

Study 6

The Love for the needy
JESUS
commanded

1. What is the similar message of Christ found in these verses: Matthew 5:12; 5:46; 6:1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 16, 18; 10:42?
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Life matters, teaches Jesus, because one day we will all stand before God and account for how we have lived. Christ teaches that on this Day of Judgment God will reward or punish for all eternity based on what we do now in this life. We have already seen that the criteria God uses to judge a person is how they treat others, especially their enemies! Now we will see that Christ taught that how we responded to the needs around us is a major part in how God will deal with us for eternity.

2. When Christ taught about being “rewarded in heaven”, could He have meant that we ‘earn’ our salvation from sin and adoption by God based on how we live?
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It appears that God’s judgment is in two stages. The first stage is the identification of those who are His (Revelation 20:11-13). This is the revealing of all those who are in the “Book of Life”. The second stage seems to be degrees of rewards or punishment based on what we have done (also Revelation 20:11-13). In Christ’s beatitudes He seems to be using the concept of ‘rewards’ in the sense of the second phase of God’s Judgment.

3. What is being described in 2Corinthians 5:10?
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4. Christ seems to make a really big issue about *Who* we are to impress. How is this reinforced in Matthew 6:1?
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5. Does Matthew 6:2-4 contradict Matthew 5:16? Explain.
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Prayer

Jesus addresses ‘public’ praying in Matthew 6:5. Praying in public is not about impressing those around you with how “spiritual” you are. It’s also not a competition- *he who prays the longest prayers wins!*

6. What kind of praying is the “best” kind of praying according to Jesus?
(Matthew 6:6)

Read Matthew 6:7. Notice what Jesus is commanding here-

- (i) **Do not use mindless phrases over and over again in your praying.**

(I was once in a prayer meeting where some very nervous young man used the expression “*Father Lord God*” in every sentence of his five minute prayer! This is mindless repetition.)

- (ii) **Do not pray like you don’t know God** (“*as the Gentiles do*”).

Christians are called to know the will of God and pray it! When we are uncertain about what God’s will we can be certain that His will is to pray for wisdom!

- (iii) **Do not pray long public prayers- one maybe two sentences is sufficient.** (“*for they think they will be heard for their many words*”)

Praying is not preaching.

The Disciples' Prayer

Perhaps the most famous prayer in the Bible is the one in Matthew 6:9-13.

7. Match the corresponding word with the concept of praying that Jesus taught in this passage-

Matthew 6: _ _	Protection :
Matthew 6: _ _	Forgiveness :
Matthew 6: _ _	Surrender and dedication :
Matthew 6: _ _	Provision :
Matthew 6: _ _	Direction :

8. According to Matthew 6:14-15, when will God forgive us?

9. Did Jesus teach that *fasting* would be an optional discipline for His followers based on Matthew 6:16-18? Explain. And, how would the type of fasting that Jesus described differ what the type of fasting that was going on in His day?

Amen.