

# SERMON STUDY GUIDE



## “Right Now or Real Reward?”- PREACHED ON MAY 4 & 5, 2024

### READ

Read Matthew 5- 6:4. Read it each day, perhaps in a different translation each day. (A great resource for looking at various translations is [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)).

### DISCUSS

What stood out to you as you continued to read last week’s passages? What was it like to pray for people you struggle with (your enemies)? How did you feel about it? How did you react? Where did you notice God moving in your heart and life?

### STUDY

Jesus spends a lot of time talking about righteousness in the Sermon on the Mount. Here, he’s focusing on a specific angle—being righteous in front of other people. Throughout this sermon, Jesus is concerned with the motivation behind our actions and the way we present ourselves. As we saw last week, the thoughts and feelings behind our sins and temptations matter as much to Jesus as the actions themselves. We must actively seek out ways to keep our hearts pure before the Lord. In Jesus’s world, Greeks and Romans did not support personal charity; wealthy contributions to projects were meant to make one popular. This contrasts with the Jewish faith and Jesus builds upon the Torah laws when he instructs us in how to live.

1. In Matthew 6:1 Jesus commands us “not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them.” But in 5:16 he said, “Let your light shine before others so they may see your good deeds.” Is there a contradiction there? Explain.
2. The Old Testament includes laws specifically aimed at helping the poor. Read the following scriptures and list how people in need were to be cared for: Exodus 22:25-27, Deuteronomy 15:7-11, and Deuteronomy 24:19-22. What do these laws have in common regarding the dignity of the poor?
3. Read Proverbs 14:21, 14:31, 19:17, and 22:9. If our giving should be unselfish and openhanded, why do you think these scriptures promise such great blessings for the giver?

### PRACTICE

There are many ways to give your time and money. This week, we invite you to pick one day to fast together, as a group. Spend the time you would spend eating, grocery shopping, or preparing your meal in prayer for those in our world in need. Donate the money you would spend on your lunch or coffee to a local food bank. While giving financially is a huge part of almsgiving, we can also give our time. Sign up with your group to serve at Love Newport Beach on May 14, or to volunteer at our summer events, like Vacation Bible School. Visit [sapres.org/next-steps](http://sapres.org/next-steps) to get started.