



Bethany Bible Study & Discussion

Sermon on the Mount (Part-V)

Wednesdays
8-9 PM

The Secret Believer (Matthew 6:1-7, 16-18)

- **Secret Giving (1-4)** How must we give? What can we give? What does it mean 'left hand must not know'? What makes us a generous giver? What can we give? What must come before our giving (II Corinthians 8:5)? How can we give secretly in a local church? How is the reward different for trumpet blowers and secret givers?
- **Secret Praying (5-7)** What is prayer? How must we pray? Why must we pray? What must be the outcome or result of our prayers? What are some reasons for ineffective prayers? Can sinners pray? Does secret praying mean we cannot have public church prayers?
- **Secret Fasting (16-18)** What is fasting? How must we fast? Examples and purpose of fasting in the OT and NT? What do we hope to achieve through fasting?
- **Secret and Shining**: Do in secret (Ch.6) and Shine as Lights (Ch.5) ... is there a contradiction? Is giving, praying, and fasting a requirement or a choice for believers?

8.25.21



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The SECRET BELIEVER

Secret Giving (1-4)

Secret Praying (5-7)

Secret Fasting (16-18)

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Continuing theme ...a higher standard for us

Our righteousness **must**
exceed the righteousness of
scribes and Pharisees
(Mathew 5:20)

Secret Giving

How must we give? What can we give? What must be our motivation?

What does it mean 'left hand must not know'?

What makes us a generous giver?

What must come before our giving (II Corinthians 1:5)? (should be 8:5)

How can we give secretly in a local church?

How is the reward different for trumpet blowers and secret givers?

Giving ...

HOW	Secretly, Willingly, Joyfully, Sacrificially
WHAT	Time, Talents, and Treasure Ourselves as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1)
INSPIRATION	Love of Christ compels us (II Corinthians 5:14)
MOTIVATION	To glorify God, not self
GENEROUS GIVERS	are sacrificial givers, give the first fruits (not left overs)

Giving

“left hand must not know”?

Not only others but even we must not be conscious of our giving (such as meditating on the act of giving)

What must come before giving?

They gave themselves **first of all to the Lord**, and then by the will of God also to us (II Corinthians 8:5, NIV)

Rewards for Trumpet Blowers and Secret Givers

Reward for trumpet blowers?

- Those seeking applause, name recognition ... they will receive just that!
 - Human applause/recognition is temporary & will never satisfy

“For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God” (John 12:43)

Reward for secret givers?

- Heavenly blessings that will last and will satisfy
- Recognition by the Lord (poor widow who gave it all, Mark 12:44)
- Blessing of obeying the Lord and His Word
- Internal joy (It is more blessed to give, Acts 20:35)

Giving ... from the Old Testament

- Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done (**Proverbs 19:17**, NIV)
- If anyone is poor among your fellow Israelites in any of the towns of the land the LORD your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward them. Rather, be openhanded and freely lend them whatever they need. (**Deuteronomy 15:7,8**, NIV)

Giving ... from NT

Generous Church “ ... know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. **2**In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their **extreme poverty** welled up in rich generosity. **3**For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even **beyond their ability**” (II **Corinthians 8:1-3**, NIV) (Acts 4:32-37)

Generous widow “They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on” (**Mark 12:44**, NIV)

Lord Jesus Christ - For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. (II **Corinthians 8:9**, NIV)

Secret Praying

What is prayer? How must we pray? Why must we pray?

What must be the outcome or result of our prayers?

What are some reasons for ineffective prayers?

Can sinners pray?

Does secret praying mean we cannot have public church prayers?

What may repetitive prayers show?

Prayer

WHAT: Communion & Communication with God

HOW:

- Secretly (personal prayers) (Church prayers will be in public)
- Humbly (Compare prayer of Pharisee and publican, Luke 18:10-14)
- In Christ (John 14:6) through the spirit (Romans 8:26-27)
- In holiness, through the blood of Christ that makes us worthy (Hebrews 10:19,22) without sin (Psalms 66:18)
- In Faith/confidence that He will hear and respond (I John 3:22)
- Without ceasing (I Thessalonians 5:17)
- Learn from Lord's prayer (Mathew 6: 9-13)

Prayer

WHY: (God knows everything ... so we are not telling him anything new)

Prayers show our **love** for the Lord and desire for **communion**

Prayers show our **dependence** on Him

Prayers reflect our **faith**

Prayer: Desired Final outcome

To hear from the Lord

- * Our communication in prayer is complete when we hear back from the Lord
- * Sometimes Lord responds quickly, and sometimes he takes time

Secret sincere prayers lead to open blessings

(in our life, lives of others, church, and community)

Some reasons for ineffective prayers

- Sin in our life (Isaiah 59:1-2, I Peter 3:7, Psalms 37:5-6)
- Praying for wrong things (James 4:3)
- Seeking answers before fulness of time (Galatians 4:4)
- Praying without faith (Mathew 21:22)

also see “HOW to pray”

Can sinners pray?

Yes,

- **But** only the sinner's prayer
- Lord, have mercy on me (Luke 18:38)
 - Blind sinner received physical and spiritual sight, and glorified God

Sinners may be successful, but it is temporary ... end is death

Sinner may enjoy all natural blessings ... that is God's love (Mathew 5:45)

Secret Fasting

What is fasting?

How must we fast?

Examples and purpose of fasting in the OT and NT?

What do we hope to achieve through fasting?

Fasting

Meaning – Cutting food intake

In a broader sense, fasting can refer to abstinence or denial

- denying food (a necessity) and other distractions/pleasures

Do it secretly (don't announce with words or looks!)

Fasting & Praying is often connected

“Declare a holy **fast** ... and **cry** out to the Lord” **Joel 1:14**, NIV

“So we **fasted and petitioned** our God about this, and he answered our prayer” **Ezra 8:23**, NIV

“so after they had **fasted and prayed** and laid hands on them, they sent them away” **Acts 13:3**, NIV

Join for Bethany monthly church fasting & prayer

Fasting in OT and NT

OT: **Mourning for sins** (day of Atonement) (required fasting)

Nineveh repents (Jonah 3:5), national repentance (I Samuel 7:6)
Mourning for death of Saul & Jonathan (I Samuel 31:13)

NT: **To seek God's will**

As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away (**Acts 13:2-3**)

To spend quality time with God (Exodus 34:28, Moses fasted and was with the Lord for forty days)

Timing and Purpose of Mourning

Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, “Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast? And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast (Matthew 9:14-15)

Today is “then” and we must fast **to enjoy communion** with the Lord

Giving, Praying, Fasting

Not an option for believers

Lord **expects** us to give, pray, and fast ... and **blessed** will be our life!

- **When** you do alms (6:2) not if you do alms
- **When** you pray (6:5) not if you pray
- **When** you fast (6:16) not if you fast

“Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men”
(Colossians 3:23)



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