

Sermon Title: Giving That Honors God

Sermon Text: Matthew 6:1-4

Date: April 26, 2026

SERMON NOTES:

QUESTIONS:

1. What stood out to you from the sermon or your time with God this week?
2. Matthew 5:16 and Matthew 6:1-2 are part of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. What stands out to you when you read these side by side? How would you make sense of them together?
3. Why might recognition from others and reward from God be in tension? What makes them opposed?

4. Read Matthew 6:3-4. When you read that God sees what is done in secret, how do you feel? Do His eyes bring you peace or discomfort? Why?

5. In what ways do you find yourself wanting approval, even if no one knows it? Where do you see that showing up in your actions? What would it look like to let God give you honor instead?

CASE STUDY:

Terrance: I've been thinking — Joe said on Sunday that there are people around me who believe in Jesus but don't behave like Jesus, and people who behave like Jesus but don't believe in Jesus. So how do you tell if someone is an authentic follower of Jesus?

Imani: Honestly, I don't think that's a question we can — or should — try to answer. We're not supposed to judge people. They might sin in one way and I sin in another (1 Timothy 5:24), but that doesn't make me any better than them. People can only see what's on the outside, but God sees the heart (1 Samuel 16:7). And I think that's really the point — it's not about what you do, it's about your heart.

Liam: I hear that, but the New Testament is actually full of verses about who's "in" and who's "out" — the whole book of 1 John, Jesus in the end of Matthew 7, Paul in Galatians 5. We get into trouble when we decide what's good and evil — that's the Adam and Eve problem — but here God's telling us what He thinks is good and evil instead. I was just reading 1 Corinthians 5:12, where Paul flat-out says we should judge people in the church. When we obey Paul, it's not about being judgmental — it's about letting the Bible judge for us.

Hannah: Right, and in Galatians Paul's saying people who do those sins won't be welcome in God's Kingdom. That sounds harsh, but honestly — can you imagine any kind of sin or evil in God's Kingdom? Isn't the whole point of being saved that we're freed from sin? Not just freed from guilt while we keep on sinning. I think the real Jesus-followers are the ones who actually do good, not just the ones with good intentions.

Aliyah: But we're never going to be perfect — that's the whole reason we need grace. And God doesn't expect us to be perfect. Or... well, maybe He does (Matthew 5:48)? But I don't think being perfect is what makes someone authentic. We're authentic because we're messy and broken and real. Knowing you're a sinner saved by grace — that's what makes you authentic.

What do you think? How do you tell if someone is an authentic follower of Jesus?