Date: 17th September 2023  Passage: Matthew 6:1-6  Preacher: Andy Bruins

Sermon Summary

Having addressed how citizens of God’s Kingdom should apply the Law in their lives, Jesus now addresses our “acts of righteousness”. The connection between the two is that what is going on in our hearts is far more important than the actual obedience or the acts themselves.

Personal Application

Q What are some of the motives that people might have for doing good deeds? Do motives really matter as long as the good things get done?

Q Read v1. What is the principle that Jesus is teaching here?

Q What is the reward we will miss out on if we do things to be seen by men? (For more on rewards see Romans 2:6-10)

Q Read v2-6. What characterises the way that hypocrites give and pray? How are we to be different?

Q Is our giving and praying ultimately worthless if people know about it? Why / why not? (look up Acts 4:32-37 and Acts 4:23-31) What is Jesus really saying here about how we do these things?

Q What things are we most likely to be tempted to do to be seen by others? How can we safeguard our hearts against hypocrisy?
**Sermon Summary**

Here Jesus continues His teaching on Prayer. He has already made the point that when we pray we must be aware of who we're praying to: We should not pray to be noticed and heard by an audience; If that is a temptation then you should keep prayer restricted to your cupboard! Now He continues by giving us a model for prayer that reflects the values of His Kingdom.

**Personal Application**

Q Why do you think prayer is such a difficult discipline for most of us? What have you found helps?

Q Read v5-8. What characterises the prayers of a) hypocrites and b) pagans? Why does Jesus say we should we not pray the way they do?

Q Read Luke 18:1-8. How does this parable fit with what Jesus is teaching here?

Q Read v9-10. What 3 petitions does Jesus say we should make for our Father in Heaven? What do they mean? Why are these the priorities that we should have in our prayers?

Q Read v11-15. What 3 petitions does Jesus say we should make from our Father in Heaven? What do they mean and why are they so important?

Q Why is it so important that we don’t bear grudges and harbour bitterness towards others? How does the message of the Gospel help us to forgive others?
Jesus is still making the crucial point as we continue further into chapter 6, that outward religious acts only get a reward from men, and that what really matters (as far as the Kingdom of Heaven is concerned) is what is going on in your heart. And there is no part of our lives more prone to “heart problems” than that of possessions, wealth and money.

Q What kind of promises does wealth make to us? How do we see these promises preached in the world we live in?

Q Read v16-18. How and why do hypocrites fast? What is the right way to fast? What other “acts of righteousness” are we in danger of doing hypocritically?

Q Read v19-21. How do v19-20 sum up the importance of how we give, pray and fast (v2-18)?

Q What kinds of earthly treasure are we tempted to go after? Why is this foolish according to v19? How do we store up treasure in heaven? What happens to our hearts when we go for the wrong kind of treasure?

Q Read v22-23. What are “bad” eyes? (see Matthew 20:13-15 where the same word is translated as “envious” in v15 (NIV)). What happens when we turn our eyes away from Christ to material possessions?

Q Read v24. What is the decision Jesus is asking us to make? Why can’t we serve God and Money?