

## Questions

1. Do you struggle with seeking the approval of other people? If so, how?
2. The hypocrites Jesus condemned wrongly believed they were still serving God. What was their hypocrisy? How were they play-acting and for what purpose? Do you ever catch yourself being guilty of such hypocrisy?
3. What is a biblical understanding of giving (to the poor, to the church)? Why do we do it and how should we do it (cf. 2 Cor 9:6-12)?
4. It is not a stretch to apply Jesus' warning in Matthew 6:5-8 to other individual acts in public worship (praying, singing, reading, speaking, preaching). Have you ever caught yourself doing one of these things while wondering if others were impressed by what you were doing?
5. Do you pray more frequently and more fervently when alone with God than you do in public? (D.A. Carson)
6. Read Luke 18:1-8. How do we reconcile this parable with the warning in Matthew 6:7? (Think about the heart.)
7. Most of what the Bible teaches about fasting is by example. What can we learn about the importance of fasting from biblical examples?
8. If we pursue man's approval, our gain is man's reward. But if we pursue God's approval, we receive a reward from our Father in heaven? What's the difference? Which are you pursuing?

# The King's Manifesto

*The Sermon on the Mount*

## Whose Approval?

**Matthew 6:1-8, 16-18**

*Doug Sachtleben, Lead Pastor*

*September 26, 2021*

**In this passage, Jesus warned of hypocrites who were teaching others to be hypocrites, and He warned us of the danger of seeking man's approval over God's approval.**

**The pattern of Jesus' statements in Matthew 6:1-18:**  
"When you do this [specific act of worship], don't be like the hypocrites who do it in an ostentatious way to be seen by others, because being seen is their full reward. YOU, rather, do your act of worship before God and be concerned only with His approval and reward."

**Jesus warned of seeking man's approval over God's in our:**

### **1. Giving (6:1-4)**

**A hypocrite pretends to be more than you are in order to gain man's approval.**

We should even guard against the possibility of congratulating ourselves for our giving (Matt 6:3-4).

## 2. Praying (6:5-8)

Jesus warned against praying for public approval and against praying with empty and repetitious words that have lost their meaning.

We must be careful about our heart attitude as we take part in individual activities that are part of public worship.

## 3. Fasting (6:16-18)

The intentional choice to refrain from normal routines of eating to spend dedicated time in prayer and worship.

Connecting the *rewards* of 6:1-18 to the *treasures* of 6:19-20.

Man's rewards: Fleeting, vanishing, fickle, and earthbound.

God's rewards: Eternal, indescribable, and in heaven.

Whose approval are you pursuing?