

# Roots of Faith

August 2, 2020 ~ The Greatest Sermon (3 of 4) ~ Mat 6.1-34

## Summary of Where We Are

- ❖ Today is 3<sup>rd</sup> part of 4-part series on the “**Sermon on the Mount**”
- ❖ First two messages regarded “**Purpose of Man**” & “**Purpose of Law**”
  - ✧ 1<sup>st</sup> message ~ Objective standards by which God evaluates & rewards man
  - ✧ 2<sup>nd</sup> message ~ Affirmation of law and correction of misunderstandings
- ❖ Wrestled to name messages – Next were “**Faith for Living**” & “**Faith for Dying**”
  - ✧ But they’ve changed to “**Roots of Faith**” & “**Fruits of Faith**”
  - ✧ Christ’s message wasn’t about dying / It was about living by faith

## Faith is Central to Living for Christ

- ❖ **Heb 11.1** ~ “**Faith is the substance of things hoped for – the evidence of things not seen.**”
  - ✧ Jesus is weaning us away from living by sight / We’re to live by faith in unseen
  - ✧ Faith is central to accomplishing all Jesus is about to tell us
  - ✧ **III: Fire** ~ Think of castaway trying to get fire started / sparks of hope
- ❖ **III: “Spiritual” paupers** ~ Carl Shoemaker c/book talks at Trinity – “**theological**”
  - ✧ Many men live lives close to fires of theology / But they aren’t alight
  - ✧ Pharisees and Scribes did this and had no life / no faith
  - ✧ Some men may be “**spiritual paupers**” though they’re “**theological giants**”
- ❖ **Chapter 6** of Matthew is about the “**inwardness of faith**”
  - ✧ **III: New building** ~ Construction must occur first before it can be put to use
  - ✧ Jesus is instructing His hearers in the necessity of the “**work**” of faith
    - Christians are said to “**improve**” upon their baptism / “**build**”
  - ✧ Fires need tending / Their eventual size depends upon the process and fuel
    - **III: Castaway** ~ Sparks & smoking coconut fibers to roaring bonfire
    - All true believers have a fire inside them / But is it strong or weak?
- ❖ Believers are to tend their fires / Matthew **6** instructs us in this tending
  - ✧ This is fire God gave us / We’re to tend our fires for Him alone
  - ✧ These fires are meant to be a blessing to others – but they exist for God

## Xition: My experience outlining Chapter 6 . . .

## Outlining Chapter 6 Until Satisfied

- ❖ Before we dig into these 34 verses let's outline them
  1. vss 1-4 ~ "do good deeds secretly" (group)
  2. vss 5-8 ~ "pray privately & earnestly" (group)
  3. vss 9-13 ~ "model of prayer from Jesus"
  4. vss 14-15 ~ "criticality of forgiveness"
  5. vss 16-18 ~ "fasting privately" (group)
  6. vss 19-21 ~ "real treasure is heavenly"
  7. vss 22-23 ~ "God must be our Master"
  8. vss 24-34 ~ "don't worry about material existence" (eat, drink, wear)
- ❖ Eight to 6 sections – "good deeds, prayer and fasting" can be grouped (134)
  1. vss 1-8, 16-18 ~ "good deeds, prayer, and fasting private & earnest"
  2. vss 9-13 ~ "model of prayer from Jesus" (group 1)
  3. vss 14-15 ~ "criticality of forgiveness" (group 1)
  4. vss 19-21 ~ "real treasure is heavenly" (group 2)
  5. vss 22-23 ~ "God must be our Master" (group 2)
  6. vss 24-34 ~ "don't worry about material existence" (eat, drink, wear)
- ❖ Six to 4 sections – group "prayer & forgiveness" as well as "treasure and God"
  1. vss 1-8, 16-18 ~ "good deeds, prayer, and fasting private & earnest"
  2. vss 9-15 ~ "model of prayer from Jesus & importance of forgiveness"
  3. vss 19-23 ~ "real treasure is heavenly & God our Master"
  4. vss 24-34 ~ "don't worry about material existence" (eat, drink, wear)
- ❖ Four sections seemed odd – Lord's Prayer stuck out – didn't fit in flow
  - ✧ Couldn't progress on sermon until it fit together
- ❖ Four sections to 3 ~ Only then did it fit perfectly
  1. vss 1-8, 16-18 ~ "Fake Faith Versus Real Faith"
  2. vss 9-15, 19-23 ~ "Supremacy of Spirit"
  3. vss 24-34 ~ "Warnings of Worldly Seduction"
    - III: Adrift in Ocean / Jesus pries our hands off what won't save us
      - Jesus places our hands on that which will save us
      - Then He warns us against letting go for lesser things

**Xition: We have 34 verses to cover (3 sections of 11, 12, 11 vss each)**

## 1. Fake Faith Versus Real Faith

### Charitable Deeds, Prayer, and Fasting

- ❖ Definition of terms
  - ✧ “charitable deeds” ~ alms – good deeds – clothing & feeding poor
  - ✧ “prayer” ~ private prayers / Lk 18.9-14 parable of two men at temple
  - ✧ “fasting” ~ spiritual focus and strength – specific goals

### We Live Our Lives for an Audience of One

- ❖ Jesus instructs His disciples to not seek glory from men
  - ✧ v2 ~ Being seen doing good deeds “that they may have glory of men”
  - ✧ v5 ~ praying on street corners “that they may be seen of men”
  - ✧ v16 ~ they disfigure their faces “that they may appear to men to be fasting”
- ❖ Jesus says c/each: “Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward”
- ❖ Secrecy is advised so that “your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly”
- ❖ It’s not about the act itself being seen - it’s that they’re doing it to be seen
  - ✧ III: AFV – Child’s drama wasn’t noticed by mom so he kept doing it
  - ✧ Sometimes when people go out it’s “to see and be seen”
    - Celebrity life – They become famous –spotlight turns on – doesn’t go off
    - III: Twilight Zone ~ Former actress watches her films – enters into one

### Resist Temptation to Praise Ourselves or to Seek Such

- ❖ What not to do and what to do
  - ✧ **Deeds / v2** ~ “do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do”
    - v3 ~ “do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing”
  - ✧ **Prayers / v5** ~ “hypocrites .. love to pray standing in the synagogues”
    - v6 ~ “when you pray, go into your room .. and shut your door”
  - ✧ **Fasting / v16** ~ “do not be like the hypocrites with a sad countenance”
    - v17 ~ “anoint your head and wash your face .. do not appear to be fasting”
- ❖ **Prov 27.2** ~ “Let another man praise you, and not your own mouth”
  - ✧ III: Presidential candidates didn’t campaign – 9<sup>th</sup> William Henry Harrison
    - Politicians today seek publicity / Always seeking reelection
  - ✧ Others praise us far less than we seek to praise ourselves / Don’t be fooled
    - **Prov 20.19b** ~ “do not associate with one who flatters with his lips”

**Xition: Sermon title today is “Roots of Faith” . . .**

## “Roots of Faith”

- ❖ 1<sup>st</sup> message – Objective measures - 7 beatitudes about character & conduct
  - ✧ 2<sup>nd</sup> – Jesus corrected misconceptions of the Law
  - ✧ But now He’s begun in earnest to instruct in character & conduct
  - ✧ Just as with the Law, He’s correcting popular misconceptions on them
- ❖ During intro used picture of drowning – Jesus pries us off of what would sink
- ❖ **III: Seeds or Plants** ~ Jesus clears ground, prepares soil, plants us in it
  - ✧ Today’s message is about nurturing faith / establishing strong roots in faith
  - ✧ Today’s message is inward (Character) – Next time about outward (Conduct)

## 2. Supremacy of Spiritual World

### The Lord’s Prayer and Location of our True Treasure

- ❖ Five points of emphasis Jesus makes in Lord’s Prayer
  1. **v9** ~ God is holy and in Heaven
  2. **v10** ~ God reigns supreme from heaven but His rule extends to earth
  3. **v11** ~ God provides for our daily needs yet we should ask for Him to do so
  4. **v12** ~ God forgives us and expects us to forgive others
  5. **v13** ~ God protects from temptation, rescues from Satan, and reigns supreme
- ❖ This prayer “anchors us deeply in the spiritual world.”
  - ✧ We admit our dependence upon God and express our fealty towards Him

### v14 ~ Criticality of Forgiveness

- ❖ Jesus interrupts His flow to defend the importance of forgiveness
  - ✧ He’d mentioned in prayer that we forgive others
  - ✧ He links our forgiving others to the Father’s forgiveness of us
- ❖ Here he goes on to emphasize what I’d shared last week
  - ✧ **Q: “Hard hearted people are not going to heaven”**
  - ✧ Jesus will say “I never knew you; depart from Me you, who practice lawlessness”

### v22 ~ Eye the Lamp of the Body

- ❖ Eyes are said to be “**windows into the soul**”
- ❖ **Read Prov 30.17** ~ “**The eye that mocks his father .. eagles will eat it**”
- ❖ **III: Blink** by Malcom Gladwell ~ Contempt shows in face
  - ✧ Most important of 18 traits in predicting a lasting relationship

- ✧ "You would think that criticism would be the worst," Gottman says, "because criticism is a global condemnation of a person's character. Yet contempt is qualitatively different from criticism. With criticism I might say to my wife, 'You never listen, you are really selfish and insensitive.' Well, she's going to respond defensively to that. That's not very good for our problem solving and interaction. But if I speak from a superior plane, that's far more damaging, and contempt is any statement made from a higher level. A lot of the time it's an insult: 'It's trying to put that person on a lower plane than you. It's hierarchical.'"
- ✧ Gottman has found, that "Contempt is closely related to disgust and both are about completely rejecting and excluding someone from the community. The big gender difference with negative emotions is that women are more critical, and men are more likely to stonewall. We find that women start talking about a problem, the men get irritated and turn away, and the women get more critical, and it becomes a circle. But there isn't any gender difference when it comes to contempt. Not at all." Contempt is special. If you can measure contempt, then all of a sudden you don't need to know every detail of the couple's relationship."
- ✧ These are referred to as microfacial expressions – they reveal the heart
- ❖ Jesus said, "If your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light."
- ✧ A believer's eye is good because God made it so – And He protects us from evil

### 3. Warning of Worldly Seduction

v25 ~ "do not worry about your life .. what you will eat .. or drink .. or put on"

- ❖ Earlier I used the picture of being lost at sea
  - ✧ Jesus pries our hands off of false faith, places our hands on real faith
    - But then He warns us to not let go
- ❖ You might think to yourself "How could anyone trade faith for these?"
  - ✧ But the reality is that it's done all of the time
  - ✧ Jesus tells the story of the seeds being sown – "cares of this world"

**Xition: But these words – "eat, drink, wear" – can mean far more**

### v31 ~ These Words Mean More / “What you will eat .. or drink .. or wear”

- ❖ Don't think of these as simply eating, drinking, and clothing
  - ✧ Time spent on these things can consume your entire life
- ❖ “Clothing” can be for prestige – “keeping up with the Joneses”
  - ✧ “tip of iceberg” / Bigger house – newer car – better job
- ❖ “Eating” can be about security – not wanting to risk going without
  - ✧ The man in the parable built bigger barns to store his wealth
    - He said to himself, “you have goods laid up for many years – take your ease”
    - But God said, “Fool! This night your soul will be required of you.”
- ❖ “Drinking” can be all about pleasure – self-indulging or carousing
  - ✧ We forget all spiritual goals and only live to party or have fun

### v33 ~ “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness”

- ❖ We naively assume that we do this all well / We're here after all – at Church
- ❖ But what we do here today takes us a few hours
  - ✧ You must keep the main thing the main thing the other 6 days too
  - ✧ You can't “let go” of all things spiritual through the week and expect progress
  - ✧ You won't grow in your service to God by merely attending worship services
  - ✧ You must “improve upon” your faith / Build it up – build upon it

#### Today's message defined the inwardness of the life of faith

- It defined basics of the faith such as good deeds, prayer, and fasting
- We're to stay spiritually focused – to not pursue prestige, security, or pleasure
- These inward disciplines are to prepare you for the work of faith

#### Next week in Chapter 7 we'll focus on that outward aspect of faith

#### ➤ Prayer and Song

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,  
And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,  
To God our Savior, who alone is wise,  
Be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever.

Amen **\*pause\*** Go in peace . . .

# Roots of Faith

August 2, 2020 ~ Sermon Handout ~ Mat 6.1-34

1. "Faith is the \_\_\_\_\_ of things hoped for – the \_\_\_\_\_ of things not seen." (Hebrews 11.1) We are to live by \_\_\_\_\_, not sight.
2. Chapter 6 concerns the \_\_\_\_\_ of faith, whereas Chapter 7 concerns the \_\_\_\_\_ of it.
3. What were given as the 3 main points of Chapter 6?
  - a. vss 1-8, 16-18 \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. vss 9-15, 19-23 \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. vss 24-34 \_\_\_\_\_
4. In the first point Jesus corrects errors in how people perform \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
5. What phrase did Jesus repeat 3 times about people doing things to be seen of people as opposed to God? "Assuredly, \_\_\_\_\_."
6. Proverbs 27.2 "\_\_\_\_\_."
7. What is main goal of Lord's Prayer? "It anchors us deeply in the \_\_\_\_\_."
8. Jesus warns us not to worry about what we'll eat, drink, or wear. Paraphrase each below:
  - a. Clothing \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Eating: \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Drinking: \_\_\_\_\_
9. What are we to seek above all else? "The \_\_\_\_\_."