



07.16.17 | The Hidden Life

Matthew 6:1-14

Matthew 6:1-4

“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven. So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

Who is the primary audience of your life?

Technology has made us self-conscious.

Building an Image and an Audience

“Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.”

The audience you live your life for matters even more than the actions you take.

- 1) Giving to the poor (verses 2-4)
- 2) Praying (verses 5-15)
- 3) Fasting (verses 16-18)

WHENEVER...

Not IF... but HOW... in reference TO WHOM

“So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward.”

Hypocrite:

Greek word for *hupokrites*, meaning stage actor

Matthew 5:20

“For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

What is the Kingdom of Heaven?

Jesus is the King; those who have oriented their life around Him belong to His Kingdom.

False righteousness = righteousness in reference to myself (for the praise of others).

True righteousness = righteousness in reference to God.

What is the “reward” of God?

“We must not be troubled by unbelievers when they say that this promise of reward makes the Christian life a mercenary affair. There are different kinds of reward...”

[There is a kind of reward] “...which has no natural connection with the things you do to earn it, and is quite foreign to the desires that ought to accompany those things.”

“Money is not the natural reward of love; that is why we call a man mercenary if he marries a woman for the sake of her money. But marriage is the proper reward for a real lover, and he is not mercenary for desiring it.”

“The proper rewards are not simply tacked on to the activity for which they are given, but are the activity itself in consummation.”

- C.S. Lewis, “The Weight of Glory”

The reward is the joy of partnership and intimacy with the Father who loves the poor. The reward is Communion with God.

“Well done, good and faithful servants... enter into the joy of your master.”

The reward is the joy of Communion.

“The proper rewards are not simply tacked on to the activity for which they are given, but are the activity itself in consummation.”

“But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

To follow Jesus is to embrace a kind of self-forgetfulness.

Hiddenness and Virtue

Jesus is unconcerned about His image and audience.

John 5:19

“Very truly, I tell you, the Son can do nothing on his own, but only what He sees the Father doing.”

Jesus' secret: He lived His life completely in reference to His Father.

“Solitude is the most radical of the disciplines for life in the spirit... It is solitude and solitude alone that opens the possibility of a radical relationship to God that can withstand all external events up to and beyond death.”

“All great works are prepared in the desert, including the redemption of the world.”

- Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*

What transforms us is the love of the Father.

John 5:20

“The Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing.”

“This is my son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”