

# Good Works Done in Secret

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

## Introduction:

- A. Luke 17:7-10
- B. The whole world has a universal appreciation for good deeds, even evil people are touched when they are at the receiving end of good deeds. The world hungers for kindness and is made better by good deeds
  - 1. "How far that little candle throws his beams! So shines a good deed in a weary world." (William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*)
  - 2. "I cannot do all the good that the world needs. But the world needs all the good that I can do." (Jana Stanfield)
  - 3. "If for every well-intended prayer uttered in hopes of making the world a better place, there was instead a good deed accomplished, the world might look as though those prayers had been answered" (D.G. McAfee)
- C. But good deeds are not about making the world a better place, nor are they about relieving the needs of others. Good deeds are about transforming us into the nature of our Father in heaven.
  - 1. Matt. 5:43-45 - "That you may be sons of your Father..."
  - 2. "Know you not that a good man does nothing for appearance sake, but for the sake of having done right?" (Epictetus)
  - 3. "You don't do kind deeds expecting kindness in return. You don't do kind deeds because you deem the recipient worthy. You do kind deeds because it's who you are, and because you understand the powerful difference your gentle hand makes in this dreary world." (R.E. Goodrich)
  - 4. "We hunger after the sweet nectar of happiness without understanding that it is harvested from the flowering field of good deeds." (Goodrich)
- D. Good deeds are not for glory, or gold in our crown, or even good feelings; good deeds are about growing in the Lord.
  - 1. "We are not saved by good deeds; we are saved for good deeds. Jesus transforms us to transform others." (Dillon Burroughs)
  - 2. "If you do one good deed your reward usually is to be set to do another and harder and better one." (C.S. Lewis)

## I. WHAT IF NO ONE NOTICES THE GOOD WORK WE HAVE DONE?

- A. We work hard, but no one seems to notice our efforts.
  - 1. Why clean the house when the kids are just going to make a mess in a short while?
  - 2. Why give that extra effort at work when the boss doesn't notice and the family doesn't appreciate the extra you bring home?
  - 3. A frequent reason for infidelity and divorce initiated is that the spouse does not appreciate them
- B. Culturally, we have come to the place that we believe being appreciated is an entitlement. Does this give us the right to stop doing good if it is not appreciated?

## **II. GOOD DEEDS ARE TO BE NOTICED**

- A. The Lord did not say that the good deeds are to be kept secret, but that they are to be performed in secret - Matt. 5:14-16
  - 1. The purpose is to glorify God from whom all blessings come, including those He gives others through us
- B. The focus is on God, not on the giver or the receiver
  - 1. Matt. 6:1-4 - The Pharisees would give gifts to the needy and then under the pretext of drawing attention to the gift, recipient, and God, would sound a trumpet and announce that "Widow Goldstein has been blessed by God with a gift of 100 shekels from scribe Feinberg!" drawing attention to the giver under the pretense of glorifying God.
  - 2. The Pharisees perfected the practice of getting attention and credit for good deeds, while excelling in hypocrisy - Matt. 23:5-12
  - 3. Some honestly believe that if other persons believe them to be right with God, then God must necessarily view them as righteous, too
    - a. Luke 16:15; John 5:44

## **III. GOOD DEEDS ARE ON GOD'S BEHALF**

- A. We need to do good deeds for God for our own sake; remember, God does not need us to do good deeds
  - 1. Just as our wickedness does not harm God, so our righteousness does not increase Him - Job 35:6-7
- B. God owes us nothing for our service - Rom. 11:33-36
  - 1. Everything we have was first given to us by God - 1Chron. 29:13-16
  - 2. Loving God is the greatest commandment - Matt. 22:36-38

## **IV. THE MOTIVATION FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS IS THAT GOD SAYS IT IS RIGHT**

- A. We do not do right because others will reward our deeds - Matt. 5:46-48
- B. Too often we do good because of what we get out of it and not because it is right in itself - Luke 6:31-37
  - 1. He did not say do unto others if they have done unto you.
- C. If respect for or belief in others is our motivation, then we will be disappointed, and our purpose for doing good deeds is removed - 1Peter 3:13-17

## **V. RIGHTEOUS DEEDS WILL NOT BE IGNORED BY GOD**

- A. Heb. 6:9-12
- B. What motivates your service? - Gal. 1:10