

RIGHEOUSNESSES AND RIGHTEOUS MOTIVES

We live in a visual world. People are constantly seen and wanting to be seen. “Selfies” and postings about our deeds and actions are norm of the day. Some of these are rather harmless, but we have definitely turned a corner where letting people know what we are doing is concerned. Studies show that when people see themselves on social media and the Internet endorphins are released into the brain giving us a “high.” We live in a world of “likes” and followers. And while, at least in the electronic sense that is a fairly new thing, being liked and admired for our looks, actions and deeds is nothing new. Jesus dealt with in the first century and that is what we will be looking at today.

Jesus’ sermon thus far:

- In the beginning of the message He talks about the character of His true disciples. (Beatitudes)
- Next He is correcting misunderstandings about the Law of God.
- Now we come to a section where Jesus speaks concerning spiritual practices and how we should go about them. Specifically He is speaking of giving, prayer and fasting.

Mt. 6:1-4

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 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. 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.

As we begin chapter six, I would like to point out that there is a little more here than one might see at just a glance.

- “charitable deeds”, alms, beneficence . (giving, prayer, fasting)
- **It is a given here that a righteous person was to be a giver.**

- What does it mean to be a giver? And where do we give? Tithing/ giving to the church. The house of God should be a priority.
- There are many good causes to which we can give.
- It comes down to priorities. "There are only 24 hours in a day. We only have so much money."
- Paul's general principles of giving.
- **Rom. 15:27**
- **For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.**
- **1 Corinthians 9:11**
- **11 If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things?**
- Question: Could the church accomplish what you get out of it if everyone gave as you did? Could we keep the lights, heat and air running?

WRONG WAYS TO GIVE/ RIGHT WAYS TO GIVE

- **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**
- The giving is to be seen by God (done in order to help others, love others for the glory of God and not to be done in order to be seen by men. It can be hard to do things in public, (public prayer) and not be concerned about how we look to other people.
- It isn't just about the act of giving, but the heart behind it.

II Cor. 9:6-8

- **6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.**
- The excuse: Well if I'm not cheerful in giving then I may as well not give at all. The feelings follow the actions.
- Ostentatious – displaying wealth or knowledge in a way that is meant to attract attention, admiration or envy.

- Hypocrite – not one who fails at an ideal but one having a double standard

The Correct way to give:

- **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.**
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- Don't let your right hand know what the left hand is doing.
- Question: So do we only give cash? Is it wrong to get a tax deduction?
- The widow's mite.
- You will be rewarded either way. Rock stars and actors... Fleeting praise vs. eternal reward.
- God will reward you openly. What does this mean and what does it not mean?
- The man in competition with God. He still hasn't won.

1. The kingdom of God is about reality, not image. God's cares about whom we really are, not just the image of our lives.

2. The kingdom of God is about generosity. (Not exclusively) God rules and reigns over a generous kingdom. If we are truly following God then that will manifest in our lives also.

3. The kingdom of God is about His glory and not my own. I shouldn't be trying to build the kingdom of Ebb.