

An Audience of One

I, Yahweh, search the mind, I try the heart, even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings. – Jeremiah 17:10

[Matthew 6:1-18] “Be careful that you don’t do your charitable giving before men, to be seen by them, or else you have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. Therefore when you do merciful deeds, don’t sound a trumpet before yourself, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may get glory from men. Most certainly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you do merciful deeds, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand does, so that your merciful deeds may be in secret, then your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

“When you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Most certainly, I tell you, they have received their reward. But you, when you pray, enter into your inner room, and having shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. In praying, don’t use vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be

heard for their much speaking. Therefore don’t be like them, for your Father knows what things you need, before you ask him. Pray like this: ‘Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. Let your Kingdom come. Let your will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. Bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For yours is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.’

“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you don’t forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

“Moreover when you fast, don’t be like the hypocrites, with sad faces. For they disfigure their faces, that they may be seen by men to be fasting. Most certainly I tell you, they have received their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face; so that you are not seen by men to be fasting, but by your Father who is in secret, and your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you.

1. What things do you do differently when others might notice? How can you avoid this?

2. How do you put your spiritual life on display? Will you “enter your inner room” today?

3. Father, I want to do everything only for you and let you tell others or reward me for...