

Jesus Uncut

“Meekness, Trust, and Mercy”

Introduction:

- A. Text before us as I see it, expands the teaching of Jesus on 3 beatitudes (Kingdom Values)

Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth. Matthew 5:5 NKJV—Meekness

Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:3 NKJV—Trust

Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy. Matthew 5:7 NKJV—Mercy

- B. Matthew 6:1-18 specifically warns readers to avoid religious pretense or showiness

- C. Context is key

1. Challenged to have exceeding righteousness
2. This text about the wrong kind of righteousness (trying to win approval or boasting of man)
3. General warning set out in Matthew 6:1

“Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Matthew 6:1 NKJV

Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: else ye have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. Matthew 6:1 ASV

4. Righteousness—dikaiosyne

- a. Paul—something imputed
- b. Matthew—something to be done

But Jesus answered and said to him, “Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he allowed Him. Matthew 3:15 NKJV

5. When practicing religious deeds (giving, praying, fasting) don’t do them to be seen.
 - a. If it’s an outward show—have your reward
 - b. If in secret—Father will reward

6. What about

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16 NKJV

- a. Matthew 5 is about whole character of Christian—Matthew 6 about religious practice
- b. Intentional attention seeking vs. inevitable witness

Three Major Lessons Taught Here

I. Our spiritual practices should be carried out with an attitude of meekness (humility).

Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth. Matthew 5:5 NKJV

3 Examples Given

A. Giving

Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly. Matthew 6:2-4 NKJV

1. Specifically—alms (giving to the poor)
 - a. Old Testament taught a lot about this
 - b. By the 1st Century Jews had prescribed giving for the poor. Extensive requirement
2. Abuse addressed
 - a. Don't sound trumpet (doubtful literal but trumpet shaped giving receptacles in temple may be in mind—widows mites)
 - b. Had become a religious show
3. Motive issue
 - a. Giving to be seen
 - b. Giving to control also wrong
 - c. Giving to manipulate (Don Cox—tithing)
4. Limited perspective

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- a. Could see no further than human applause
- b. Missed reward coming from the Father

(ILL) Businessman—“reward received—no more payment.”

2 Things

— Not legalism no one can know, have to hide.

NOTE: If it is your conviction its ok, but not what that is talking about.

— Giving to get—formula—does not buy reward from the Father

B. Praying

"And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. Matthew 6:5-6 NKJV"

1. Devout Jews prayed 3 times a day
2. 9th hour was normal
3. Standing was normal position but kneeling as well
4. Not prohibiting public prayer—Jesus prayed privately after but also publically.

At that time Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. Matthew 11:25 NKJV"

Then He commanded the multitudes to sit down on the grass. And He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples; and the disciples gave to the multitudes. Matthew 14:19 NKJV"

He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." Matthew 26:39 NKJV"

Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done." Matthew 26:42 NKJV"

NOTE: Lord's Prayer (in a moment) is the plural—it's corporate

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5. Issue is not prayer but motive
6. Praying for God as audience, not man.

But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. Matthew 6:6 NKJV

(ILL) Inner storeroom, only lockable room in Palestine home—He sees in secret (omnipotent but unseen—they are too seen—will reward)

C. Fasting

Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face. Matthew 6:16-17 NKJV

1. Most Jewish fasts were self-debasing—no washing, no shaving
2. So concerned with motive, Jesus overrides this norm
3. Fasting not talked about a lot in the New Testament
 - a. Assumed believers would fast
 - b. It's obvious He is speaking about chosen by choice not prescribed
 - c. Prescribed fast would impress no one

TRUTH: Spiritual Practices carried out in spirit of meekness

Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth. Matthew 5:5 NKJV

IMPORTANT: Proudly describe your spiritual practice to unsaved or new believer it deters effectiveness.

II. Our spiritual practice should be carried out in a posture of trust.

Beatitude:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:3 NKJV

NOTE: Dependence on God, poverty of spirit

Note here how Jesus deals with this:

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And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. Matthew 6:7-8 NKJV

IMPORTANT: This is not about how our prayer is viewed by others, but by God. How we approach Him.

A. Don't be like the heathen (Gentiles)

1. World outside Christ followers
2. Don't know God as a Father
3. Pray to their deities with babbling and badgering a reluctant god
4. Values quantity (maybe volume) over quality

(ILL) Elijah/Prophets of Baal

5. It assumes the purpose of prayer is to demand God's attention and then inform Him of needs that may have been overlooked.

B. What this is not

1. Not prohibiting repeating a prayer—Jesus did

So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Matthew 26:44 NKJV

2. Not prohibiting liturgical or written prayer

C. What it is—Trust

1. A father who knows what I need
2. Wants me to pray not to seek things, but to know Him as Father

D. Signs of mis-teaching about prayer

1. Demands
2. Volume
3. Formulas
4. Claiming

(ILL) Dad, me, Nova, Mustang

SIDE BAR: Model Prayer

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— Worship set the stage

In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Matthew 6:9-10 NKJV

— Petition

Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. 13 And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. Matthew 6:11-13 a, b NKJV

NOTE: Dependence, trust in the Father

III. Our spiritual practices should be carried out with a heart of mercy.

"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matthew 6:14-15 NKJV

Beatitudes Kingdom Value

Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy. Matthew 5:7 NKJV

A. Propositional form parable of two debtors

Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. 24 And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. 25 But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. 26 The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, 'Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' 27 Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. 28 "But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!' 29 So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' 30 And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. 31 So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. 32 Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. 33 Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?' 34 And his master was angry, and delivered him to the

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torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. 35 "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses." Matthew 18:23-35 NKJV

B. Reason for coming—Last Supper

For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Matthew 26:28 NIV

C. If as followers of Jesus we are going to ask to be forgiven—we cannot be-grudge other's forgiveness

NOTE: Only the forgiving will be forgiven

D. What are the parameters?

1. Personal obedience

And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. Matthew 6:12 NKJV

2. Without limit

Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" 22 Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. Matthew 18:21-22 NKJV

Conclusion: Jesus Uncut

Kingdom Values
Religious Practices
Attitude of Humility
Posture of Trust
Heart of Mercy

Violinist Scans the Audience for His Master Teacher

*“In his book *What God Thinks when we Fail*, Steven C. Roy tells a fictional story about a young violinist who lived in London many years ago. Although he was a superb musician, he was deathly afraid of large crowds, so he avoided giving concerts. But after enduring criticism for his unwillingness to give concerts, he finally agreed to perform in the largest concert hall in London.*

The young violinist came onto the stage and sat alone on a stool. He put his violin under his chin and played for an hour and a half. No music in front of him, no orchestra behind him, no breaks—just an hour and a half of absolutely beautiful violin music. After ten minutes or so, many critics put down their pads and listened, like the rest...After the performance, the crowd rose to its feet and began applauding wildly—and they wouldn’t stop.

But the young violinist didn’t acknowledge the applause. He just peered out into the audience as if he were looking for something—or someone. Finally he found what he was looking for. Relief came over his face, and he began to acknowledge the cheers.

After the concert, the critics met the young violinist backstage...They said, “You were wonderful. But one question: Why did it take you so long to acknowledge the applause of the audience?”

The young violinist took a deep breath and answered, “You know I was really afraid of playing here. Yet this was something I knew I needed to do. Tonight, just before I came on stage, I received word that my master teacher was to be in the audience. Throughout the concert, I tried to look for him, but I could never find him. So after I finished playing, I started to look more intently. I was so eager to find my teacher that I couldn’t even hear the applause. I just had to know what he thought of my playing. That was all that mattered. Finally, I found him high in a balcony. He was standing and applauding, with a big smile on his face. After seeing him, I was finally able to relax. I said to myself, ‘If the master is pleased with what I have done, then everything else is okay.’”