

## BUT I SAY UNTO YOU

Praise:

We all like it. It is a heady experience to receive it.  
Young, say “look at me” seeking praise.  
Later in life, we still like favorable appraisal of others.

**But (found 10 times in chapter) if we do it only for effect, especially in religion—then there is a problem!**

This had happened to the Jews. So much so that their service to God had become hypocritical.  
Jesus addresses the problem in Matthew 6

### OUTLINE OF CHAPTER

**Structure: Alms, prayer, fasting:** 3 topics covered.

*Warning:* not to do the act to be praised by men.

*Guarantee:* if warning not heeded, will get what they seek, but no more.

*Instruction:* how to perform act of piety properly.

*Assurance:* God who seeks in secret will reward openly.

**Focus of Jews: “look at me.”**

Religion had become *self-centered*, rather than *God-centered*.

**[But] Jesus speaks of the correct way of worshiping.**

Couched in warning “Beware” of sham religion. 6:1

Hypocritical because self is the object of adoration.

### WHAT IS DONE VS. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE

**Alms giving.** 6:2-4

Honored by men *vs.* others be helped.

Before men *vs.* in secret.

**Prayer.** 6:5-8

To be seen by men *vs.* God may hear.

Meaningless repetitions *vs.* sincere requests.

Sample prayer offered. 6:9-15: Proper *focus, requests, attitude.*

**Fasting** (deprivation). 6:16-18

Others view their act *vs.* help focus on higher, spiritual matters.

### WHAT FOLLOWS ROUNDS OUT THE ‘BEWARE’

**Not mammon.** Focus needs to be on spiritual/eternal. 6:19-25

**Not here and now.** Lay up treasures in heaven.

**Not seek *first* (priority) the things of this life,** seek kingdom first.

### LESSONS FOR ALL: WHAT SHOULD BE DONE

**Let all acts of kindness be done because it is right (i.e.: righteous living)**

Do it so others have little chance to praise.

Something between you and God alone.

**Let all prayers be communication with God.**

Pray so that others have little chance of praising.

Private communion with God.

**Let forgiveness flow from heart toward others.**

So forgiveness can flow from God.

**Let all acts of deprivation be done to enhance one’s own spiritual condition.**

**Let your pursuit of the kingdom be foremost.**

Affairs of life second.

*This is what should be done, if we are to expect anything from the Lord.*

Seek His reign in your life by yielding to His rule.