

“Please God in Secret Service”

Prelude: The Kingdom of God (part 8)

(Matthew 6:1-4; II Corinthians 5:9-10)

February 22, 2022 FBCLA Rev. Dr. Scott T. Arnold.

Introduction: Oxymorons and the Paradox of “Secret Service”

I. Be Careful in Your Service

A. Check your motivation (1)

1. Don't justify yourself before people

¹ *"Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them.*

2. Don't think your reward is from man *If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.*

3. Be modest before people (2)

² *"So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets,*

4. Be humble and faithful to God

as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men.

B. Check your actions (3)

1. Be active in giving

³ *But when you give to the needy,*

2. Be discrete in charity

do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

C. Check your results (4)

1. Before God our Father

⁴ *so that your giving may be in secret.*

2. According to His Grace and Truth

Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

II. Aim to Please God (II Cor. 5:9-10)

A. **Our goal** ⁹ *So we make it our goal to please him,*

B. **A Kingdom priority eternally**

whether we are at home in the body or away from it.

III. Prepare to Appear Before Christ (10)

A. The Judgment Seat

¹⁰ **For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,**

Parable: ⁹ To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: ¹⁰ *"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.*

¹¹ *The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men--robbers, evildoers, adulterers--or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.' ¹³ "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.' ¹⁴ "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted." (Lk 18:9-14)*

B. Christ judges our lives

¹⁰ ...that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body,

C. Christ rewards us fairly

¹⁰... whether good or bad.

Conclusion: Living with Kindness and Godly Character:

³ *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. ⁴ Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

⁵ *Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:*

⁶ *Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross! Philippians 2:1-11 (NIV)*