

**MISSED YOU.....Back from Vacation and
Look what God did while we were gone-NEW BALANCE 95K-Next Week**

**THEME OF OUR TEXT TODAY....SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES THAT ARE GOOD,
BUT "ONLY" IF DONE WITH THE RIGHT HEART, with the RIGHT Motive!**

**Jesus is first going to teach us about "giving" and "praying" with THE
RIGHT "MOTIVE" behind both of these good habits!**

OUR TEXT FOR TODAY...STEVE: FROM BIBLE

Matt. 6:1 "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. ⁵ "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. ⁷ "And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. ⁸ "So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ 'Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ 'Give us this day our daily bread. ¹² 'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³ 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

[For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]

¹⁴ "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ "But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

LET'S DO A LITTLE MORE UNPACKING OF OUR TEXT IN MATTHEW....

POINT 1: Jesus is not attacking good works, like giving to the poor, He's attacking **good works done for bad reasons.**

He doesn't say: "Beware of giving." BUT He begs the question, "Are you showing off or doing what you do to be noticed *by man.*" **STOP IT** ☺

Jesus is making sure we examine our hearts and make sure we have the right **MOTIVE, to do EVERYTHING to the Glory of GOD!**

We can do this by surrendering to H/S and asking THREE simple questions

1. Who am I trying to impress?...**The "right answer is NO ONE** ☺
2. Would I still give, even if *no one else* will know or find out?
3. Am I more excited about God's smile or people's approval?

ADDITIONAL POINT: REAL practice of RIGHTEOUSNESS IS QUIET

"Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing..."

Jesus is using humor because He knows, you don't have two brains and is simply saying...**Don't narrate your obedience to God, to Others.**

AND, Don't: hint, post online or angle for praise from others when you do good!

POINT 2: Jesus is not attacking public prayer, ONLY praying in a manner so that others might *applaud your prayers...*

STEVE STORY: Praying at home in marriage...

NUMBER TWO: First Time Praying in Public with church band...

POINT 3: Pray as if God is the ONLY One there and the only One listening

Public prayer is found and condoned all though out the New Testament Church along with Public Worship...beginning in the Book of Acts I'll give you just **TWO** examples...

Acts 12:5 So Peter was kept in the prison, but prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God.

Acts 12:11 When Peter came to himself, he said, “Now I know for sure that the Lord has sent forth His angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting.” And when he realized *this*, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying.

SO WHAT'S UP WITH THE “REWARD PROMISE” OF JESUS?

Matthew 6:3–5 “But when you give... **OR** ...when you pray... your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

Jesus doesn't say where or when He will reward you, but you can by faith be sure He will reward you far greater than ANY benefit you could get from the world!

IN OTHER WORDS, “God will reward you and you can take it to the bank ☺.”

Not always with money, Not always with comfort. But reward you surely...

Sometimes the reward is: Peace, Joy, or greater FRUIT from the Holy Spirit! OR it might be deeper closeness to our heavenly Father, OR IT COULD BE, the freedom from pride, OR deeper trust and faith in Jesus!!!!

While the Earth may give applause, Jesus promises an “abundant life”...

Described as closer intimacy with Him!!!!

OR IT MIGHT BE... “Future” REWARDS IN HEAVEN (undefined) THAT MIGHT REQUIRE YOU TO HAVE MORE FAITH IN JESUS NOW IN THIS LIFE THAN THE IMMEDIATE GRATIFICATION that stokes your ego....

You can't escape REWARD THEOLOGY in the Bible!

Rom. 14:10 *But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.*

2Cor. 5:10 *For we must all appear before the **judgment seat of Christ**, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

1Cor. 3:10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. ¹¹ For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³ each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. ¹⁴ If any man's work which he has built on it remains, **he will receive a reward.** ¹⁵ If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

POINT 4: OUR HEAVENLY FATHER DOESN'T MISS A THING YOU DO and he is the most important person you should be seeking to please on earth!

"Your Father who sees in secret..."

He sees YOUR *unseen* kindness...YOUR *unseen* service, YOUR *unseen* faithfulness, YOUR *unseen* obedience, YOUR *unseen* thankfulness...
And watch this....YOUR UNSEEN FORGIVENESS!

We live in a world that says: "Be seen." While Jesus says: **"Be sincere."**

We live in a world that says: "Build your platform." While Jesus says:

" How about you Build your prayer life to me."

We live in a world that says: "Prove yourself special." While Jesus says:

"Your Father already sees you and approves of you." ***And that is enough!***

FOR NEXT WEEK...

HOW TO FORGIVE OTHERS, Especially when they don't deserve it.... ☺

Here is just a sample... of WHY Forgiveness is SO IMPORTANT:

1. **We all struggle with forgiving others when they hurt us....BUT, forgiveness is NOT permission to hurt me again!**
2. **"Unforgiveness, doesn't punish the one who hurt you...it poisons YOU, the one who's holding onto unforgiveness!"**

3. You don't forgive because someone deserves it. You forgive because YOU can't afford to stay bound to a cancer that will destroy YOU.
4. You will never fully experience the forgiveness and intimacy of God, as long as you hold onto unforgiveness of others...You will only see the forgiveness of God through your own measure of forgiveness of others!!!!
5. Forgiveness of SELF is dependent on your forgiveness of others!

COMMUNION...

Father forgive them for they know NOT what they are doing....

Did anyone ask for forgiveness?

Did anyone deserve forgiveness?