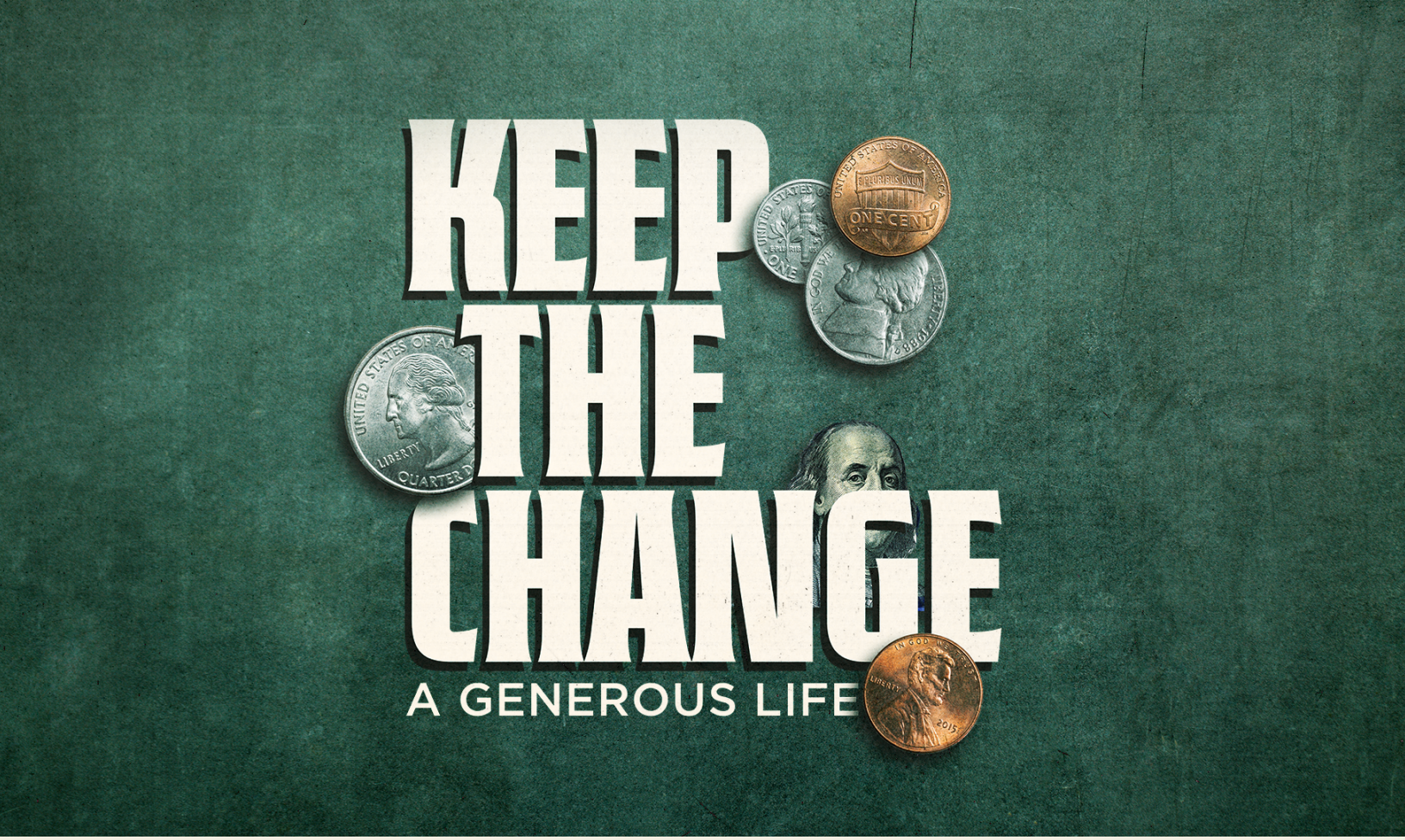


WEEK ONE · PASTOR JAY

Audience of One

Matthew 6:1–4

5-DAY DEVOTIONAL · SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Compassion CHURCH

5-DAY DEVOTIONAL

The Father Who Sees in Secret

DAY 1 Ask Why You Do What You Do

READING · MATTHEW 6:1

Jesus opens this part of the Sermon on the Mount with a warning: “Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them” (Matthew 6:1, ESV). Notice that He does not put a period after practicing your righteousness before others. Doing good where others can see is not the problem; doing it in order to be seen is. He is less concerned with what you do and more concerned with why you do it. You are saved for good works, not by good works. But if you are not careful, you can slip from being a Christian because the Lord saved you to being a Christian who performs, checking every box to prove you are somebody. Your actions flow out of who you are in Christ, not out of earning a place in front of Him. Today, ask the honest question: why do I do what I do?

REFLECTION

When you look at the good things you do each week, which ones flow from who you are in Christ, and which feel like checking boxes?

TRY THIS WEEK

Write down three things you do for God each week, such as serving, giving or praying. Next to each one, write one honest sentence about why you do it.

DAY 2 Let the Light Shine on Him

READING · MATTHEW 5:16; MATTHEW 6:1

Just before today’s chapter, Jesus told His followers, “let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16, ESV). So which is it? Do good in public, or keep it hidden? Jesus is pro-good works, and He is also pro-giving God the glory. He is not for you taking the glory. The same action can look exactly alike whether it comes from a good heart or a bad one, but the heart can be completely different. The test is simple: who gets the glory? If it points back to you, it is the wrong reason. If it points to Him, it is the right reason. Ask yourself today where the light shines.

REFLECTION

If you knew a camera was on you, would you serve, worship or pray any differently? What exactly would change?

TRY THIS WEEK

Choose one good thing you will do this week. Before you do it, pray one sentence asking God to let it point people to Him instead of to you.

DAY 3 Be the Part, Not Just Look It

READING · MATTHEW 6:2

Jesus says the hypocrites sound a trumpet when they give, "that they may be praised by others" (Matthew 6:2, ESV). A hypocrite is an actor, someone pretending to be something they are not to gain approval. They cared more about their reputation than their righteousness. Picture a man who injects himself to look like a bodybuilder but cannot curl fifty pounds or pick up a bag of groceries. He looks the part, yet has no strength when it is needed. Jesus says people like this have received their reward. They got their applause, and that is all they get. They traded an eternal reward for a cheap, temporary compliment. Today, choose to be the part, not just look it.

REFLECTION

Where are you tempted to look like you have it all together while the strength underneath is thin? What would being the part look like there?

TRY THIS WEEK

This week, when someone asks you to pray with them, stop and pray right then. If no one asks, offer to pray with one person yourself.

DAY 4 Grow the Roots No One Sees

READING · MATTHEW 6:1–4

Jesus warns that doing good to be seen leaves you with no reward from your Father (Matthew 6:1). That warning gets personal when no one says thank you. Your feelings are real, but frustration over going unnoticed reveals your motivation: why and who you are doing it for. People compliment what they see. Everyone admires a great oak's trunk, limbs and leaves, but nobody talks about the root system. What you do in hidden moments, in your quiet time with the Lord, is what allows you to grow. The secret never gets the glamour, and the quiet places never get the applause, yet the things that happen in secret determine what happens in public. Tend your roots today.

REFLECTION

The last time you felt overlooked or unthanked, what did that frustration reveal about who you were really doing it for?

TRY THIS WEEK

Set aside fifteen minutes each day this week for a hidden habit: private prayer, quiet obedience or a gift no one will hear about. Tell no one.

DAY 5 Your Father Sees in Secret

READING · MATTHEW 6:3–4

Jesus tells you not to let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, "so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Matthew 6:4, ESV). He is exaggerating to make a point: keep it secret, and do not keep a scoreboard of what you have given. You have a Father who sees. He sees your generosity, your sacrifice and your faithfulness. He hears the prayers you pray when no one else is around. The applause will fade, the compliments will stop and the crowds will move on. But the Father who sees what you have done in secret will reward you. Rest in His attention today.

REFLECTION

What would change this week if your Father's attention were enough for you, even when no one else notices what you do?

TRY THIS WEEK

Do one generous thing this week that no one will ever know about. Do not mention it, post it or add it to any scoreboard.

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, check my heart. I do not want it to be out of line. Show me why I do what I do and who I am doing it for. Thank You that You see what is done in secret. May everything I do give You the glory. Amen.

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Audience of One

OPENING PRAYER & ICE BREAKER

> *Open your time together in prayer, asking God to check each heart and show everyone why they do what they do and who they are doing it for.*

Ice Breaker: Think of a job behind the scenes that almost nobody notices, like unlocking the doors, setting the thermostat or cleaning the bathrooms. What is one unseen task you have done or quietly appreciated?

SERMON OVERVIEW

Pastor Jay walked through Matthew 6:1–4, where Jesus is less concerned with what we do than with why we do it. He challenged us to check our motives, change our audience and trust that God sees. We see that good things can be done for wrong reasons, and that the Father who sees in secret is the audience we live for.

KEY SCRIPTURE · MATTHEW 6:3–4

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. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (ESV)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Section 1 · Check Your Motives

1. Read Matthew 6:1–4 together. What words or phrases stand out to you, and what do you notice about the difference between doing good and doing good to be seen?
2. We are saved for good works, not by good works. Where do you feel the pull to check boxes and prove you are a good Christian, rather than letting your actions flow from who you are in Christ?
3. Pastor Jay asked, “Why do you do what you do and who are you doing it for?” Think of one way you serve, give or worship. How would you honestly answer both questions?

4. Jesus says to let your light shine so others give glory to your Father (Matthew 5:16), yet warns against doing good to be seen. How do you tell the difference between letting your light shine and seeking the spotlight?

5. Call it the camera test: if you knew a camera was on you, would you serve, worship or pray any differently? What does your honest answer reveal about your audience?

Section 2 · Change Your Audience

1. A hypocrite is an actor, someone playing a part that is not who they are in order to gain approval. Where are you most tempted to look the part instead of being the part?

2. Jesus says those who perform for applause have received their reward. They traded an eternal reward for a temporary compliment. What kind of recognition do you find yourself chasing most, and what does it cost you?

3. When we go unnoticed or unthanked, frustration can reveal our motivation. Without sharing more than you are comfortable with, when have you felt overlooked, and what did that feeling show you about who you were serving?

4. People admire a tree's trunk, limbs and leaves, but nobody talks about the roots. What hidden habits, like private prayer, private generosity or private obedience, are feeding your roots right now, and which need attention?

Section 3 · Trust That God Sees

1. Jesus says not to let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. What does keeping a scoreboard of your giving or helping look like, and why does it pull the heart off course?

2. Imagine giving a gift you prayed about, then hearing nothing back for eight weeks. Why is it so hard to let God's confirmation be enough when part of us still wants to hear from people?

3. Your Father sees your generosity, your sacrifice, your faithfulness and the prayers you pray when no one is around. How does knowing He sees change the way you approach the unseen parts of your week?

4. Three challenges close the message: do what's right even when no one's watching, be faithful even when no one's thanking you, and trust God when no one is noticing you. Which is hardest for you this week, and why?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

✓ Jesus cares less about what you do than about why you do it.

- ✓ You are saved for good works, not by them. Your actions flow from who you are in Christ.
- ✓ You can do good things for wrong reasons. The test is who gets the glory.
- ✓ A hypocrite is an actor. Being the part matters more than looking the part.
- ✓ Living for applause trades an eternal reward for a cheap, temporary compliment.
- ✓ What happens in secret, like the roots of a tree, determines what happens in public.
- ✓ Your Father sees what is done in secret and will reward you.

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE

Choose one or more to put into practice before your group meets again:

Option 1 Do Right Unwatched

Do what's right even when no one's watching. Choose one task this week that no one will see and do it with your whole heart for the Lord.

Option 2 Serve Without Thanks

Be faithful even when no one's thanking you. Keep serving in one place this week without mentioning it or waiting for recognition.

Option 3 Trust His Notice

Trust God when no one is noticing you. Each time you feel overlooked this week, pray one sentence thanking your Father that He sees.

Option 4 Give in Secret

Give one gift this week, of money, time or help, that no one will ever hear about. Do not post it or add it to a mental scoreboard.

Option 5 Ask God to Check

Spend time with the Lord each day and pray, God, check my heart. Write down what He shows you about why you do what you do.

PERSONAL JOURNALING

- Why do I do what I do, and who am I doing it for?

- Would I still serve, worship, pray and give the way I do if nobody ever knew about it?
- Where am I measuring the value of my service by the recognition I receive?
- What hidden roots in my life, like private prayer, generosity or obedience, need my attention this week?

ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS

- Ask one another: Where did you do what's right this week when no one was watching?
- Ask one another: When did you feel unnoticed or unthanked this week, and how did you turn your attention back to the Father who sees?

CLOSING PRAYER FOCUS

- That God would check each heart and show everyone why they do what they do and who they do it for.
- That each person's desire to honor God would grow greater than the desire to be noticed.
- That each person would stop living for the recognition of people and start trusting the attention of the Father.
- That anyone who feels distant from the Lord would get that connection back.

LEADER NOTES

- This week does not ask anyone to do more. It asks each person to know why they do what they do. Keep the tone challenging, not condemning.
- Some may carry hurt from going unnoticed. Feelings are real and should not be dismissed; the question is who we are doing it for.

> *"People may never see everything you do for God, but God will never miss anything that you do for Him.*
>
> PASTOR JAY

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