

Good Works Done in Secret

Luke 17:7-10

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- “And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? 8 But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink'? 9 Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. 10 So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.’”

Good Works Done in Secret

- The whole world has an appreciation for good deeds
 - “How far that little candle throws his beams! So shines a good deed in a weary world.” (William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*)
 - “I cannot do all the good that the world needs. But the world needs all the good that I can do.” (Jana Stanfield)
 - “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)

Good Works Done in Secret

- Good deeds are about transforming into the nature of our Father in heaven
 - Matt. 5:43-45 - “That you may be sons of your Father...”
 - “Know you not that a good man does nothing for appearance sake, but for the sake of having done right?” (Epictetus)
 - “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)
 - “We hunger after the sweet nectar of happiness without understanding that it is harvested from the flowering field of good deeds.” (Goodrich)

Good Works Done in Secret

- Good deeds are about growing in the Lord
 - “We are not saved by good deeds; we are saved for good deeds. Jesus transforms us to transform others.” (Dillon Burroughs)
 - “If you do one good deed your reward usually is to be set to do another and harder and better one.” (C.S. Lewis)

What If No One Notices The Good Work We Have Done?

- We work hard, but no one seems to notice our efforts.
- Culturally, we have come to the place that we believe that being appreciated is an entitlement.
- Does this give us the right to stop doing good if it is not appreciated?

Good Deeds Are To Be Noticed

- The Lord did not say that good deeds are to be kept secret, but that they are to be performed in secret
 - Matt. 5:14-16 - “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Good Deeds Are To Be Noticed

- The focus is on God, not on the giver or the receiver
 - Matt. 6:1-4 - “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.”

Good Deeds Are To Be Noticed

- The Pharisees perfected the practice of getting attention and credit for good deeds, while excelling in hypocrisy
 - Matt. 23:5-7, 11-12 - “But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. 6 They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, 7 greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi... 11 'But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Good Deeds Are To Be Noticed

- Some honestly believe that if other persons believe them to be right with God, then God must necessarily view them as righteous, too
 - Luke 16:15 - “And He said to them, You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.”
 - John 5:44 - “How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God?”

Good Deeds Are On God's Behalf

- We need to do good deeds for God for our own sake; remember, God does not need us to do good deeds
- Just as our wickedness does not harm God, so our righteousness does not increase Him
 - Job 35:6-7 - “f you sin, what do you accomplish against Him? Or, if your transgressions are multiplied, what do you do to Him? 7 If you are righteous, what do you give Him? Or what does He receive from your hand?”

Good Deeds Are On God's Behalf

- God owes us nothing for our service
 - Rom. 11:33-36 - “For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all. 33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! 34 For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor? 35 Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him? 36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.”

Good Deeds Are On God's Behalf

- Everything we have was first given us by God
 - 1Chron. 29:13-16 - “Now therefore, our God, We thank You And praise Your glorious name. 14 But who am I, and who are my people, That we should be able to offer so willingly as this? For all things come from You, And of Your own we have given You. 15 For we are aliens and pilgrims before You, As were all our fathers; Our days on earth are as a shadow, And without hope. 16 O LORD our God, all this abundance that we have prepared to build You a house for Your holy name is from Your hand, and is all Your own.”

Good Deeds Are On God's Behalf

- Loving God is the greatest commandment
 - Matt. 22:36-38 - “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? 37 Jesus said to him, You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment”

The Motivation For Righteousness Is That God Says It Is Right

- We do not do right because others will reward our deeds
 - Matt. 5:46-48 - “For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”

The Motivation For Righteousness Is That God Says It Is Right

- Too often we do good because of what we get out of it and not because it is right in itself
 - Luke 6:31-36 - “And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. 32 But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. 35 But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. 36 Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.”

The Motivation For Righteousness Is That God Says It Is Right

- 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 3:13-14, 16-17 - “And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? 14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled.16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. 17 For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.”

Righteous Deeds Will Not Be Ignored By God

- Heb. 6:9-12 - “But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. 10 For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

Righteous Deeds Will Not Be Ignored By God

- What motivates your service?
 - Gal. 1:10 - “For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.”