

Not For Show
Season of Joy

8/11/12

Text: Matt 6: 1- 9

Introduction: Kids in Church

Last week we spoke about:

- How joy is much more than an emotional experience
- How joy is connected to the things we do for others
- How joy is ironic in that it makes its greatest impact during the most difficult challenging moments of our lives

We begin this week with a warning – from Jesus about behavioral motives

A warning that states it does matter what we do – especially if you claim to be doing it for God

Read **Matt 6: 1-4**

“Watch out! Don’t do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. ² When you give to someone in need, don’t do as the hypocrites do—blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth; they have received all the reward they will ever get. ³ But when you give to someone in need, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. ⁴ Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.” NLT

Years ago when Jen and I served as Pastors we were teaching from Romans – underlying idea of that book is *Grace*– we are saved not by our best efforts and good deeds but simply believing in and accepting Jesus the Son of God and savior ... Faith = restoration to God or simply put salvation by faith not works - Basis of the Reformation

A member attending that study took one verse and twisted the meaning

Stating that because of grace that she was free to live in whatever way she chose –as long as she believed in Jesus she was covered and secure

Rom 8:1 *“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.”*

Just three verses down she left out

“...for those who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.” v 4 NIV

There are things that God requires of us – in relationship toward himself and others

The warning is emphasized by the Lord.

→ Your **reason** for doing something is more important than the deed itself.

More important to whom? - Answer to God

Jesus makes it crystal clear - Don't do you good deeds in public for show
To advance your personal agenda or self gratification

Don't exploit people in need to further **your** cause in the eyes of others
Don't take advantage of them using them for your own selfish purpose

☆ Ever see the politician at mission on Christmas or Thanksgiving working on the soup line while the whole thing is being recorded so their pictures can appear on the evening news? Its all for show!

God is not pleased – Jesus states that you've lost your reward from your Father in Heaven
One of those rewards is Joy – the deep down heart felt blessing of doing for someone else out of concern for them - not yourself

Even more sobering is the second comment - they have received all the reward they will ever get.
It sounds like Jesus is speaking of an eternal reward or lack there of.

Have you checked you motives lately? When you're about to do something noble is it to make you or God look good?

Are you doing things in private or public for everyone to see?
That includes your giving in tithe and offerings

Are you giving back to God what he has entrusted to you? Are you being as discreet about it as possible?

What does God require of us?

James 1:27 *“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”* NKJ

This is the credo of Youth Mentoring an LI organization lead by John Craig – It is at the motivation of Light House Mission, lead by Pastor Jim Ryan –
Both of these organizations are accomplishing unbelievable things for God, because he is pleased and blessing the work they are doing

Someone said “One measure of our likeness to Christ is our sensitivity to the suffering of others.”

Philippians 2:1-3 tells us to think of others above ourselves – looking out for their interests not just ours

Colossians 3:12 -15 says that mercy kindness and humility are marks of those God has redeemed.

Quote - “Meaning well’ is different from ‘being good,’ which requires doing good, which often requires putting the needs and well being of others above one’s own needs and well-being. To me, that’s virtuous.” By Author Rosie Schaap

Jesus goes further in this relationship with the Living God, talking about prayer

Every relationship is based on communication –
No communication no relationship

Your relationship to God is no different –

How do we communicate with God?

Two principle ways are: prayer and reading His Word

We're doing one of them right now examining – reflecting – digesting God's Word
At least I hope that's what is happening.

Read **Matt. 6: 5-9** “When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. ⁶ But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you. ⁷ “When you pray, don't babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. ⁸ Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!

⁹ Pray like this:

**Our Father in heaven,
may your name be kept holy.” NLT**

The same elements – hypocrites – private not public
It's not about the show –

What do you suppose holds more weight a long rehearsed prayer to be said at Invocation or an off the cuff couple of sentences that comes from the heart?

Jesus said to the Samaritan Woman at the Well *“But the time is coming--indeed it's here now when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way.”* John 4:23 NLT

The Father is seeking – Can you get that? You weren't looking for God He was looking for you and He found you. God is the initiator!

Don't babble or pray robotically – God will help you to pray when you pray from the heart
Jesus said - Your Father already know exactly what you need even before you ask

**“Our Father in Heaven
May your name be kept Holy”**

Do you see the balance between these two lines
It is a balance we've gotten away from

In 1741 during the Great Awakening Jonathan Edward preached perhaps the most famous sermon in American history, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.”
So powerful was this message that listeners ran to the pulpit begging Edward to stop the sermon.
Hell Fire preaching –

Today we hear little about Hell from most pulpits

But a lot about God being a doting heavenly father who will give you whatever you ask for if you just believe

God would never be so mean as to send someone to an awful place like hell. A loving God would never do that.

Which view is correct?

Bird's Eye View - Jen's birthday this past Friday tradition is to put birthday – thank you – Thanksgiving cards on shelf's of our open hutch in the dinning room way back to when our girls were just little squirts

I took a moment to read some of the sentiments in the cards sent – and you can feel the friendship and love that are expressed in them.

Pretty special but then my wife is a pretty special individual.

The sentiments that Jen's friends expressed in that card are the sentiments God wants to express personally to you. He already sent us the best gift anyone ever got a special delivery Christmas Day about 2000 years ago.

→ The notes and letters are in here! (You're Bible) Have you taken time to read them lately
Jesus said your Father already know what you need before you even ask!

1. God is a loving Father – But a father who truly loves his children – doesn't give them every thing they ask for
He loves them too much to do that – he knows that they need instruction, correction, and discipline and sometimes need to be challenged to reach their full potential
A loving Father will do what is best and give his best for his children
2. But He is also the awesome God of this universe

Look at this instructional prayer of Jesus – the way we should approach God!

“Our Father in Heaven – May Your name be kept Holy”

KJ Hallowed be Thy Name - Hallowed means to treat with great revere - reverence
Not to be taken lightly

To have the relationship God desires for us and the results we desire from God – it cannot be casual
Jesus must be Lord – the director and leader of our lives

Isaiah writes *“The Sovereign Lord has given me his words of wisdom, so that I know how to comfort the weary, Morning by morning he wakens me and opens my understanding to his will.”*
Isaiah 51: 4, 5

Lets pray