INTRODUCTION

In Matthew 6:1-18, Jesus takes the three chief acts of Jewish piety and he offers this warning.

“Be careful not to do your ‘acts of righteousness’ before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.”

WHY DO WE DO WHAT WE DO?

Is it for the applause of men or for the glory of God?

I. GIVING TO THE NEEDY.

Matthew 6:2-4

We are to give without calling attention to ourselves.

If you seek men’s applause you will have it, but no more.

Do you want your reward from men or from God?

II. PRAYER.

Matthew 6:5-15

Prayer is not a performance.

Jesus identifies two ways of praying that will have no reward.

- Pretentious Prayer – verses 5-6
- Meaningless Repetition – verses 7-8

How does this fit with Matthew 5:16?

“In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

There is no contradiction. It is all about who gets the glory.
Then Jesus gives us a model prayer to teach us how to pray.
**The Lord’s Prayer:**
- Our Father

There are three petitions for:
- God’s name – his honor and reputation.
- God’s kingdom – the advancement of his kingdom.
- God’s will – in our world and in our life.

There are 3 petitions for:
- Daily needs
- Forgiveness of sins
- Spiritual Victory – over temptation and the evil one.

Then he comes back to forgiveness once again. It is that important. Verses 14-15

**III. FASTING.**
*Matthew 6:16-18*

This is the third pillar of Jewish piety. Jesus expects us to fast – just like giving to the needy and praying.

It is the motivation Jesus is concerned about.

Why do we fast? We do it not for the applause of men, but to hear God speak.

**Conclusion**

What Jesus said about these three areas can apply to many other areas. Whose applause matters most – the applause of men or the applause of heaven?