

Holy Habits-4
“Good Works”
Matthew 6:1-4 (NIV)

Hey Newsong!

I want to take a second and welcome all of our first time guests and those worshipping with us online! We're finishing up our series called Holy Habits...and I just want to say that I'm so proud of you!

You've been really putting these holy habits to work in your life! Fasting and praying for 21 days...giving God the first fruits of your year! Reading His Word every day...and taking notes...God is doing something amazing in our church! Get ready Newsong, because the best is yet to come!

If you're just joining us today, we've been looking at three spiritual disciplines that Jesus teaches us to put into practice...

Well how do you know that Jesus expects us to practice these things...because He says “When you fast”; “When you pray” this implies that these are spiritual disciplines that every follower of Jesus should put into practice...

What we’ve been learning is that there’s a right way and a wrong way to practice these things...and Jesus actually uses the religious leaders as an example and He says don’t be like them! Their heart isn’t in the right place...they are hypocrites...They’re pretenders...

They want to be seen by people...They want everyone to notice them...Jesus says that’s the wrong motive...don’t be like that!

6 “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.-Matthew 6:1-4 (NIV)

Today we’re going to talk about genuinely living out our faith and doing good works

Pray

When it comes to living out our faith, I want to point out three things from our text...

Jesus expects our **KNOW** to **SHOW**

6 “Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them.”

What does “practice your righteousness” mean? It means to live out your faith...To practice what you preach...To let what you know God is doing on the inside of you...show on the outside of you...

In other words...The more that we get to know God...the more we allow His Holy Spirit to mold our hearts...the more we want to do good works...

Jesus isn't saying “don't practice your righteousness or live out your faith...He's saying be careful who you're doing it for...

So Jesus expects us to let our know show...to do good works...

Now let me clarify...we're not saved by our good deeds...Paul writes...

8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.

We're not saved by our good works...but if you are truly saved, you will do good deeds...it's part of the Christian life...

10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.-Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV)

James says it this way

17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.-James 2:17 (NIV)

So, good works flow from saved people...In other words...Christians should be the most charitable, merciful, kind hearted, generous people on the planet...We should see a need and want to do something about it...That's letting your know show...that's practicing your righteousness...

Now Part of doing those good works is giving to those in need...

2 “So when you give to the needy,-Matthew 6:2 (NIV)

This was known as alms giving and it was something that goes all the way back OT

35 “If any of your fellow Israelites become poor and are unable to support themselves among you, help them as you would a foreigner and stranger, so they can continue to live among you.-Leviticus 25:35 (NIV)

In **John 13** we read that Jesus and His disciples had a money bag so that they could buy what they needed and give to the poor...

The greek word for giving to the needy is *el-eh-ay-mos-oo'-nay* and it means showing kindness and compassion...

Doing good works is something we're commanded to do and especially for those who have been blessed financially to be a blessing to others...

Here's how Paul says it to Timothy

17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.

19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.-1 Timothy 6:17-19 (NIV)

Now you may read that and say...Thank God I'm not rich...Ah but come on now...

You say that while scrolling on your iphone, sipping your iced caramel macchiato with coconut milk, riding in your uber to go shopping downtown for some more stuff that you really don't need and really don't have room for in your apartment...

Now there's nothing wrong with any of that, and yes perhaps you're not rich in comparison to Musk, Bezos, or Swift...but even the poorest of the poor in our country are considered rich in other countries...Which is why so many people want to come here.

Mecaila returning from her missions trip

My daughter wanted to get rid of all of her things...she was so touched by how blessed she was...God doesn't want us to feel bad about our things...He wants us to realize that we're blessed to be a blessing!

Now this isn't a direct message on giving money...although the Bible has a lot to say about how we manage and give our money, and we will take a deeper dive into generosity in a few weeks...

The idea here is that our hearts should be moved by the Holy Spirit to help others...and that includes giving money to those in need. When we do that with the right motives, it helps others and brings glory to God!


Jesus expects us to let our know show...And using giving as an example, He teaches us that

There's a **WRONG** way to give

6 “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.

Wrong giving comes from a wrong motivation. If you give just so that everyone can see how generous you are...that's the wrong motivation.

This reminds me of one of my favorite Seinfeld episodes

 [George Gets Steinbrenner Addicted To Cal...](#)

(Start at 1:24 to 2:30 or end of scene)

George wanted to tip the guy to show his appreciation, but only if the guy could see him do it...so he wanted the pat on the back...

So for the Christian, when it comes to giving, or doing good works...it should include three parties...

The giver, the recipient, and God...That's it!
Some people do a good deed just so they can be seen by everyone...they want everyone to see how spiritual they are...This is what the religious leaders in Jesus' day were doing...

By Jesus' day almsgiving was considered the greatest act of righteousness you could do. It was believed that every time you did a good deed, or you gave to the poor, you gained favor with God...up to the idea that God would forgive your sin based on how much you give...

To this day, good deeds are what many world religions and cults depend upon for their salvation, and they can only hope that one day their good deeds will outweigh their bad deeds...

Aren't you thankful for Jesus? Aren't you thankful for the cross?

Thankful for God's grace and mercy? We don't have to work for our salvation...Jesus did all of the work for us!

Wrong giving comes from wrong motivation...

If you're doing something nice for someone in hopes that God will forgive you of your sins...that's not how it works. If you're giving so that others can see you...Jesus says you got your reward...

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 6:2 (NIV)

In the Temple and in the Synagogues there were offering boxes called "trumpets."

They were the shape of a trumpet...smaller at the top than at the bottom to prevent theft...

So Jesus could be speaking metaphorically saying don't draw attention to yourself when you give...

How would that play out today? Well imagine for a second it's time to give and I pull out my phone and record myself giving and then post it on it on I.G...

Look at me I'm Mikey T. I am full of generosity...(throwing bills) What am I doing? I'm blowing my own trumpet...

Now it's also possible that Jesus is speaking literally, because he mentions the street corners...and in Eastern culture, beggars would often carry with them a horn that they would blow when someone gave them money...

So a person who only wanted to be seen by everyone, aka a hypocrite...they would probably look for beggars who had a horn and give only to them, so that they could get the credit!

And Jesus says that you got your reward... You made everyone look...Everyone told you how awesome you are...You got your reward. You've been paid in full...the transaction is complete...

One day all of us who are saved will stand before Jesus, and He will judge us and reward us (not for our salvation, that was a free gift) But for what we did on earth, how we served God, how we helped the needy...

Imagine now Jesus rewarding you, and you're like, Lord thank you, but I did a lot more than what's recorded here...don't I get a reward for that...He'll say you already got it!

Remember all those likes and shares you got on your reel? That was your reward...

Jesus is saying that we need to stop showing off, stop putting our generosity on display, stop lusting to be noticed when you do a good deed or give any kind of money...

There's a **RIGHT** way to give

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.-Matthew 6:3 (NIV)

Giving the right way...means that we have the right motivation...

We see a need and we're moved with compassion to do something about it...

I don't do it to gain favor with God..

I don't do it so that I can feel good about myself
I don't do it so that I can feel spiritual...
I don't do it so that I can get likes on social
media...

It's not about me at all...It's about others...
I want to do this because people need help and
I can help...God has blessed me, so let me be
a blessing to others...

When we give with the right motive it tells
others that God cares about them...

A local Church gave us gifts at Christmas

Wow! God loves us? God's thinking about us?
God knows about our situation? That was a
seed planted in our hearts about God!

The right motivation means I don't want anyone
else to know about this...And it just happens
naturally because of our relationship with God

Jesus calls this “not letting your left hand know what your right hand is doing” In other words this is between me, you and God!

Our giving and good deeds happen naturally and spontaneously as the Holy Spirit leads us...

Pentecostal Handshake

“The Lord told me to give this to you”

It’s done in secret...

Now this doesn’t mean that all good things ever done have to be a secret...that’s impossible, and Jesus tells us in Matthew 5

16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.-Matthew 5:16 (NIV)

The key is to bring God glory...If people see it or hear about it they give God the glory...

In fact, most people who are generous and give with the right heart and motivation never want anyone to know about it...

In fact, they do it so often and it's become such a part of their walk with God that they don't even think about it...they just do it and then they put it out of their minds...

In Matthew 25 Jesus is speaking about the end times...And how His followers served Him here on earth...

34 "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in,

36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' 37 "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' 40 "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'-Matthew 25:34-40 (NIV)

The idea is that we are so in love with Jesus that we just want to serve like Him and give like Him, and have compassion like Him...

It's just something that we do...It flows out of us because the Holy Spirit is working in us!

So we want God to keep the record of these things...And in the end there is a reward that's waiting for us!

Paul says it like this...

17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. 23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, 24 since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. -Colossians 5:17; 23-24 (NIV)

Family, most of our generosity (whether giving or serving) if done with the right motive, will go unnoticed, unappreciated, and unrewarded until we see Jesus face to face.

But it's an amazing way to live...It's a purposeful way to live...

It's a Kingdom way to live...It's how Jesus lived...He gave of Himself...He put others first and it's how Jesus wants us to live!

What's the Holy Spirit Saying To You?

Father,

We want to live generous lives. We want to be authentic and practice our righteousness in such a way that brings glory to You and You alone! Holy Spirit help us to not live for the applause of others, but all that we do, we do with the right motive...with a heart that is in alignment with Your will and Your will! Father, We want to hear "well done My good and faithful servant!"

