**Pastor Demetric Felton Sr April 30, 2023**

**Warning: No Acting Allowed!**

Matthew 6:1-18

**Key Truth:** Our giving, praying, and fasting should be done out of a heartfelt adoration for God.

-Spiritual disciplines are not religious rituals; they are habits and practices designed to develop, grow, and strengthen one’s spirit and character as a follower of Jesus.-

**The Contrast In Motives:**

1. Hypocrites seek the adulation of the crowd.

2. Disciples seek the approval and glory of God the Father.

 Matthew 5:16

3. Hypocrites seek to do their good works in the public’s eye.

4. Disciples seek to do good works in the privacy of their hearts.

**What We Learn:**

1. Jesus expects His disciples to practice spiritual disciplines.

2. Jesus teaches that we can do the right things the wrong way.

3. Jesus teaches that spiritual disciplines done with the right

 motive, will be rewarded by God the Father.

4. Jesus gave us a simple, yet profound example of prayer that

 should include these elements:

 A. Adoration - Hallowed be your name

 B. Submission – Your kingdom come, your will be done.

 C. Provision – Give us this day our daily bread

 D. Confession – Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors

 E. Direction – Lead us not into temptation

**Taking It Beyond The Walls:** Thank Jesus for giving us tools like giving, prayer, and fasting, that help us grow in our relationship with God. Ask God to search your heart and carefully consider your motives for engaging in spiritual disciplines.

**Connection Group Homework:**

Looking back at your notes, was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

In what part of your life are you most tempted to do things for the praise of people rather than the praise of God?

Read Matthew 6:1-4: In what ways does your attitude toward giving reflect your attitude of worship?

Read ACTS 4:32-35 & 5:1-6: What do you think motivated Joseph and Ananias to give to the needy? What was the difference in the outcome? Why do you think God reacted the way He did?

Read Matthew 6:5-8: Who taught you to pray? Who are you teaching to pray?

Since God already knows our needs before we ask, what’s the point of practicing consistent, private prayer?

Read Psalm 37:3-4: Respond to this statement: When we’re centered on God’s agenda, it’ll change the way we pray as well as what we pray for.

How have your experiences with prayer influenced your ability to trust God?

Read Matthew 6:16-18: How would you describe your experience with fasting?

Besides food, what are some things you can give up as part of a fast?