



ASKING BETTER QUESTIONS -
THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT
SESSION 16 -GIVING (Mt 6:1-4)

Giving (Mt 6:1-4)

“Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

“So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”



Initial Questions

- How careful?
- What is the place of giving to the needy?
- Reward in heaven?
- Not letting left hand know what your right hand is doing?

Explaining Righteousness

- Matt 5 – Blessed are.... , You have heard it said, but now I tell you, salt, light...
- Matt 6 – do not be like
 - ***The conspicuous givers (Mt 6:1-4)***
 - *The conspicuous prayers. (Mt 6:5-15)*
 - *The conspicuous fasters (Mt 6:16-18)*

Giving to the poor

- There will always be poor people in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your fellow Israelites who are poor and needy in your land. (Deut 15:11)
- Blessed are those who have regard for the weak; the LORD delivers them in times of trouble. (Ps 41:1)
- Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will reward them for what they have done. (Prov 19:17)



Giving to the poor



- Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” (Mt 19:21)
- The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. (Mk 14:7)
- Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Lk 12:32-34)
- What is common to these three passages?
- It’s what you **want**. Where your heart is at.



The inside of the cup

- Then the Lord said to him, “Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? **But now as for what is inside you—be generous to the poor, and everything will be clean for you.**” Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone. (Lk 11:39-42)
- Paying attention to the internal state – what does Jesus look at here?
- Where were Pharisees going wrong here?
- What is Jesus looking for in our hearts?
- How do you measure that?
- You can't!

Practicing Righteousness

- Righteousness (*Dikaiosune*. δικαιοσύνην)
- How do you understand “righteousness” at the moment?
- What do we learn from this text about “righteousness”?
- It’s something you can practice. Living out.
- Any other thoughts?
- The Sermon on the mount will fill out this picture for us.

Announcing with trumpets

- Then



- Now



Drawing attention to yourself

Hypocrite

9:02 pm Mon 20 Nov Interlinear Online 58%

< Mat 6

G5273 - *hypokritēs*

ὑποκριτής

Transliteration: *hypokritēs* 🔊

Pronunciation: hoop-ok-ree-tace'

Part of Speech: masculine noun

Root Word (Etymology): From ὑποκρίνομαι (G5271)

TDNT Reference: 8:559,1235

Outline of Biblical Usage:

- I. one who answers, an interpreter
- II. an actor, stage player
- III. a dissembler, pretender, hypocrite

KJV Translation Count: 20x
The KJV translates Strong's G5273 in the following manner: hypocrite (20x).

Bibles Updates Available

Strong's Definitions: ὑποκριτής *hypokritēs*, hoop-ok-ree-tace', from G5271, an actor under an assumed character (stage-player), i.e. (figuratively) a dissembler ("hypocrite":—hypocrite.

- Actor, Pretender
- Different sense to way we use the word today.
- Theatrical mask



Reward

- It is again made clear that the follower of Jesus is interested in the rewards and blessings of God, and not in the transient approval of men. And, as we understand from the text, Jesus's disciple is not giving secretly in order to win some heavenly reward; rather he is giving secretly to avoid the glamour of honor from men, to please his heavenly Father, and to meet real need. The result is spiritual reward. [Carson, 74]
- What do you think about that?

Left and right hands

But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”

What is Jesus getting at here?

What about this?

- Mt 6:1 - **Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them.**
- But...
- Mt 5:16 - **In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven**
- So, be visible or not?
- The clue lies in the fact that Jesus is speaking against different sins. It is our human cowardice which made him say 'let your light shine before others', and our human vanity which made him tell us to beware of practising our righteousness in front of others. A. B. Bruce sums it up well when he writes that we are to '**show when tempted to hide**' and '**hide when tempted to show**'. (Stott, 106)



Personal reflection

- The demand for genuine perfection loses itself in the lesser goal of external piety; the goal of pleasing the Father is traded for its shrunken cousin, the goal of pleasing men. It almost seems as if the greater the demand for holiness, the greater the opportunity for hypocrisy. This is why I suspect that the danger is potentially most serious among religious leaders. [Carson, 71]
- What do you think about that?

How to do it..

- And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. (2 Cor 8:1-5).
- What do you notice here?

According to what he has

- And here is my judgment about what is best for you in this matter. Last year you were the first not only to give but also to have the desire to do so. Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means. **For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have.** Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. The goal is equality, as it is written: “The one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little.” (2 Cor 8:10-15)
- And here?

In your own words

So when you give to the needy....

How would you say it in your own words?



Reflection

- Where does my honour come from right now?
- Do I see being generous to the needy as part of my discipleship?
- How important to me is “praise from men”?
- Do I have some internal cup-cleaning to do here?