



Jesus' gospel is not just the offer of salvation, but the declaration of sovereignty. This is the clear message of his Sermon on the Mount. It is a call to find the truly blessed life by taking a narrow path most won't choose—the way of King Jesus.

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family and/or with a group.

1 Rick began by reminding us that *"Few temptations are more real than the temptation to not be real."* When has this been a struggle for you recently? Follow up: What is one thing you can do to consistently resist this temptation?

2 *Don't confuse "surpassing" righteousness with "impressing" righteousness.* Jesus put great emphasis on the importance of righteousness (the kind that goes deeper and wider than what the religious leaders were practicing in Matthew 5). **Read Matthew 6:1.** Do you ever find yourself more worried about impressing those around you with your religious devotion than you are about pleasing God? What needs to change so that you might be focused on God?

3 **BEWARE...** *The first observation that needs to be made is that the King expects his subjects to give, pray, and fast.* **Read Matthew 6:2-8, 16-18.** Jesus illustrates the principle of verse 1 by focusing on three religious practices: giving, praying, and fasting. How have a commitment to these disciplines increased your faith and built spiritual strength in you? Follow up: Rick noted that *Jesus is not forbidding the public practice of spiritual disciplines.* How can we best navigate the tension to be public with our faith in a way that calls attention to the King and not to ourselves (see **Matthew 5:16**)?

4 **BE AWARE...** *Satan will always try to counterfeit righteousness.* There is no holy ground Satan will not attempt to trespass. Follow up: **Read Acts 5:1-11.** What do you think motivated Ananias and Sapphira to behave

the way they did? What was their sin? Follow up: Why is it important to *"not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing"* when you give to the poor? In what ways are we tempted to be hypocritical in our giving?

5 **BE AWARE...** *The secret to righteousness is secret righteousness.* Three times Jesus affirms *"what is done in secret."* What does practicing righteousness secretly deliver us from? Follow up: What can we learn from the example of Jesus in this area (see **Mark 1:35, Luke 5:16, and Luke 6:12**)? Follow up: Where is the best "room" you have found to connect with God in private prayer?

6 **BE AWARE...** *The reward of righteousness is the attention of God.* Three times Jesus says, *"God sees you, and will reward you."* How have you experienced rewards from God for giving, praying, and/or fasting? Follow up: **Read Philippians 4:6-7.** How do these verses relate to what Jesus says about rewards? How have you experienced this?

7 Rick closed by asking us to contemplate this question, *"Do I find joy if only God finds out?"* How have you learned to deal with that tension? How can this message help to purify our motives? Homework: Who can you bless this week without them knowing it was you?

