

Shape UP Week 2-Act of Righteousness

ICE BREAKER QUESTIONS

1. What is favourite movie genre to watch? Why
2. What is something you did at work that no-one noticed?

WORD

Matthew 6:1-4 (NIV)

1 *“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.*

2 *“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.*

3 *But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*

If we read one chapter before Matthew 6, we will learn that Matthew 5 speaks of the righteousness of those that the kingdom must possess and Chapter 6 speaks of the righteousness of those that the kingdom must practice.

Jesus has taught that righteousness includes a person's heart—their thoughts and attitudes—as much as by their outward actions. Here, He begins to show that our inner person, including our motivations, is actually *more important* than our actions. Because our action show our inner person or the condition of the heart, thought and attitude. His message is not that what we do is unimportant, but that improper motives turn otherwise good deeds into selfishness.

One great temptation of living under the Law and the Prophets, at this moment in Israel's history, was serving spiritual pride instead of serving God with pure devotion. This is still a challenge for many believers today; the approval of other people is extremely tempting. The word “*Righteousness means God’s approval.*” If we practice our righteousness to seek men’s approval Jesus said we lost our reward.

DISCUSSION

What are some examples of things we might do in front of others in order to get recognition?

WORD

How Do We Practice the Acts of Righteousness

According to Jesus teaching here in Matthew 6:1-4 Act of righteousness, act of service or act of giving is all about the heart, mind and attitude. And if this 3 align in the teaching of Christ the scripture says, you will receive your reward.

Jesus was very effective in His ministry here on earth because he walked the righteousness of God, meaning he live the approval of God. He did not do anything according to his own will but the will of his Father.

1. Heart of Giving

Matthew 6:3-4 (NIV)

3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Jesus said "when" and not "if" you give to the needy. The disciples of Jesus should expect themselves to give in order to meet the needs of those who are truly lacking. As believers of Christ, we need to avoid letting worldly praise motivate our actions. Jesus gives the correct model for Christian giving to meet the needs of others: secrecy for the sake of authentic integrity.

Also, let us precise in our understanding that Jesus is not saying we have done wrong if people are impressed by our gift. But it is wrong to give for the purpose of impressing people. It's not an issue of who knows about it or what they think about it. It's all about our MOTIVE. For people or For God?

2. Idea of Giving (Thought)

Matthew 6:2 (NIV)

2 "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.

Jesus is using a metaphor here to colourfully describe the people who made sure that everyone knew they were giving to the needy. Basically, he's saying "When you give, don't make a big deal out of it." Don't attract attention to it. Don't advertise how much you're giving. Don't show off your generosity

3 ACT OF GIVING (Attitude)

Matthew 6:1 (NIV)

1 "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.

The action of giving is not public but private. It's confidential giving and the reason is not to get recognition from men but rather to honour and obey God. As we do this, the result is not praise from men but rather a reward from God.

DISCUSSION

How does this change our hearts and empower us to honour God in our acts of righteousness?

LIFE APPLICATION

Let us guard our own motivations and make sure we are not doing it for getting credits from others. Our motivations should help those who need it, not to draw a spotlight to ourselves. Limit talking to others about what/who and how much you give to.

DISCUSSION

What is the one thing that stood out to you from this week's message?

VERSE TO MEDITATE ON

Matthew 5:20

For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven

PRAYER

Share your prayer request and answered prayer. Pray for one another and throughout this week.

