

Matt. 6:16 *“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.***

Let me First go back to the rewards God has for you in heaven as I know from experience of many years that some of you STILL STUGGLE with the concept of God REWARDING you in heaven.....

A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON REWARD THEOLOGY....

Steve explain the reward we get on earth serving God in ANY place...

Explain the many parables on faithfulness and rewards taught in parables and how talents given can be expanded to serve Jesus MORE!!!!

What if rewards in heaven is GREATER opportunity to serve God on a NEW heaven and NEW earth.....FOREVER?

What if rewards are GREATER opportunity for intimacy with Jesus in heaven just like Peter, James and John?

What if rewards in heaven is a closer seat to Jesus when all people and angels are worshipping God....Invited by Jesus to front row?

OR the 5 different crowns the Bible teaches as rewards for believers, that you just might cast at the feet of Jesus as the means to greater worship? 😊

Jesus has just given us the THIRD and final Spiritual Disciplines that His Jewish audience were used to practicing....

Spiritual Disciplines that as important NOW as they were back then

1. Prayer and Fasting are typically found together
2. **STEVE: Explain what happens with your body when you fast**
3. Is Fasting ONLY with Food?

YOU CAN - Temporarily Fast with Food, Fast from the news, Fast from things that take money, Fast from your favorite thing, Fast from Sex if you are married!!!! 😊 Fast from anything that will remind you to replace it with time with God to prove to yourself that God is FIRST IN YOUR LIFE!!!!

Matt. 6:19 *“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ **“But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven,** where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; ²¹ **for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. What if your treasure in heaven is intimacy with Jesus on earth, cultivated by Sunday attendance and worship of God?***

²¹ for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Look again at these THREE verses and tell me what the context and best meaning is in light of this portion of Scripture that comes before and after it

ANSWER:

NUMBER ONE: God desires that we choose an intimate personal relationship with Him as our FIRST PRIORITY in this life, seeking after Him with all eyes toward an eternal perspective, that is enjoyed in THIS LIFE...This is NOT only treasure in preparation for heaven BUT is treasure right now on earth, with the ABUNDANT LIFE PROMISED BY JESUS!

This is exactly what the early Church was doing!!!!

Acts 2:41-47 *So then, those who had received his (Peter’s word) were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. ⁴² They were continually devoting themselves to the **apostles’ teaching** (WORD) and to **fellowship**, to **the breaking of bread** (Lord’s Supper) and to **prayer**...⁴⁷ **praising God** and **having favor with all the people**. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

1. The FOUR primary ways we enjoy intimacy with God...and make HIM OUR TREASURE ON EARTH are:

- a. **Prayer (And Fasting)** (Remember the Lord’s Prayer we just moved from and how forgiveness of others is our tangible means of expressing LOVE FOR OTHERS and keeps us CLOSE TO OUR HEAVENLY FATHER with “Daily” and unceasing dialog with God **REMEMBER:** (Prayer is BOTH Personal and Corporate))
- b. **Word** Personal time invested in studying God’s Word, Daily...alone, with our spouse and children **AND CORPORATELY**

- c. **The Lord's Supper** Regularly partaking of the Lord's Supper as the Body of Christ unites us together as a family and ONE Body in Christ
- d. **Praising God, IE. WORSHIP** Our Heavenly Father is continually seeking after those who will Worship Him in "Spirit and Truth"!

POINT: Correct Worship is never about you and your preferences, but about your HEART FOR GOD...making everything you do and say about

God...Making your attendance on the Lord's Day MORE about Him and His Desire and LESS about you and YOUR preferences.....

WE gather together as one body to praise and worship God AS

PARTICIPANTS, NOT just observers! For God inhabits the praises of His people

NUMBER TWO: These verses about Money and the love of money...what it provides, what it consumes from us, how it robs us of quality time with God and how it rules every human heart to the detriment of our time with God, IS OUR GREATEST COMPETITOR OF OUR RELATIONSHIP AND INTIMACY WITH GOD!

Look at the verses that IMMEDIATELY follow the text on ²¹ for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matt. 6:22 "The eye is the lamp of the body; (Competition in our affection with God begins with what/or Who we **look at and focus our life on**) *so then if your eye is clear*, (Focused on God and our relationship with Him) *your whole body will be full of light*. (Perhaps this is why Jesus described Himself as the "TRUE" Light of the World) ²³ *"But if your eye is bad*, (IE. Focused on the lust of your flesh and anything else pulling us from God) *your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!*

Matt. 6:24 **"No one can serve two masters; (God and wealth) for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.**

This last verse ties right back to verse 19 and OUR TREASURE will be **"Followed"** by our HEART....

SPECIAL SERVICE TODAY!...ONLINE ENCOURAGED TO JOIN US AT HOME
Worship when done right (In Spirit and Truth) IS PRAYER and GIVING
SOMETHING SPECIAL TO GOD!

Additionally, praying together UNITES our hearts together as ONE Body in Christ!

If you have ever said, “I didn’t get anything out of the service today” (after a church service)....YOUR MOTIVE for coming to church MIGHT BE A PROBLEM!**GOD IS LOOKING TO SEE WHAT YOU CAME TO GIVE HIM ON SUNDAY MORNINGS.....**

1. **God is seeking after your prayers today**, specifically...Your desire for what GOD’S WILL IS FOR YOUR LIFE!
2. **FOR SURE: God is seeking after your worship today**, so that you will draw closer to His desire for intimacy with YOU, and with the Holy Spirit who lives inside every believer

TO THE WOMAN AT THE WELL.....JESUS SAID, “The Father is seeking after those who worship in SPIRIT AND TRUTH”

John 4:20-26 *“Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”* ²¹ *Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.”* ²² *“You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.”* ²³ *“But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.”* ²⁴ *“God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”* ²⁵ *The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.”* ²⁶ *Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am He.”*

Did you come to get fed from the Word of God? GREAT

Matt. 4:4 *But He (Jesus) answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"*

Deut. 8:3 *"He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.*

Did you come to give your worship to God? GREAT!

Did you come to GIVE and surrender YOUR WILL/your HEART to God THROUGH PRAYER?THAT'S EVEN GREATER!