe the process of discipleship or growing in God? How do you respond to Nate's definition (above)? How might these definitions impact daily life?
  - ❖ Read [Matthew 22.36-40](#) and [Matthew 7.21-23](#) ([7.17-27](#) for context). Considering Jesus' words in these two passages, how would you define growth in Jesus?
  - ❖ What has your pursuit of going deeper with God looked like? How might you have been “disciplined into superficiality”? Where have you grown? Where have you gotten stuck?
- **Our motivation for our spiritual practices is to create space to open our hearts for God to form us, to become more aware of his always-presence.**
  - ❖ Enjoying being seen and known is part of what it means to be human, but this should not be our motivation.
  - ❖ How does a motivation based on increased awareness of God's presence, openness to God, relating with God, allowing Him to change you affect your spiritual practices?
- **Giving, from a desire to love God and others, is a spiritual practice that God can use to form our hearts.**
  - ❖ What does giving from this motivation look like?
  - ❖ How might God change us through giving? What truths can this kind of giving remind us of?
  - ❖ How does Jesus' example of giving his life out of love for us influence our giving?
- What statements or aspects of this message bring comfort? Which bring conviction? Take some time to talk to God about what bubbles up as you read/hear and reflect on this message.
- What might God be inviting you into as a response to this message/reflection on giving freely?