

**Date:** 11-03-2019  
**Series:** The Sermon on the Mount

## A MISSING PIECE OF THE DISCIPLESHIP PUZZLE (Matthew 6:1-18)

**Matthew 6:1-18**-----1 "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. 2 Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly. 5 "And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. 7 And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. 9 In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. 13 And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. 14 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. 16 "Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

Robert Morin spent 50 of his 77 years on earth working as a cataloguer at the University of New Hampshire's library. According to *The Washington Post*, Morin "lived a simple, frugal life," complete with TV dinners and a car that was more than 20 years old. He also read plenty of books—thousands of them over the course of his life—and he "loved to talk to students," according to UNH spokeswoman Erika Mantz. Morin passed away in March of 2015, but not one person who had known Morin all the years he worked in the university library would have thought the announcement the school made about him could have been possible. In September of 2016, the school announced Morin had left all his earthly wealth to the school. Now, you might ask, How much could a librarian leave behind? Well, apparently, a lot, because Morin left the UNH an estate totaling \$4 million. While reading and going about his work, Morin had "quietly amassed" a fortune.

The extraordinary gift was a first for the school: "In our history, I'm not aware of anything like this," said Mantz. Morin's wish was that UNH would spend his money to fulfill whatever needs they had; he apparently told his financial adviser that the school would "figure out what to do with it."

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**Now that is an amazing story!** I don't know if Robert Morin was a believer or not, but even if he wasn't, he probably would have been shocked to learn that—from one point of view—the God who created him would have been quite impressed at what he had done (and BTW, I'm not speaking about the amount of money he gave away, as impressive as that was). Robert Morin did something that not many people—even believers—are content to do. And that will be the focus of what I want to speak to you about this morning.

**Title:** A Missing Piece of the Discipleship Puzzle

(Prayer)

### Review

**5:21-48**.....How to Relate to Others Properly

**6:1-7:11**.....How to Relate to God Properly  
(in 6:1-18, “your Father” is used 9X)

**7:12**.....Summary: “The Golden Rule”

### Interesting Features of Today's Text (6:1-18):

---“Father” (10X)

---“reward” (7X)

**Hebrews 11:6**-----But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

---“forgive” (6X)

**As He teaches, Jesus assumes that followers of His are people who give, pray, and fast:**

“...when you give” (2X) --- not “if” you pray

“...when you pray” (3X)

“...when you fast” (2X)

### Lessons:

- 1. Never give so that it might be seen and applauded by others (God will not reward this). Give in secret and God will reward you openly (6:1-4).**

(Comments on following Scripture):

“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. 2 Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, **do not sound a trumpet** before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 3 **But when you do a charitable deed**, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 that your charitable deed may be in secret; and **your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly**.

(Note: say a word here about giving to the church.)

2. **Never pray so that it might be seen and applauded by others (God will not reward this). Pray in secret and God will reward you openly (6:5-15).**

(Comments on following Scripture):

5 “And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. **For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men.** Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. 7 And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 “Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.

(Jesus tells us how to pray):

**9 In this manner**, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. 13 And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. 14 “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

We are to pray regularly for “family” forgiveness (so we can stay close to our Father). This “family” forgiveness (and our continued closeness with God) is contingent on our forgiveness toward others (if we don’t forgive others, God won’t forgive us).

3. **Never fast so that it might be seen and applauded by others (God will not reward this). Fast in secret and God will reward you openly (6:16-18).**

16 “**Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting.** Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

(Comments)

A woman who wanted to remain anonymous told the following story:

**It's just a small, white envelope** stuck among the branches of our Christmas tree. No name, no identification, no inscription. It has peeked through the branches of our tree for the past 10 years or so.

It all began because my husband, Mike, hated Christmas—oh, not the true meaning of Christmas, but the commercial aspects of it: overspending, the frantic running around at the last minute, the gifts given in desperation.

Knowing he felt this way, I decided one year to bypass the usual shirts, sweaters, ties. I reached for something special just for Mike.

Our son Kevin was wrestling at the junior level at the school he attended; shortly before Christmas, there was a non-league match against a team sponsored by an inner-city church. These youngsters, dressed in sneakers so ragged that shoestrings seemed to be the only thing holding them together, presented a sharp contrast to our boys in their spiffy blue and gold uniforms and sparkling new wrestling shoes. As the match began, I was alarmed to see that the other team was wrestling without headgear.

It was a luxury the ragtag team obviously could not afford. We ended up walloping them. As each of their boys got up from the mat, he swaggered around in his tatters with false bravado, a kind of street pride that couldn't acknowledge defeat.

Mike shook his head sadly. "I wish just one of them could have won," he said. "They have a lot of potential, but losing like this could take the heart right out of them." That's when the idea for his present came.

That afternoon, I went to a local sporting goods store and bought an assortment of wrestling headgear and shoes and sent them anonymously to the inner-city church. On Christmas Eve, I placed an envelope on the tree, the note inside telling Mike what I had done and that this was his gift from me. His smile was the brightest thing about Christmas. Each Christmas, I followed the tradition—one year sending a group of mentally handicapped youngsters to a hockey game, another year giving a check to a pair of elderly brothers whose home had burned to the ground the week before Christmas.

The envelope became the highlight of our Christmas. It was always the last thing opened on Christmas morning, and our children would stand with wide-eyed anticipation as their dad lifted the envelope from the tree to reveal its contents. As the children grew, the envelope never lost its allure.

The story doesn't end there. We lost Mike due to cancer. When Christmas rolled around, I was so wrapped up in grief that I barely got the tree up. But on Christmas Eve I placed an envelope on the tree, and in the morning it was joined by three more.

Each of our children had placed an envelope on the tree for their dad. The tradition has grown and someday will expand even further with our grandchildren standing around the tree with wide-eyed anticipation watching as their fathers take down the envelopes.

Mike's spirit, like the Christmas spirit, will always be with us.

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**So what is the** missing puzzle piece of discipleship? What did the librarian Robert Morin do that even followers of God often leave out? He gave without seeking the applause of other people.

The missing puzzle piece of discipleship? It is doing what we do as God's followers **for His eyes only**—to please Him (and not to obtain the applause of those around us).

It all comes down to this: Would I rather have a slap on the back down here, or an eternal reward from God up there?