

# *Resurrection Life of Jesus Church*

## THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

RLJ-1911

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### PART 17: PRACTICAL INSTRUCTIONS

#### **PRAYING IN PUBLIC**

Image and prestige were important to the Pharisees and Sadducees. They had been labeled hypocrites by Jesus and now He took them to task for their custom of praying loudly in public. They were not really praying to God. It was a form of public prayer talking so that people would see they were devout in their relationship to God. Jesus told people to conduct their prayer in the privacy of their homes. Furthermore, God is not an idiot and it is not necessary to repeat prayers endlessly. Jesus said the petition to the Lord was heard the first time, effectively rendering moot the need to repeat yourself again and again as if God wasn't paying attention the first, second, or third time, etc.

**verses 5-7**

#### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Any child attending Sunday school has been taught "The Lord's Prayer," and while it is a prayer, it has been mislabeled. Jesus taught his followers how they should pray and should be called "The Disciple's Prayer."

Most Christians have not understood the new concept that Jesus taught His followers. The idea of forgiveness was foreign to the Jewish people. They were used to bargaining in and talking to God, but Jesus showed them that there could be no unforgiveness if a person wanted God to grant their petition. Forgiveness is mandatory in the Kingdom of God. **verses 8-15**

#### **FASTING**

Fasting was popular among the Pharisees and Sadducees. They would dress in sackcloth, sprinkle ashes on their heads, and walk around in public to show everyone their piety and how much they were willing to sacrifice. Jesus stated that fasting should be carried out in secret; it was between you and God. **verses 16-18**

The Holy Spirit told the prophet Isaiah about true fasting and that instruction is still valid today. **Isaiah 58:1-11**

#### **GETTING RICH**

People down through the ages strived to accumulate riches in form of land, buildings, silver and gold. Jesus wanted to show the correct perspective of riches. A human being is born with no riches and he leaves behind all that he accumulated at death. A man's life on earth is set to a maximum of 120 years. Few people live that long, with most dying between the ages of 60 to 90. **Genesis 6:3**

People who are not born again will end up in hell when their physical bodies die. After the Great White Throne Judgment, everyone in hell will be moved to the Lake of Fire where they will be forever tormented. Their pain and suffering will vary according to



what they did on the earth. People who sinned greatly will encounter more severe punishment than those who sinned less.

Thus, the goal for you and me should be to find salvation and secure a place in heaven. Everyone who was alive on earth 2,000 years ago is dead. They are either in heaven or hell. All the tangible goods they accumulated were left behind at death and do not exist anymore. This means that the land is owned by someone else, the business no longer exists, the gold and silver have been melted and formed into something else, the jewels adorn another creation, the home is a pile of rubble, and the furniture no longer survives. With this as a background, here is what Jesus taught about riches. **Matthew 6:19-21**

## THE LIGHT OF THE BODY

Very few people have understood what Jesus meant when He spoke about the eye being “single.” I am also guilty in this area, having done what so many Christians do in reading a verse, not understanding it, and just moving on instead of examining its meaning. **verses 22-24**

This series has forced me to investigate everything I never understood in the Gospel of Matthew. It is obvious that when Jesus spoke about the eye being single, that it was a common expression used during that time period in Galilee.

When I checked my Swedish Bible, it referred to that the eye was “healthy.” As I checked a number of sources, I found one that I felt is a true interpretation of this verse based upon my respect for the man. It was written by the American evangelist Charles Finney and published in the Oberlin Evangelist magazine on December 2, 1840. Here is the excerpt:

*“It implies a state of entire consecration. That Christ intended to be understood, by a single eye, to mean a state of entire consecration to God, is evident from what follows the text. He says—‘No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.’ It is very plain, that the mind's eye is not right, unless the soul is supremely and only devoted to the love and service of God. Nothing less than a state of entire consecration to God can be intended by a single eye.”<sup>1</sup>*

There were no electronic devices at the time of Jesus and during the time of Charles Finney. A man would look at a woman and lust after her or it could be a person gazing with jealousy at someone’s possession. Thus, if you are staring at things that bring lust and envy, you are distracted by the desires you observe and not being single minded.

Examining this verse in light of what we are experiencing today, I believe this is what Jesus is saying to us today:

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.gospeltruth.net/1840OE/401202\\_single\\_evil\\_eye.htm](https://www.gospeltruth.net/1840OE/401202_single_evil_eye.htm)

- ❖ It makes your soul dirty and filled with lust when you watch ungodly television and movies.
- ❖ Men watching scantily dressed women in stores, on the street, and in videos will create a slow burning lust.
- ❖ Women reading graphic novels about steamy relationships will create erotic desire that seeks an outlet.
- ❖ The eye of a person sees alcohol and desire rises to drink the beverage.
- ❖ Food can also be a source of yearning. The sad thing is that a lot of Americans are obese and keep eating more than they need.

How would I summarize the teaching of Jesus? Anything you think, say, or do that disobeys the commandments of God is sinful and defiles your soul. Keep your eyes upon Jesus and adhere to the solid foundation of the Bible.

- ❖ Theft occurs when a person sees someone else's possession and gives in to the desire.
- ❖ People fornicate because they see an object of lust decide to act upon it.
- ❖ Murder takes place because a person sees something that makes them angry and lose control of their emotions.
- ❖ People become worldly when they see things and their possessions distract them into walking away from the Lord.
- ❖ Political leaders see things they like in another country and this often leads to war.

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*Be careful what you choose to look upon!*

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***Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!***

***Do you have an ear to hear with?***