

FROM WHERE COMES MY REWARD?

Matthew 6:1-4 (NKJV) ¹“Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. ²Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. ³But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you [£]openly.

In the previous chapter the message of Jesus was directed at the deepest folds of our heart. It is to look inside of our hearts.

Now in this Jesus puts His finger at the condition of our outer self. It comes to the next circle : the ego.

What motivates us to do good deeds?

Is it love or compassion?

Is it to be appreciated by others?

This is a very difficult test. It is so tempting to help when someone is watching our deeds.

We need our names etched in stone for having donated for a big cause.

It is indeed painful to see Christian institutions encouraging big donations by luring the donors that they will etch their name in gilded letters in the building that would be built.

Many who have not really read and understood this Scripture have parted with a goodly sum, thinking that because their names are etched in stone in a Christian Institution or a Church, they will be rewarded.

But alas, it is quite to the contrary. Jesus says if you donate so that your name should be known and celebrated, there you have received your reward already. No more gilded letters or stone etched name in heaven.

This is the literal level. Right now as we are reading this we might have thought about some gullible rich person who has donated a big sum for a gilded name and be smiling patronisingly.

But now to Level II

Most of us are working. We all work for earthly institutions, masters(except a miniscule percent) and we want our labour to be recognized.

We want our names to be acknowledged. When someone wants to use our concept we tell them : Be sure to acknowledge me.

As a research supervisor am very strict in acknowledging intellectual borrowing. That is ethical, else it will be a clear case of plagiarism.

But despite all such considerations, when our work has been hijacked and used by someone else and s/he gets the credit for our work, how do we react?

On the earthly level, we can fight and claim our honour, yet at the same time, based on this chapter , we can let go. Because ultimately whatever we work and whoever we work for, our needs are filled by our Sovereign God. It is not our boss or our immediate employer.

Do we have the grace to leave it to our God and still say, "My reward is from Him?"

Or are we hurt and fume about the injustice?

Do we have the heart to let it go as an act of charity?

This bit I know is pretty difficult. We all love to be recognized, praised and acknowledged. Even if we help in secret, that is give our money in secret, we will not want to let go the praise which is due to us.

Looking back at my life, I have put in many many hours of labour in His vineyard that only God knows. I had never spoken about them. But my life now is also the reward of the Father who has seen me in secret. The Lord has literally poured into my lap full measure pressed in and pressed out. No I did not work that He would reward me, but God cannot be unfaithful. It is not in Him.

Right now God has truly blessed me undeservedly and lavishly. I always remember that God will never be anybody's debtor. He knows how to reward us, when to reward also.

My dear friends the moral of the story is this, whether you donate or work, let it not be, to be praised or to be flattered, but do it wholeheartedly whether anyone is seeing or not, so the One who always sees you will reward you openly may be not in ways you expected. But He will surely reward you in very unexpected ways and it is certainly bigger than what could have been.

Be careful never to pass off someone's work or ministry or idea as your own. God will not be pleased. This also amounts to stealing.

If someone steals your praise, never mind, God has a bigger and better package for you.

God bless.

A very meaningful song titled, Audience of one.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gde7isWvoAE&feature=related>