

“Right Giving”

Matthew 6 v1-4

Scripture Ref: Luke 6:38; Matt 10:42; Rev 22:12

- 1. Jesus turns from our relationships with one another, and now begins to focus on our everyday life**
 - a. Right giving**
 - b. Right praying**
 - c. Right fasting**
 - d. Right use of money**
- 2. These aspects fold into one theme – True Worship**
 - a. See worship is not just what we do on Sunday mornings**
 - b. Worship is how we live our lives... and it comes forth most visibly in the areas of our lives that require the most self-sacrifice**
 - c. And there is probably no area requiring self-sacrifice than giving!**
- 3. Jesus opens this next section of giving, praying, fasting, from a perspective of “doing your deeds before men”.**

The Praise of People

6:1 "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2

- a. “Take heed” – pay attention – examine yourselves – then you do a charitable deed, do you do so that people will notice?**
- 4. FACT: People LOVE being noticed! (you know you do!) In case you don’t believe me, then explain why a significant portion of our economy is built on the idea of “check me out”**
 - a. What we wear**
 - b. What we drive**
 - c. Where we live, and the kind of house we live in**
 - d. How we look: Hair, skin, eyes, physique**
 - e. ...all of these things are intended for one thing - getting noticed by someone...**
 - f. Our friends, our neighbors, our superiors, members of the opposite sex.**
- 5. That’s just way of the world – right?**
 - a. But what happens when we bring this mindset into our Christian walk?**
 - b. And a “religious person” would not want to be noticed by clothing or cars or houses; that would be worldly!**
 - c. Much better to get noticed for how righteous we are!**

- d. Jesus has a name for that - hypocrisy!

Hypocrite

- 6. The word Jesus uses - hupokrites (hoop-ok-ree-tace') – is a Greek word that means “mask wearer”. Hupokrites were actors in the Greek theater who wore masks with very exaggerated expressions so that the people in the back row could see what kind of emotion was being displayed.
 - a. We get the word “two-faced” from this same idea – someone who is presenting a face that is a façade – a fake.
 - b. Can pertain to many areas of life
 - c. But Jesus is calling attention to someone who does a good deed, or gives in such a way that other people see what they are doing
 - d. IOW this person is presenting a “face” of righteousness...
 - e. But in fact there is another face behind the mask, and the real motive is for people to see it, in order that they might receive the praise of people!
- 7. Now we might think “what’s wrong if people see what we do, isn’t that being a good example?” “Isn’t that “being a light?”
 - a. There is a distinction – and the distinction is not found in the *external act*, but in the *internal motive*.
 - b. If we do something that is born of the Spirit of God, and someone sees, it’s a good thing, because we are operating in the Spirit, and we would not take credit or glory for the deed.
 - c. But if we do something with the motive of receiving the praise of man, guess what: It will work. We’ll get the praise of man!
 - d. But the real question becomes: Who do we want to please, God or man?
 - e. Jesus is telling us very plainly – you can have one or the other – but not both...

Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

- 8. Originally in Israel, people gave to the poor by going to an area on the side of the temple courtyard called “the Chamber of the Secret”
 - a. There was a large chest called “The Trumpet” that people would drop their gifts into, unseen by others.
 - b. Later, the poor would come to the Chamber of the Secret and receive the gifts from the Trumpet.
- 9. As the years went by, the Pharisees decided that there was a better way.

- a. They tied small trumpets to their belts, and then whenever they wanted to give to the poor, they would stand on the street corner and blow their trumpets.
 - b. The poor would then gather around them the generous Pharisees, and receive the gifts with great fanfare.
 - c. And everyone could see “my, how righteous the Pharisees are!”
10. Yet Jesus called the Pharisees hypocrites because they gave not out of concern for the poor, but in order to receive the praise of people.
- a. And so, Jesus said, they have their reward – the praise of men.
 - b. And so the question becomes – “is that a worthy reward?”
 - c. Do I want the praise of people NOW, or a reward from the Lord LATER?
 - d. Well that depends. It depends on what I see as the most valuable.
11. Now don’t get me wrong, the praise of people can be really good – you get it now, and it can feel really good!
- a. You feel important! People say nice things about you!
 - b. “Oh look, there is Clay, did you know what he did? He gave a gift to that family that needed some help! Wow, he’s so generous. Such a blessing.”
12. But there is a downside to the praise of people – it doesn’t last!
- a. People may notice your good deeds, and think well of you for a while, say nice things.
 - b. But over time you are relegated to the dark corners of their memory.
 - c. *(example: my sales awards)*
 - d. It’s funny: Our world’s cities are filled with statues of men who at some point were very important and well thought of – people knew who they were!
 - e. But now, they have been long forgotten – just who is the 14th Earl of Derby? I don’t know, but there is a statue of him!
13. And I’ll tell you something else: People are fickle! They will love you one moment, and could care less about you the next.
- a. Just ask a certain president who once enjoyed an 86% approval rating, the highest of any president
 - b. Now he has the lowest approval rating of any president.
 - c. Same guy- same beliefs – what happened?
14. Bottom line – if we do what we do for the praise of people, we can get satisfied for a short while, but will not last.
- a. Sort of like Honey Buns. I love Honey Buns. Soft and sweet and sticky. They are awesome!

- b. Getting praise from man is sort of like being really hungry, and getting one of those honey-buns.
- c. And you eat it – it tastes really good – but it does not fill the void.
- d. 10 minutes later, your still hungry!
- e. Verses a steak – when you are really hungry, nothing like some charred animal flesh! Sugar and dough just doesn't cut it!

Jesus has a Better Plan

3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.

15. Notice – not “if you do a charitable deed” but “when you do a charitable deed”.

- a. IOW there is an expectation that we, as Gods children, would have the heart of God and be charitable to others.
- b. But when we do it, we should not let our left hand know what our right hand is doing.

16. What? That seems weird. Do I hide my hands behind my back?

- a. OK – it's hyperbole again
- b. It's called “remaining anonymous”
- c. Think about it: We are the body of Christ, maybe I'm the left hand, and you are the right.

17. Why? Because it removes “self” from the equation.

- a. It allows us to give from a heart of compassion and obedience.

18. But here is the thing: It is never really 100% anonymous.

- a. You know. And that's OK. It's a blessing to do something good and kind, and we can feel blessed to be used of the Lord in that way.
- b. And God knows. God see's in secret, yet He rewards openly.

19. How?

- a. He rewards in this life: God tell us in His word, He promises us, when we give, it will be given to us:

Luke 6:38

38 Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

- i. Sadly too many Christians never get hold of this promise, and they never give of themselves, and they miss untold blessings from the Lord.

b. God also has a reward waiting for the faithful:

Matt 10:42

42 And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly, I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward."

Rev 22:12

"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work.

c. Ever been to an award ceremony and received an award?

d. Imagine the award ceremony that will happen in heaven!

20. So here is where we leave – what do you want? What means something to you?

a. Praise from man? OR reward from God?

b. Do you want a Honey Bun - or a steak?

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