

I. Review SOTM

A. Beatitudes - Jesus starts this Sermon with a section that has become known as the Beatitudes, these eight heart conditions are given as the purpose and context of the rest of the sermon. They are considered as the essential components of the spiritual life of the believer and an onramp to the culture of the Kingdom of God. These beatitudes are so much more than a good idea or idealistic poetry. Jesus is revealing the deep things of His love to us and inviting us to behold and be transformed by them. (Ex. 34:6-8; Mat. 11:29; 1 Cor. 2:6-16)

1. Poor In Spirit
2. Mourning for the Kingdom
3. Meekness
4. Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness
5. Merciful
6. Pure in Heart
7. Peacemakers
8. Enduring Persecution

B. After Jesus lays out the Beatitudes as the goal of Gods will for our lives, He then spends the rest of His teaching instructing us how to move forward in the destiny of becoming like Him. Jesus gives us 6 Hindrances then 4 Positioners as He encourages and implores us to grow in intimacy with Him and be transformed by His beauty. (Mat. 25:1-4)

1. Hindrances - Six Aspects of the Fallen Heart or Old Man that is being transformed/put to death in the garden of our heart. (Mat. 5:21-48)
 - a. Spirit of Murder
 - b. Spirit of Covetousness
 - c. Spirit of Treachery
 - d. Spirit of Manipulation
 - e. Spirit of Revenge
 - f. Spirit of Animosity
2. Positioners - Four activities that position us to encounter Jesus and receive rewards from our Father. (Mat. 6:1-34)
 - a. Charitable Deeds (Giving of yourself for the gain of others)
 - b. Prayer (Meditation, Contemplation, Intercession, Worship and Dialogue)
 - c. Fasting (Prioritizing Spiritual Food over Physical Food)
 - d. Giving (Prioritizing our Spiritual Security over Physical Security)

II. Positioning to Encounter God through the Activity

- A. Biblically speaking, “Encountering God” is when the Holy Spirit reveals truth about God to your spirit. In turn this truth must be understood or comprehended by you through the work of the Holy Spirit to the level that it moves and transforms your heart in love. 16:14-15; 17:20-26; 1 Cor. 2:9-14)
- B. In session 23 of this series we established that we do not do these activities of good works because it increases our standing of righteousness or increases God's love for us. We do them to position our minds and hearts to encounter the relational knowledge of God by and through the Holy Spirit.
 - 1. It is my conviction that the greatest reward that can be given to man is to have relational intimacy with God Himself. Therefore, under the theme of rewards the pinnacle manifestation of this would be nearness and intimacy with the Most High. (Pr. 2:1-5; Ps. 16:11, 17:15, 36:7-10, 65:4)

Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in Heaven. (Mat. 6:1)

- 2. Jesus wants us to set our eyes and hearts upon God as we do these deeds. This intentional pursuit of relational conversation is the separator between duty or obligation based activity (eyes on us and others) vs love and intimacy based obedience (eyes on Jesus). (Jhn. 5:39-40)
- C. Father who See's – In the early days of my faith, I always thought of the truth that our God see's all through a very negative lens. I didn't want Him to see my heart and my activities because I thought He mostly despised everything He saw. Jesus assures us of quite the opposite reality. He tells us that our Father watches the movements of our heart and actions so that He can reward us. (Isa. 30:18-19)
 - 1. It is absolutely life changing to understand that God is not put off by our weaknesses and pursues our hearts in the midst of our immaturity. He pursues us so that He can reward even the smallest effort to love Him and grow in our relationship with Him. (Ps. 139:1-16; Lk. 15:20)

That your deed may be done in secret; and your Father who see's in secret will reward you openly. (Mat. 6:4)

- 2. Reward – The most common use of this word in Jesus time was the idea of the “fruit that occurs naturally through toils and endeavors to produce it”. Jesus tells us that if the fruit (reward) that we are hoping to produce is to be seen by men then that is the fruit (reward) that is will

produce. If the reward that we are looking to produce is to be seen by God and have deeper relationship with Him then that is what we will receive. (Eph. 6:5-8)

Do not sound a trumpet to be seen by men.....do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. (Mat. 6:2-3)

3. Living before His Eyes – Jesus knows that our tendency is to live before the eyes of men, especially the men in whom we desire their approval and adulation. (Jhn 12:43; Gal. 6:12; 1 Thes. 2:6)
 - a. Our own eyes – Jesus tells us we have a tendency to want to do works of righteousness to impress ourselves as well and tells us that we are to refrain from rejoicing in our own devotion to Jesus but rather to simply rejoice in Jesus so that our reward may be full.

III. Positioning to Encounter God through the act of Charitable Deeds

- A. The first lifestyle activity that Jesus exhorts us to as a main way to position ourselves to encounter Him and experience rewards of intimacy is by intentionally doing charitable deeds for others. (Mat. 6:1-4)
- B. Charitable Deeds – The word translated “Charitable Deeds” or “Alms” in the New Testament literally means to give to another who has need in hopes of benefiting them. This word is used to speak of giving money, skill, time, and other forms of strength to those who need help.
- C. Practical’s of Seeking Encounter in Charitable Deeds – Living of lifestyle of doing charitable deeds will not only work the muscle of Godly activity but also reveal and bring up all sorts of questions, emotions, and responses in your heart and mind both positive and negative. I believe the heart of Jesus in encouraging us to do charitable deeds is about having encounters with us in the midst of what goes on in our hearts and minds as we are doing them. If we simply do the activity devoid of conversation and seeking encounter, we can easily be giving ourselves to dead works. (Is. 1:11-16; Amos 5:21-23; Heb. 6:1-2; Rev. 3:1-2)
 1. **Invite** – Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you and highlight specific aspects of the way doing the charitable deed affects you and others.
 2. **Observe** – Pay attention to the emotions, thoughts, and responses of both yourself and the one in whom you are doing the charitable deed for. What sort of “noise” is going on in your heart and mind?
 3. **Dialogue** – Talk to God about the “noise” both positive and negative that your feeling and thinking and the response of the individual you are

helping as you do your charitable deed. Ask Jesus to give you insight into His heart, emotions, and truth concerning these things.

4. **Contemplate** – When you are done doing your charitable deed take time to contemplate your encounter with Jesus. Meditate, journal, and share your encounter.