

“The Happy Heart of Giving!”

MATTHEW Chapter 6:1-4

- In **Matthew chapter 6** Jesus will warn us about the dangers of hypocrisy (Matt 6:2,5,16). A hypocrite is not a person who falls short of his high ideals, or who occasionally sins, because all of us experience these failures.

- The Greek word translated *hypocrite* originally meant *"an actor who wears a mask."* These religious leaders practiced their religion for the applause of men, not for the reward of God.

- **In this chapter, Christ reveals three areas of hypocrisy practiced by the Pharisees:**

(1) Their hypocrisy in Giving (Matt. 6:1-4)

(2) Their hypocrisy in Praying (Matt. 6:5-15)

(3) Their hypocrisy in Fasting (Matt. 6:16-18)

> (v1-2) BEWARE OF GIVING WITH A WRONG HEART!

(v1-2) - “Take heed” is *prosecho* in Greek, which means *beware* or pay attention to it, especially in the sense of being on guard.

- **“Charitable deeds”** – NIV refers to this as **“acts of righteousness.”** Religion can be used as a big show through appearance or performance. Unfortunately, some try to look religious, holy, or righteous by the uniform they wear. Observe the outfits worn by religious leaders today, from the Pope to Dali Lama. FYI, both are called “His Holiness.”

- The question I ask myself is **“Did Jesus wear a particular garb to appear holy?”** The answer is no. Secondly, they like to put on a “really big show!”

- They proclaim, “Touch not God’s anointed!” These hypocrites’ prey upon the weak, the sick, and the elderly promising healing and fortune asking them to give their “seed faith” money to their ministry.

- Peter warns us in 2 Peter 2:1-3 - ***But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them-bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.***

- **Three aspects of giving with a WRONG HEART:**

(1) Sins cannot be purchased away - Pope Leo the Great declared, **“By prayer we seek to appease God, by fasting we extinguish the lust of the flesh, and by alms we redeem our sins.”**

- **Redemption is only through the blood of Jesus Christ, Revelation 5:9-10 - “You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us* kings* and priests to our God; and we* shall reign on the earth.”**

- Peter tells us in 1 Peter 1:18-19 - ***knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.***

(2) The “power of God” cannot be purchased - Let’s turn to Acts Ch. 8:14-25

(3) Self-glory or self-exaltation is not permitted in our giving – Turn to Acts Ch. 5:1-11.

(v3-4) LET’S HAVE A HAPPY HEART FOR GIVING!

- The **RIGHT HEART** – When it comes to giving God does not need our gifts or finances, however, money can become a god within our lives.

- Jesus said in Matthew 6:24 - *"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon (money)."*

- In 1 Timothy 6:10 we are told - *For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

- Paul explains our R.O.I. (return on investment) when we give in Philippians 4:17 – *Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account*

- How to give with the right heart?

(1) **BE WILLING!** – Jesus said in Luke 6:38 – *“Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”*

(2) **BE FAITHFUL!** - Luke 16:10-12 - *He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own?*

(3) **BE CHEERFUL!** - 2 Cor 9:6-7 - *He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. (Notice the R.O.I.)*

(4) **BE CONSISTENT!** – 1 Cor. 16:2 – *On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper*

(5) **BE LOVING!** – Acts 2:41-47; 4:32-34.

- How much do Christians give? The *tithe or tenth* of one’s income has been the customary offering, this according to Abraham’s offering to Melchizedek in Genesis Ch. 14, also referenced in Hebrews Ch. 7.

- Jacob offered a tenth in Genesis Ch. 28. The Law of Moses prescribed tithing in some detail in Lev 27:30-32; Num 18:21-32; Deut 12:5-7,11-12,17-18.

- Malachi 3:10 says, *“Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,” says the LORD of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.”*

- The New Testament does not give a calculation for our offering, the tithe would be considered our minimum, but now we are to prayerfully consider our offerings to the Lord through the inspiration that *God gave His only begotten Son* for our salvation.

Our alms, acts of righteousness, or charitable deeds are not to be done through legalism, but through love for God.

- A final thought: Matthew 25:14-30