

Sermon Reflections

Hypocrisy's Risk and Reward (Matthew 6:1-18)

Summary: Keep yourself from all hypocrisy by setting your sights on the unseen God and His reward.

1. Beware: Others' Estimation of You Tempts You toward Hypocrisy (v. 1)

- What is meant by “practicing your righteousness”? Knowing that you live *Coram Deo*, or, “Before the Face of God” and that your Father desires more than conformity in external conduct but rather internal heart change — how does that affect the manner in which you serve the Lord Jesus?
- What is it that distinguishes between a truly righteous deed devoted to God and a hypocritical deed devoted to one’s self? Do you take time to examine your motives in serving Jesus?

2. Are You Willing to Give if Only God Sees? (vv. 2-4)

- What is the definition of hypocrisy? Jesus teaches on three particular works. Can you identify other works (in your service to Jesus) that present an opportunity for hypocrisy? Any work can be done for one’s own glory. We must remain watchful, continually mortifying the sin of hypocrisy.
- What does Jesus mean when He commands us to not let the left hand know what the right hand is doing? Why does a stance of only giving anonymously miss the point?

3. Are You willing to Pray if Only God Hears? (vv. 5-15)

- In what way does Jesus counsel His people to fight hypocrisy in how they pray? Are your public prayers genuine rather than hypocritical in that they are merely an overflow of what you are already doing in private before God alone?
- Do you struggle in your private prayer life? Have you sought help from a mature brother or sister in this area?

4. Are You Willing to Fast if Only God Knows? (vv. 16-18)

- What is the purpose of fasting?
- In relation to giving, praying, and fasting, there is a contrast in the reward of the hypocrite who seeks the praise of men and the reward of the one who seeks after God. What are these rewards? What are some ways we can encourage ourselves and our brothers and sisters to keep our eyes on “things above,” and Jesus, our “exceeding great reward” (Genesis 15:1)?