

BE CAREFUL!

Righteousness: To do right by God and right by people.

# 3 Common Religious Practices of 1st Century Judaism

Giving

Praying

Fasting

In modern English, we call someone a *hypocrite* when they say one thing and do another. It's, "Do as I say, not as I do." That is not exactly what it meant. Jesus meant *someone who does the right thing with the wrong motive.*

Jesus said, “Be Careful!” We can fool others, and we can even fool ourselves, but we cannot fool God. Be Careful!

Matthew 6: 1-4

**“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.**

Matthew 6: 1-4

**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 also said, “Let your light so shine before people that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”



A.B. Bruce said that we are to “show when tempted to hide and hide when tempted to show.”

Jesus said, “If you want honor from people, you will get it, but that is all that you will get.”

1) Generous Giving reflects a heart  
for God.

Prov. 14:31

**Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt  
for their Maker,  
but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.**

Jesus said, “Whatever you do for the least of these, you do for me.”

(Matthew 25:40)

Proverbs 19:17

**Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the  
LORD,  
and he will reward them for what they  
have done.**

It's easy to become proud of our generosity, so Jesus says, "Be generous, but be careful!"

2) No gift that is given in God's honor  
is wasted.



Your Father in Heaven rewards you for the motivations of your heart, not the “success” of your generosity.

3) It's possible to become proud of  
our humility

Confession should lead to wholeness, but pride kills confession in 2 ways.

- 1) We are unwilling to admit our sin and confess because of our pride.
- 2) We admit and confess our sin and that becomes the source of our pride.

4) Seek the right reward

What if we do good deeds not to receive honor from people, but to honor God, and God responds by honoring us?

NT Wright, “Jesus doesn’t say what kind of reward we should expect. That, too, is part of the point. Simply knowing God better is reward enough, but there may be other things as well. You never know till you try.”

Os Guinness said, “As followers of Jesus we are called to live before an audience of one.”

What if you can hear, “Well  
done” on this side of Heaven?