

“Matthew”

Fall Series 1

Lesson 8

“Matthew 6:1-34”

Objective: To understand the message that Matthew meant to convey to his audience and then to come to understand what that message means for us today as those living in the 21st century. We will seek to ascertain what this message means and to determine how we are intended to live our lives as those who are disciples of Christ in our modern context, in light of the message it contains. We will place special emphasis upon application.

Materials: I will begin by examining carefully the Greek text of Matthew, examine other early translations such as the Syriac Peshitta, various modern translations, and any other sources relevant to the historical setting of the first century Roman world that can help us to understand the original meaning. I will then examine early interpretations and understandings and examine commentaries and modern interpretations to enlighten our understanding, help us make application to our current situation.

Procedures

1. We will begin by examining the text from the Greek text.
2. We will examine the contextual setting and seek to understand as much as we possibly can about the historical, cultural, and social settings, in order to understand the message Matthew intended and that God still intends for us.
3. From here, we will seek to find out how to best apply the words of Matthew, for the early disciples, then to our modern contextual framework as disciples of Jesus.
4. We will seek to understand the attitudes that we are called to have as disciples and to reflect not only the actions that are the calling of a disciple, but also to learn how to form our attitudes and thoughts in order to reflect our calling as followers of Jesus Christ.

Lesson


At Chapter 6 Jesus will turn His attention to the practicing of “religion,” or “piety.” This, at least, is the way that English translations translate a word that is most often translated as “righteousness,” or “justice” (*δικαιοσύνην - dikaisunen*). To be fair, finding a translation for this word in English is really challenging, but I think the word “religion” carries so much baggage in a modern context as to make it unacceptable as a translation. The word “piety” is a somewhat pretentious word that is more old-fashioned and does not really work well either, but essentially gets the point across. The word used here, in this context is used to describe something along the lines of “right conduct,” or to “practice righteousness.”¹ The issue that Jesus addresses in 6:1 would be to “practice righteousness” in any of its various forms

¹ R.T. France, The Gospel of Matthew, in The New International Commentary on the New Testament series (Grand Rapids MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), p. 234. Cf. 1 John 2:29 **If you know that he is righteous, you also know that every person who practices righteousness is born from him.** CEB. 1 John 3:7 **Little children, make sure no one deceives you. The person who practices righteousness is righteous, in the same way that Jesus is righteous.** CEB. 1 John 3:10 **This is how God’s children and the devil’s children are apparent: everyone who doesn’t practice righteousness is not from God, including the person who doesn’t love a brother or sister.** CEB. Revelation 22:11 **This is how God’s children and the devil’s children are apparent: everyone who doesn’t practice righteousness is not from God, including the person who doesn’t love a brother or sister.** CEB.

such as in giving to the poor, fasting, prayer, and worship are in view here as Jesus speaks to His audience.

The idea is that such people are doing deeds of righteousness and the focus of Jesus is upon challenging His audience to insure that these deeds are not done in order to come to the notice of men. The focus is on the attention, the praise, or notice that is given by doing these deeds. The focus for doing such deeds should be different for kingdom people. Their focus is to be upon doing the right thing with no thought of reward from, but with the focus for reward coming from the “Father who is in heaven.” In verses 6:2-4, clarification of this will be added. These verses also explain the textual variant that is found in some manuscripts indicating “almsgiving” at 6:1.² The issue addressed by Jesus again relates to the heart, to the motivation for doing the things that a person does. In one instance, the reward for doing right is focused upon receiving rewards from earthly benefactors and in the other the focus is upon receiving a reward from God the

² Barbara and Kurt Aland, Johannes Karavidopoulos, Carlos M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 28th Revised Edition (Münster/Westphalia: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012), p. 13. Most of these manuscripts are from the 9th century, though one is from the 4th/5th century. It is likely that the textual variant came into the text as the result of an interpretive understanding of what Jesus meant with the more general term used here.



Father. One is focused upon the kingdom of this world and the other upon the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus challenges His audience to give in secret so that the only possibility of a reward would be from God, the one who sees what a person does even in secret. The focus, and the understanding of the persons performing the actions, are upon kingdom of heaven values, upon kingdom of heaven rewards.

Once again, Jesus continues to steer the focus of His followers toward a different way of doing things, toward a different focus.

At times, people are deeply concerned about changes in the tax exempt status for churches and their personal tax exemption amount as they decide regarding their donations to church.


According to the focus of Jesus such things should make no significant difference in a person's decision to give to the poor.

“True piety is not for show. Right deeds must be accompanied by right intention The Father in heaven rewards only those whose motives are pure, who care not for what others think but only for what is right before heaven. The key is intention.”³

³ W. D. Davies and D. C. Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, International Critical Commentary series, Vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), pp. 575-576.

Next, in 6:5-6, Jesus will focus upon prayer. Once again Jesus will focus upon the “hypocrites” (ὑποκριταί - *hypokritai*). Hypocrites are those who are actors, those who play a part on the stage. They pretend to be someone they are not. Jesus here rebukes such displays when it comes to righteous acts as disingenuous and once again placing the focus of their hope for reward in a place other than in their desire for reward from God. They look to a reward, or a praise from men, from the this present world and not from the Father in Heaven. Jesus indicates that it is the prayers that are done in secret, those that only God sees that are genuine. If these prayers are done in secret, then only the one who knows all secrets will know of them. Once again, Jesus focuses upon the intentions of the heart.

In 6:7-8, Jesus will continue providing His instructions regarding prayer. He indicates that the focus should be upon genuine words, not upon those meant to impress men. Florid, complex, and poetic words were common among the people and many have survived from antiquity. Once again, the focus of Jesus will be upon the intent of the heart not the eloquence of the speaker. At verse 8, Jesus clearly indicates that God does not need




to hear the words of men as He already knows what a person needs before they even ask. The intent of this teaching is not to prohibit audible public prayer as such. While it is certainly the case that Jesus is often portrayed as praying privately, He also, on occasion, prayed aloud in the hearing of others (11:25; 14:19; 26:39, 42; Luke 11:1).⁴ The focus is once again upon the intent of heart.

The pattern prayer that Jesus gives in verses 9-13 is worded in the plural, as a corporate prayer, rather than as a private prayer. Gatherings for prayer were a regular feature of the life of Jesus and His disciples from the beginning of His ministry. The issue of concern for Jesus here is not the prayer itself but the motivation behind the prayer.⁵ The use of the Lord's Prayer has proven to be a controversial topic among some members of the churches of Christ. Some have put forward the reasoning that we should no longer pray this prayer because it speaks of the coming of the kingdom and the kingdom has in fact already arrived. Such reasoning is indeed faulty for a number of reasons, only one of which is that those who put forth this perspective fail to follow


⁴ R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 239.

⁵ R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 239.



through with the sentence in 6:10 that not only prays for the kingdom to come, but also for the will of God to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

I am certain that the will of God is not currently done on earth in the way it is in heaven. Have you seen our world? There are so many ways that the will of God is not being done on earth as it is in heaven. The verbs that are used by Jesus here, in this verse, are being used to indicate petitions being made to God. They could be translated something along the lines of, “May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” This is a prayer that has yet to reach the fullness of what it will become, and dare I say that one day the coming of the kingdom of God itself will overwhelm all that currently is not completely, and totally, under the dominion of God. There is far more to come than has already arrived. We live in that interim time when the kingdom is not yet fully come in the way that one day it will be fully present. When the kingdom and rule of God are fully come as they will come when Jesus returns there will indeed be no need to pray this prayer because all will be made right and all will be as it should be with the reign of God righting all wrongs. Until that day, this



prayer should be lifted up often, and widely, by all who long to see the face of God and His just and righteous rule.

This prayer begins at verse 9 with a confession of the fact that God is our Father, the one who is in heaven. The first half of the prayer focuses on God's honor, His kingdom, and His purpose. The first three clauses are in fact cast in the form of wishes, using the third person imperative verb form. They do, in fact, form a doxology, an act of worship, that associates the praying community with God's purposes in the world. Then the second person imperatives (case of command) are set within the overall priority of the will of God rather than focusing upon the desires of those praying the prayer.⁶ This is how our prayers should begin, with worship of God, with the honoring of God, proclaiming His greatness to the all the powers of heaven and all who might hear. Once again, there is a focus upon loyalty to God, trust in God, and full confidence in God. Relationship stands at the heart of the words of Jesus here as they did in chapter 5. Relationship, and issues surrounding relationship, are crucial to the message of

⁶ R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 243.

Jesus. He came to join people together with one another and with their God in relationship, in community.

At verse 11, we come to the first of the petitions for the disciples own needs, their own concerns, and their own material provision (cf. Proverbs 30:8b⁷). In verses 25-33, we will be told by Jesus that a part of what it means to recognize God as our heavenly Father is to be prepared to trust him for food, drink, and clothing. This petition expresses that trust in God in its most basic form. It is the case that, even bread, the most basic of rations comes as the result of God's daily provision (cf. Psalm 104:14-15, 27-28⁸) and is therefore a proper subject for prayer rather than to be taken for granted.⁹ In His lifetime, Jesus was accused of many things one of which was that He was accused of being a "glutton and a drunkard."¹⁰ Have you ever noticed how easily people can

⁷ **Don't give me either poverty or wealth; give me just the food I need.** CEB.

⁸ **14 You make grass grow for cattle; you make plants for human farming in order to get food from the ground, 15 and wine, which cheers people's hearts, along with oil, which makes the face shine, and bread, which sustains the human heart. 27 All your creations wait for you to give them their food on time. 28 When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled completely full!** CEB.

⁹ R.T. France, The Gospel of Matthew, p. 247.

¹⁰ Luke 7:34 **the Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'** NRSV.

become great critics of the efforts of others, of the actions of others?

N.T. Wright notes that the accusations against Jesus are extremely serious, actually worthy of death. The accusations against Jesus are actually a quotation from Deuteronomy 21:18-21.¹¹ This is a passage that deals with the issue of what to do with a rebellious son. The accusations that are made against Jesus are that He is a rebellious Son. You see, the people watching the actions misinterpret, misunderstand, Jesus' eating and drinking with tax-collectors and sinners. Jesus is not being a glutton and a drunkard. He is not a party animal. The heart of the actions of Jesus are focused upon the kingdom of heaven and life in that kingdom. There is contained in the heart of the Old Testament the idea that in the kingdom of God there will be a great and festive banquet, which God has prepared for His people. This vision goes back to the promise of a land that will flow with milk and honey, a part of it is linked to the great feast of quail that

¹¹ **21:18** If someone has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father and mother, who does not heed them when they discipline him, **19** then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his town at the gate of that place. **20** They shall say to the elders of his town, "This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey us. **He is a glutton and a drunkard.**" **21** Then all the men of the town shall stone him to death. So you shall purge the evil from your midst; and all Israel will hear, and be afraid. NRSV.


God brought to Israel as they wandered in the wilderness, and a part is related to the imagery of the great Psalm where the image of God is given of Him preparing a feast before their enemies.¹² The actions of Jesus are an enactment and a proclamation of the inbreaking of the kingdom of heaven, a foretaste of what is to come.¹³

The banquet, the party, was a sign that God was acting at last, He was beginning His rescue of His people and was beginning the process of wiping away all tears from all eyes. Jesus' parties, and His feeding of His followers in the wilderness, were intended, for those with eyes to see, to pick up this whole theme and celebrate it. As is so often the case, the most powerful things Jesus said were in actions, not words.¹⁴ The words of this prayer given by Jesus to those listening to His words should call from our hearts a sense of gratitude, a sense of recognition, and a sense of

¹² Psalm 23:5 **You prepare a feast before me in plain sight of my enemies. You refresh my head with oil; my cup is completely full.** NET. Cf. Isaiah 25:6-8 **On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear. 7 And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death forever. 8 Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken.** NRSV.

¹³ N.T. Wright, *The Lord and His Prayer* (Grand Rapids MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), pp. 24-25.

¹⁴ N.T. Wright, *The Lord and His Prayer*, p. 25.



hope for the future. When it is the case that we are willing, and able, to acknowledge the place of God in our daily routines we are reminded of His promises of a better future, of a better world, and maybe in the midst of such moments we can participate a little more each day in the coming into being more fully of the rule and reign of God in our lives and in our world. As we remember the source of our daily life there is an opportunity to honor God in the way that we live that life. Will we live our life as if the kingdom of God has truly arrived in our heart?

At 6:12, we move onto the part of the prayer that focuses upon forgiveness. Forgiveness, is something that all of us need in great abundance and Jesus certainly includes this important matter in His prayer. It can sometimes be the case that people believe on the day that they were baptized all their sins were forgiven, both, past and future. Certainly there is an aspect of truth to this perception, but such a view should certainly not preclude a recognition of our continual need for forgiveness and our continual need to express this not only in our words, but also in the way we forgive others. Wright says of this section of the prayer, "In particular, having received God's forgiveness

themselves, they were to practice it amongst themselves. Not to do so would mean they hadn't grasped what was going on. As soon as someone in one of these Jesus cells refused to forgive a fellow-member, he or she was saying, in effect, 'I don't really believe the Kingdom has arrived. I don't think the Forgiveness of Sins has actually occurred.' Failure to forgive one another wasn't a matter of failing to live up to a new bit of moral teaching. It was cutting off the branch you were sitting on. The only reason for being Kingdom-people, for being Jesus' people was that the forgiveness of sins was happening; so if you didn't live forgiveness, you were denying the very basis of your own existence."¹⁵

Some people believe that once they are baptized they are assured of their salvation no matter what they do or how they act. There is a sense in which this might be true. However, if you fail to take the warnings of Jesus, then He, and His offer of salvation, become nothing more than an insurance program. For those that hold such an opinion the danger of evil is genuine and ever-present and still very much a danger to them. The dangers of evil are genuine and our need for God's protection is needed for as


¹⁵ N.T. Wright, *The Lord and His Prayer*, p. 39.

long as we have breath in our lungs. Testing, trial, and temptation marked the entire life of Jesus on earth. Why would it not mark the entire life of those that would follow Him? This prayer, like all the other petitions in the Lord's Prayer, is grounded firmly in the life and the work of Jesus Himself.¹⁶ Just as Jesus was in danger of being tempted and destroyed by evil through His whole life, so too those that follow Him are in danger of the same. Only through the power of God can we hope to be rescued.¹⁷ The protection of God should be a constant petition for those that would follow Jesus.

At 6:14-15, Jesus returns once again to the matter of forgiveness. If there was any doubt about the conditional nature of "forgiveness" then all doubt is removed by this section. Verse 15 makes it clear that for those that refuse to forgive others, forgiveness is withheld from them by God. The forgiveness of God which takes root in the soul of the one that is truly forgiven will produce fruit of like kind. It will produce an abundance of forgiveness for those who have been wronged, for those who have been hurt by the actions and the inactions of others. Each time we

¹⁶ N.T. Wright, *The Lord and His Prayer*, p. 48.


¹⁷ Ephesians 6:12 **We aren't fighting against human enemies but against rulers, authorities, forces of cosmic darkness, and spiritual powers of evil in the heavens.** CEB.



say this prayer, we are reminded of this great truth, this constant reality of the kingdom of heaven.

At 6:16-18, Jesus addresses the issue of fasting. It was assumed that disciples give to the poor and pray, so here it is also assumed that disciples would fast. It is likely a surprise to readers today that such an assumption would be made.¹⁸ How many of you have participated in fasting for purposes other than a medical procedure, or for dietary reasons? Fasting is often associated with prayer in the Old Testament and is meant to express humility, focus, and commitment to God. Fasting, in the time of Jesus was considered to be an indicator of piety and an act of faithfulness to God. The issue that Jesus has with fasting is that for some this offered an opportunity of putting on a display so that others would know that in fact a person is fasting. The purpose of fasting is supposed to be in order to focus upon God, not for recognition from other people. Again, here, like with giving to the poor and with prayer, Jesus indicates that fasting should be done in secret as something done between the person doing the fasting and God.

¹⁸ R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 254.



At 6:19-21, Jesus will focus upon earthly resources, earthly treasures. How many of us hoard things? I suspect that Americans will rank high as some of the greatest hoarders in all of history and in all of the world today. How many things do you have in your house, or in your garage that you have not used, or perhaps even seen in the last 2 years. The focus here is upon the heart. Jesus knows that where things are that you treasure, so there also is your heart. Remember, Jesus is trying to get them to focus on the fact that the kingdom of heaven is breaking into the world and gradually, bit by bit replacing the kingdom of this world. The things of this world are temporary and fleeting. They pass away with use, with time, and through calamity. The things of heaven are secure in the hands of God. They are eternal, of lasting value and cannot suffer calamity. The real issue is where a person will entrust their heart, to their 401k, or to God.

At 6:22-24, while the imagery of light may be familiar and easily understood, the concept of the eyes as “the lamp of the body” is not nearly so obvious or so easily understood.¹⁹ “These difficult verses can only be understood correctly by noting the

¹⁹ R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 260.

context in which they stand, i.e. the pericopes on either side, both of which refer to concern with wealth.”²⁰ To be fair, there are numerous interpretations of this verse and none of them is beyond dispute. There is some indication that the most widely perceived interpretation to the modern mind, that somehow the eye is the window to the soul, is not in view as it is a modern conception of the eye, not one the ancients will have held and therefore anachronistic. What is involved in these verses is the antithesis of generosity, covetousness, an evil and envious disposition, a hatred of others.²¹ Jesus here calls upon His followers to oppose those things that are categorized as darkness, such as covetousness, hatred, and the pursuit of earthly wealth, especially at the expense of pursuing the values and the matters of the importance in the kingdom of heaven.

The issue is that no one can have divided loyalties, serving two masters. As is expressed quite clearly and distinctly in verse 24 the issue is one of loyalty. Will a person be loyal to the kingdom of heaven and to God, or will one be loyal, devoted to, or

²⁰ Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, Vol. 33A in the Word Biblical Commentary series (Dallas TX: Word Books, Publisher, 1993), p. 158.

²¹ W.D. Davies and D.C. Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, International Critical Commentary series, Vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), pp. 637-640.

cling (ἀνθέξεται - *anexetai*) to, God, or will they be loyal, devoted to, or cling to, wealth (μαμωνᾶ - *mamona*). Again the issue is related to covenant and loyalty. It is the same as it has always been, from the very first person who walked on this earth. Will we trust God or will we trust in our own understanding, our own abilities, our own creativeness and innovativeness, or will we trust in God?


The next section, 6:25-34, focuses upon the heavenly care of the Father.²² It is the case that much of the focus of all human beings is how they are not only going to survive, but also how they can live in comfort and security. The focus is upon self, or upon one's family, and how to provide for self and one's family. In having this focus reliance is most often upon one's own abilities, one's own resources, and upon what can be done focusing upon oneself. The teaching of Jesus here challenges His listeners to rely upon, to trust, the true source of all that sustains us. Nothing that a person has, not even the air they breath would exist apart from God's gracious provision. How much worrying and concern is spent on things that, in truth, people actually have no control over.

²² W.D. Davies and D.C. Allison, *Matthew 1-7*, p. 645.

Jesus seeks to shift the focus away from self-reliance and selfish focus to a reliance upon God and a focus upon Him.

God provides all that we need. The question is will we both acknowledge this fact and will we trust God in such a way as to demonstrate our recognition of this truth. Jesus begins this section of His teaching by using the term, “therefore” (*Διὰ τοῦτο - Dia touto*) which indicates that what is said here is to be connected with the previous section. The idea is that when we understand who our master is we then come to understand the source of our life, our blessings, and our sustenance. Such an understanding will change our focus of attention, what we are concerned about, our priorities in life, who we seek to please. The nations, the Gentiles, pursue all the things that they think are important to sustain their life; they do this in a way that does not reflect a faith, a trust, in God.

Jesus indicates that God knows what we need, not what we might want ,or desire, but what we genuinely need. The implication is that God will provide for the needs of those that trust in Him and wait upon His provision. Jesus challenges His readers to live life to the full each day. Life to the full, in service of




God, and His kingdom. It is the case that we often focus so much on the problems of tomorrow that we fail to live our life today. Such an understanding of life is not an excuse for sitting down and doing nothing, but a call to live in the present to the full extent and with the full focus of all that we are, and all that we have been given by God. Such focus, upon the source of all blessings, and upon the provision that comes from God changes us. Such focus indicates that we trust in God, that we believe in Him. This is the calling that Jesus issues to His listeners and it is still the calling that is set for us today. Will we trust God?

Synopsis

Jesus teaches His listeners that they need to take care regarding the motivation for the acts of piety, their acts of righteousness. They need to insure that they do them in such a way that they are focused on gaining honor from men, but rather are focused upon honoring God. They are to be actions that are genuine and from the heart not to gain the praise of men. Rewards are to be sought from God, not from men and from this earthly world.

Prayer is to be done in such a way that it does not seek the recognition and honor of men. Again, the focus is to be centered on seeking to honor and please God. In the midst of this section, Jesus will give His listeners a model prayer to teach them how, and what, they should pray. The focus of prayer is to be directed toward honoring God and trusting in Him for the necessities of life. There is also a focus on forgiving others as a condition of being forgiven. Jesus will also touch on another act of righteousness and He will challenge people to fast in a way that



focuses upon attentiveness to God and not as a demonstration before men.

Jesus will also admonish His listeners to pursue the treasures of heaven and to stop collecting the treasures of earth. The focus of their life is to be directed toward serving God. He warns them of the dangers of trying to serve 2 masters. He also teaches them to avoid worrying about things that indicate a focus, and a service, upon this world and its values. God is to be recognized as the source of our necessities and we should seek God's kingdom and doing what is right in the kingdom and not according to the standards and goals of this world.

Main Points

- Jesus gives warnings regarding taking care to practice our good deeds for the right audience, God.
- Jesus calls for genuine prayer, from the heart directed to God.
- Jesus gives His listeners a model prayer.
- Jesus challenges His readers to fast in a way that draws no attention from people, but is for God alone.
- Our treasure and our heart are connected, our master is where our heart is.
- Jesus challenges His listeners to live each day in trust of God.

Questions

1. What motivates you to attend church?
2. Why do you think it is important to do good deeds in secret?
3. What reward do you think Jesus expects His audience to understand will be given by the Father?
4. What are some ways that you focus on God when you pray?
5. Why do you think we need to pray if God already knows what we need?
6. What is the purpose for prayer?
7. What are some ways that people can show honor to God?
8. Why do you think Jesus challenges His audience to pray for their daily sustenance?
9. Why do you think God will not forgive people that do not forgive others?
10. What are some ways that God protects people from temptation?
11. How do you think fasting could help a person focus on God?
12. What are some heavenly treasures?
13. What are some ways that what you treasure is connected to where your heart is?
14. What are some ways that you demonstrate by how you live who your master is?
15. What are some things that you worry about? Why?

16. How do your priorities in life indicate that you have a desire for God's kingdom?

17. What are some ways that you feel you can promote the kingdom of heaven by the way you live your life?

18. Why do you think human beings want to control so many things about life?

19. What are some ways that you seek to glorify God?

20. How do your priorities in life indicate that you trust God?

To Take Home

What is Important to know?

It is important to know that this life is a testing ground to see whether we will decide to trust God or trust in someone, or something else. Our actions demonstrate the focus of our heart. So often we seek, we crave, the praise of other people for our actions and the things that we do. Jesus challenges His listeners to focus upon pleasing God and seeking reward from God. What are some ways that you have sought to please God in your life rather than to please yourself or other people?

Where is God in these words?

God is in these words of Jesus trying to challenge His children to trust in Him. So often the wisdom of the world is to focus on things that are not important to God. The world's view is that we live in a realm of limited resources. God's view of the world is that resources are unlimited. The only limitation rests in our ability to trust and follow Him. What are some ways that you seek to demonstrate that you trust in God in the choices that you make?

What does any of this mean for how I live my life?

The words of Jesus to His listeners are not meant to be taken as theory they are meant to be put into action in daily life. Sometimes we seek to test God to see if He will give us what we want rather than what we need. There is a big difference between giving a person what they want as opposed to what they need. It is easy to play lip service to the words of Jesus without putting them into action in our lives. How does Jesus being your Lord and Savior change the way you treat other people and the choices that you make in your life?

What is the word of God calling us to do?

The word of God is calling us to trust Him. It is calling us to live into the destiny that He has created for us. God allows us to choose our path, how we will act, and react to each of the circumstances that we encounter in our life. The words of Jesus challenge us to trust in God not just in words, but in the day to day decisions that we make. When is an instance where someone has treated you better than you deserved because they followed Jesus?