Matthew 6:1-13

- **Review…**
  - The Sermon of the King…
    - The LONGEST public teaching recorded in the New Testament - **Matthew 5-7**
    - Explaining to those who want to LEARN - how to be CITIZENS of the KINGDOM of God!
  - Keeping the Law…
    - Beginning with the Beatitudes – Jesus established we are POOR in Spirit…
    - And in order to be GOOD – we have to keep every JOT and TITTLE of the LAW…
    - We must be MORE righteous than even the SCRIBES and PHARISEES [mic drop]
  - Redefining the Law…
    - Jesus went on to examine FIVE [out of 613] - LAWS of Moses…
    - The LAW said do NOT murder – Jesus said to HATE without a cause it MURDER…
    - The LAW said to NOT commit adultery – Jesus said if we LOOK and LUST we are guilty…
    - The LAW said to KEEP our promises – Jesus said let our Yes be Yes – and No be No…
    - The LAW said an EYE for an EYE – Jesus said to turn the other CHEEK – go the extra MILE…
    - The LAW said to LOVE our neighbor – Jesus said to LOVE our enemy…
    - With just FIVE laws Jesus proved beyond any doubt – we are NOT good…
    - Because to be GOOD – we need to be PERFECT – as our Father in Heaven is PERFECT…
    - And knowing that is what allows us to be a Citizen of the Kingdom – because it drives us to Jesus!
- **1 – Giving… vs. 1-4**
  - 1st – Relationship with God…
    - Having established how to become a Citizen of the Kingdom [we are NOT good]
    - Jesus is going to move on and define how to LIVE as a CITIZEN…
    - FIRST – He will tell us how we are to RELATE to God…
    - He will do so by addressing SIX areas: Giving – Prayer – Forgiving - Fasting – Treasures – Worry!
  - 2nd – Heart Check… vs. 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!
    - Take heed [προσέχω] – we might say PAY attention [imperative]
    - Because Jesus is going to give a CONTRAST – a way to CHECK our heart…
    - When we are do CHARITY – from [ἔλεος] MERCY: giving to poor - helping those in need…
    - Do NOT [μὴ] give so that we can be SEEN my men…
    - Because if we do – then we will NEVER [οὐ] get a reward from our Father in Heaven!
    - While it is a GOOD thing to have MERCY [ἔλεος] on those who are less fortunate…
    - We must make sure we GIVE with the right MOTIVE…
    - Because WHY we do something reveals WHO we want to SERVE…
    - If we focused on pleasing MEN – then we are NOT living our lives to please GOD!
    - **Galatians 1:10** – "If I still please men – I [am] not be a bondservant of Christ."
  - 3rd – Reward of Men… vs. 2
    - The Tithe…
      - Therefore - when you do a charitable deed!
      - When you give [subjunctive] – this is NOT a command…
      - We often hear about TITHES in church – from Hebrew word for a tenth [עֶשֶׂר]
      - According to the LAW there were THREE different TITHES…
      - The Levitical tithe - to provide for those who served the Lord - **Numbers 18:21-24**
      - The Harvest tithe – to be given to the Lord - **Deuteronomy 14:22-26**

- The Poor tithe – which was only once every THREE years - **Deuteronomy 14:28-29**
- I am always amused by those who teach giving 10% to the church [it should be 23%]
- People take this LAW from the OT and teach it like it belongs in the NT...
- But the LAW is NOT a buffet - we cannot pick and choose what we like!

▪ Not Required…
- People GIVE out of a sense of obligation - but do NOT want to…
- It may even be taught that if we do not GIVE - God will NOT bless us...
- As if we do not GIVE to the church - we are stealing from God - **Malachi 3:8**
- But the NT says whatever we GIVE - we are to do it with a HAPPY heart...
- If we GIVE out of obligation - it counts for nothing - God does NOT want it!
- **II Corinthians 9:7** – "Let each one give as he purposes in his heart - not grudgingly or of necessity. For God loves a cheerful giver."

▪ Hypocrites…
- Do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and the streets…
- That they may have glory from men!
- If we GIVE – we are NOT [μὴ] to sound a TRUMPET [make a lot of noise]
- Like the HYPOCRITES [ὑποκριτής] – to be TWO faced!
- It was common in Jesus day for men to actually ANNOUNCE their GIFTS…
- They would blow TRUMPETS in the church [συναγωγή] and on the streets…
- They wanted EVERYONE to SEE how generous they were – GLORY of men [subjunctive]
- It reminds me of politicians who GIVE [tax money] – with their name plastered on the GIFT…
- Or GIFTS to a church - with the name of the GIVER posted for all to see!

▪ Earthly Reward…
- AMEN - I say to you - they have their reward!
- [ἀμήν] – Jesus assured His disciples – anyone who GIVES only to be seen by men…
- Has their REWARD – God is NOT impressed by their SELFISH motivation!
- Jesus was in the Temple - watching as people gave their money - **Mark 12:42-44**
- There were many there who were RICH - who put in a LOT of money [with trumpets]
- But there was a poor widow who only put in TWO mites [not even a peso]
- Jesus called the disciples and told them - she gave MORE than all the rich put together…
- The rich gave out of their ABUNDANCE – but she gave ALL she had!
- Giving to God is not about MONEY - God does NOT need anything...
- Giving is not about the QUANTITY - giving a lot means NOTHING if it costs us nothing...
- Giving is about SACRIFICE - giving from the heart - showing our LOVE for God!

o 4th – Reward of God… vs. 3-4

▪ In Secret… vs. 3-4
- When we do a charitable deed do not let our left hand know what our right hand is doing.
- That our charitable deed may be in secret!
- When we GIVE – we must NOT [imperative] let our left hand know what our right is doing…
- In other words – we need to give in SECRET for ONLY God to see!
- King Jehoash took a wooden box – with a hole cut into the top – **II Kings 12:9**
- He set it on the side as people came into the house of the Lord…
- The purpose of the box – let the people give anonymously to the Lord!
- When a church passes an offering plate people tend to make a SHOW of their gift...
- But they are NOT giving to God - they are giving for the recognition of MEN…
- Jesus says - they have their reward - the temporary praises of others...
- That is why we have a BOX – and do NOT pass an offering plate - give anonymously!

- Heavenly Reward…
  - Your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly!
  - Those who GIVE in secret – will be REWARDED [future] openly!
  - That does NOT mean that God will make us RICH…
  - God is not an ATM - put in our DEPOSIT – and out comes more MONEY!
  - We do NOT give – so that we can RECEIVE – we give in SECRET to show our HEART…
  - We are NOT looking for an EARTHLY reward…
  - We want our FATHER in heaven to SEE that we want to please Him…
  - And when we do – He will [future] reward us OPENLY – when we get to Heaven!

- **2 – Prayer… vs. 5-13**
  - 1st – Reward of Men… vs. 5
    - Not Required…
      - When you pray!
      - PRAY [προσεύχομαι] – to give our wish or request to God…
      - But this is NOT a command – it is a CHOICE [subjunctive]!
      - Too often PRAYER is treated as a ritual - part of what God expects a Christian to do...
      - As if somehow a few recited words to God - once or twice a day - is enough...
      - But rarely do people take the time in prayer to LISTEN – have a CONVERSATION!
      - Prayer is how we COMMUNICATE with our Father in heaven...
      - How we have a RELATIONSHIP with God - if we NEVER take time to talk to Him...
      - Telling Him about our day - getting to KNOW the God who created us...
      - Taking the time to listening to His WILL and PLAN for our lives!
    - Hypocrites…
      - 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!
      - If we PRAY – we are NOT [μὴ] to pray in the open for everyone to SEE…
      - Like the HYPOCRITES [ὑποκριτής] – to be TWO faced!
      - It was common in Jesus day for men to make PUBLIC prayers…
      - They would STAND up to pray in church [συναγωγή] – and on the streets…
      - They LOVED [φιλέω] to have everyone SEE how spiritual they were!
      - There is nothing wrong with having a GROUP conversation with God...
      - But we need to watch the motive of our heart - do not pray to IMPRESS others...
      - People who use BIG words - tremble their voice - to sound more spiritual...
      - God is NOT impressed - at best they are acting like a fool and embarrassing themselves...
      - Prayer should be NATURAL – a simple conversation with God - no matter who is there!
    - Earthly Reward…
      - AMEN - I say to you - they have their reward!
      - [ἀμήν] – Jesus assured His disciples – anyone who PRAYS only to be seen by men…
      - Has their REWARD – God is NOT impressed by their SELF righteous act!
      - Many of the LEADERS in Israel believed Jesus was the Messiah – **John 12:43**
      - But they would not CONFESS him – because they LOVED [ἀγαπάω] the praises of Men!
      - The problem with LOVING the praises of MEN – is it means we put them ahead of God…
      - And we will NOT stand up for Jesus – because we LOVE something else more than Him!
  - 2nd – Reward of God … vs. 6
    - In Secret…
      - 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!
      - If [subjunctive] we PRAY – we must [imperative] go into our room and shut the door…

- In other words – we need to PRAY in SECRET to our Father who we CANNOT see!
- We are called to PRAY continually – **I Thessalonians 5:17**
- We obviously cannot literally lock ourselves up in a room ALL day long…
- What this means is we are to PRAY in a way that is NOT obvious [seen by men]
- Quietly talking to our FATHER in heaven as we go about our day!

▪ Heavenly Reward…
- Your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly!
- Those who PRAY in secret – will be REWARDED [future] openly!
- The REWARD for PRAYER – is a RELATIONSHIP with our God…
- We get to have instant access to the CREATION of Heaven and Earth!
- **Hebrews 4:16** – "Come boldly to the throne of grace… and find grace to help in time of need."

o 3rd – Why Pray… vs. 7-8

▪ No Repetition… vs. 7
- When you pray - do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do.
- For they think that they will be heard for their many words!
- When we are PRAYING [participle] – we are NOT [μή] to use REPETITION…
- Unbelievers [ἔθνος] use repetition – thinking God will listen if they use LOTS of words!
- It is NOT wrong to REPEAT prayer - Jesus asked 3x to take the cross – **Matthew 26:44**
- Or asking for the same thing more than once – Parable of the persistent widow - **Luke 18:1-8**
- But the idea of SCRIPTED prayers is just silly - that is a SPEECH - not a PRAYER!
- If someone came up to us the same time every day and said the same thing...
- Never any variation - never waiting around for a reply – there would be NO relationship…
- In the same way - when we simply repeat ourselves out of habit - there is no communication...
- We must be careful not to make prayer a RITUAL - rather than a CONVERSATION!

▪ God Knows… vs. 8
- Therefore do not be like them.
- For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him!
- Do NOT [μὴ] be like UNBELIEVERS – thinking we need to let God know what we NEED…
- Because our Father SEES [perfect] what we NEED – before we even ASK!
- STOP right there – this is a PROFOUND statement…
- The world think the REASON for PRAYER – is to let God know what we NEED…
- They think that because they do NOT know God – so He does NOT answer them…
- And they use REPETITION – many words – to try and get His attention!
- But our Father already SEES [εἴδω] what we need…
- God is ETERNAL – He is outside of TIME – He saw our NEED before – **Genesis 1:1**
- So if we do NOT pray to give God information [what we need] – WHY do we pray!

o 4th – How to Prayer… vs. 9-13

▪ Example… vs. 9
- In this manner – therefore pray!
- Since we are NOT to pray REPETITIVELY – because God knows what we NEED…
- Jesus gives the PATTERN [manner] we should use in PRAYER [imperative]!
- Ironically – this PRAYER has been abused over the years as a REPETITIVE prayer…
- But it is meant be an example of HOW to PRAY – we call it the LORDS prayer…
- Though it would be better called the MODEL prayer…
- The LORDS prayer can be found in the book of John – **John 17**

▪ Who to pray to… vs. 9
- Our Father in heaven - Hallowed be Your name!

- FIRST - Jesus opens the MODEL prayer by addressing to our Father…
- Recognizing His name is HOLY [ἁγιάζω] – the NAME of the LORD [יְהוָה]
- If we put in an incorrect email address – cell number – it does not end up where we want…
- Yet a lot of people try praying to the WRONG address [Saints - Mary]
- There is only ONE mediator – and that is Jesus – **I Timothy 2:5**
- Through Him we direct our prayer toward our Father in Heaven…
- And we PRAY in the Holy Spirit – **I Corinthians 14:15**
- We pray to the Father – through the Son - in the Spirit - because they are one!

▪ What to pray for… vs. 10
- Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven!
- SECOND – Jesus tell us we must PRAY [imperative] for God to bring His Kingdom…
- This is not talking about the RETURN of Jesus – this is about our hearts – **Luke 17:21**
- We are PRAYING [imperative] for the WILL of God to be done in our lives [on earth]!
- When we PRAY - our perspective changes - we see our circumstances in a new light...
- We no longer SEE our problems - instead we SEE God who is GREATER than any problem…
- PRAYER is not about changing the mind of God – telling Him what we NEED...
- PRAYER is about God changing our mind - getting us to see His Will!
- **Philippians 4:6** - "Do not worry about anything. Instead - pray about everything..."

▪ What we need… vs. 11-12
- Give us this day our daily bread - and forgive us our debts!
- THIRD – Jesus tell us there are two NEEDS we PRAY for God to give [imperative] to us …
- FIRST – our DAILY [2x in NT] bread – what we NEED to physically LIVE…
- SECOND – our DEBTS [sins] forgiven – what we NEED to spiritually LIVE!
- We might have a LONG list of what we THINK we NEED – but the list is quite SHORT…
- We need FOOD to live - and most important - we NEED to be forgiven of our SINS…
- Anything more than that is not a NEED – it is just our WANTS!

▪ What we must do… vs. 12
- As we forgive our debtors!
- FOURTH - Our responsibility in PRAYER – is to always [present] FORGIVE [indicative]
- FORGIVE [ἀφίημι] – to cast something far away from us…
- To be FORGIVEN – we must FORGIVE those who are in DEBT [sin] to us!
- **Luke 17:4** – "Even if [someone] wrongs you seven times a day and each time turns again and asks forgiveness - forgive [them]."
- When we are hurt by someone - and refuse to forgive – we are DISOBEYING God...
- Now not only do we have a DAMAGED relationship with the person who sinned…
- But we also have a DAMAGED relationship with the Lord…
- With unforgiveness in our hearts - God will NOT hear our prayers - **Mark 11:25**

▪ What God does… vs. 13
- Do not lead us into trials - but deliver us from the evil!
- FIFTH - We can ask God to please NOT [μή] lead [subjunctive] us into TRIALS…
- TRIALS [πειρασμός] can alternately be translated as TEMPTATION…
- How can we tell the difference between a TRIAL or a TEMPTATION…
- A TEMPTATION does NOT come from God - **James 1:13**
- A TRIAL is FROM God – something He uses to TEST us – **James 1:2-3**
- But even if God does allow a TRIAL – we know He can RESCUE us from EVIL [the trial]!
- Silver is refined by putting it into the heat of an intense fire…
- The fire draws out the impurities of the silver so they can be removed…
- The smith knows the silver is pure when he can see his reflection!

- Jesus put us in TRIALS to TEST our FAITH - draw out the impurities from our life [sin]
- He knows when we are done – because He sees His reflection in our lives…
- We want God to use us – we want to draw closer to the Lord…
- But often we will find before God a work THROUGH us – He first does one IN us…
- Do not be surprised if we ask God to use us- only to find we are in a trial...
- God uses it to PREPARE us – mold us – shape us – into Godly men and women!
- **I Peter 4:12** – "Do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you..."

▪ How to Close… vs. 13

- For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen!
- FINALLY - we close our prayer with a recognition of WHO God is…
- He is [present] the one who is owns EVERYTHING – the KINGDOM…
- He has [present] all the POWER [δύναμις] – He is SOVEREIGN – **Ephesians 1:11**
- He is always [present] the one who deserves all the GLORY [δόξα]
- Not just TODAY – but ALWAYS [αἰών]!
- Did you ever wonder why we put our hands together in PRAYER…
- With hands outstretched – fingers interlocked – we are defenseless…
- We are coming to God in SURRENDER – recognizing His AUTHORITY…
- Saying to Him – whatever He wants to do – AMEN [ἀμήν]!