



Impact Your World

Jesus and the Sermon on the Mount

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock.”

— Matthew 7:24 —

LESSON FIVE

IMPACT YOUR WORLD The Secret Lives We Live

DISCUSSION QUESTION

“How are we to be “the light of the world”
when Jesus tells us to give, pray, and fast in secret?”

LESSON

Impact Your World: The Secret Lives We Live

- Jesus warns us about attempting to practice righteousness with the wrong motive.
- The word “hypocrite” describes an “actor on stage” who assumes a phony identity.
- The word “to be noticed” is the word “theater” in English.
- Give, pray, and fast ... but not with the intention to be noticed by an audience.
- God knows everything already. You cannot fool Him. He sees and judges the heart.

What about our *daily lives* could be seen by others as showing off?

What about our *church life* could be seen by others as showing off?



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Matthew 6:1-18

1 “Beware of practicing your righteousness before men **to be noticed by them**; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.

2 “So **when you give to the poor, do not** sound a trumpet before you, as the **hypocrites** do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. **Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.**

3 But **when you give to the poor, do not** let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

4 so that your giving will be **in secret**; and **your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.**

5 “**When you pray**, you are **not** to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. **Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.**

6 But you, **when you pray, go into your inner room**, close your door and pray to your Father who is **in secret**, and **your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.**

7 “And **when you are praying, do not** use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words.

8 So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

9 “Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.

10 ‘Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

11 ‘Give us this day our daily bread.

12 ‘And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 ‘And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]’

14 For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

15 But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

16 “**Whenever you fast, do not** put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance so that they will be **noticed by men** when they are fasting. **Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.**

17 But you, **when you fast**, anoint your head and wash your face

18 so that your fasting will not be noticed by men, but by your Father who is **in secret**; and **your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.**



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SHOWING OFF

CHARLES R. SWINDOLL

Jesus opened a five-gallon can of worms the day He preached His Sermon on the Mount. There wasn't a Pharisee within gunshot range who wouldn't have given his last denarius to have seen Him strung up by sundown. They hated Him because He refused to let them get away with their phony religious drool!

If there was one thing Jesus despised, it was the very thing every Pharisee majored in at seminary: showing off. Another word for it is "self-righteousness." The Messiah unsheathed His sharp sword of truth that day, exposing their pride. Like never before, the smug show-offs were put in their place!

Listen to Matthew 6:1: "Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them."

In other words, stop showing off! Stop calling attention to your righteousness! And then, to make the warning stick, our Lord gave three specific examples of how people show off their own righteousness so that others might ooh and aah over them.

In Matthew 6:2 Jesus says, "So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you." In other words, when you perform acts of charity or assist someone in need, keep it quiet. Remain anonymous. Jesus promises that "your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you" (6:4).

In Matthew 6:5 Jesus talks about "when you pray." He warns us against being supplicational show-offs who stand in prominent places and mouth meaningless mush in order to be seen and heard. A show-off loves syrupy words. He's got the technique for sounding high and holy down pat. But Jesus says: Don't show off when you talk with the Father.

In Matthew 6:16 Jesus says, "Whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do." Fasting is when the show-off really hits his stride! He works overtime trying to appear humble and sad, hoping to look hungry and exhausted like some freak who just finished walking across the Sahara that afternoon. Instead, we ought to look and sound fresh, clean, and completely natural.

Our Lord reserved His strongest and longest sermon not for struggling sinners or discouraged disciples but for hypocrites . . . for glory hogs. Unfortunately, most of them never change because they don't hear what He says to them. Show-offs, you see, are terribly hard-of-hearing.



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Others May ... You May Not

G. D. Watson
(1845-1924)

If God has called you to be really like Christ in all your spirit, He will draw you into a life of crucifixion and humility and put on you such demands of obedience, that He will not allow you to follow other Christians, and in many ways He will seem to let other good people do things which He will not let you do.

Others can brag on themselves, and their work, on their success, on their writings, but the Holy Spirit will not allow you to do any such thing, and if you begin it, He will lead you into some deep mortification that will make you despise yourself and all your good works.

The Lord will let others be honored and put forward, and keep you hid away in obscurity because He wants to produce some choice fragrant fruit for His glory, which can be produced only in the shade.

Others will be allowed to succeed in making money, but it is likely God will keep you poor because he wants you to have something far better than gold and that is a helpless dependence on Him; that He may have the privilege of supplying your needs day by day - out of an unseen treasury.

God will let others be great, but He will keep you small. He will let others do a great work for Him and get credit for it, but He will make you work and toil on without knowing how much you are doing; and then to make your work still more precious, He will let others get the credit for the work you have done, and this will make your reward ten times greater when He comes.

The Holy Spirit will put strict watch over you, with a jealous love, and will rebuke you for little words and feelings, or for wasting your time, which other Christians never seem distressed over.

So make up your mind that God is an infinite Sovereign, and has a right to do what He pleases with His own, and He will not explain to you a thousand things which may puzzle you in His dealing with you. He will wrap you up in a jealous love, and let other people say and do many things that you cannot do or say.

Settle it forever, that you are to deal directly with the Holy Spirit, and that He is to have the privilege of tying your tongue, or chaining your hand, or closing your eyes, in ways that others are not dealt with.

Now, when you are so possessed with the Living God that you are, in your secret heart, pleased and delighted over this particular personal, private, jealous guardianship and management of the Holy Spirit over your life, you will have found the vestibule of heaven.