

## Giving to the needy

**Read:** Matthew 6:1-4

### Summary:

In Matthew chapter 5 Jesus has been teaching His disciples about character (v3-12) influence (v13-16) and living right (v17-48). He now brings out a very challenging principle ... Live knowing you are watched by God rather than to be seen by men.

Outside We all know that people observe the actions of others. We live in a media driven society where personalities are observed in minute detail. Jesus also expects us to behave well (he says *when you give not if*). Matthew chapter 6 is all about what we do – giving, prayer and fasting.

The bible describes giving as the right thing to do (Deut 15:11, Psalm 41:1, Proverbs 19:17) and Jesus himself talked a lot about it (Matthew 5:42, 19:21, 25:35). However Jesus points out that it is not just what the hand is doing that is important but what the heart is doing!

Inside Jesus warns against being a hypocrite, an actor who pretends to give money but intends to receive praise. Jesus is looking at the motive of our actions. We know from 1 Samuel 16:7 that *man looks at the outward appearance but God looks at the heart*. We do not live as Christians to be known but to make known the glory of God

God Sees We know from the Old Testament that God watches over the whole earth (Psalm 139, Deuteronomy 29:29, Jeremiah 23:24) and this had been a fearful thing. Jesus teaches that God sees and that because He is our Father (due to the death and resurrection of Jesus breaking down the barrier that was between us and God) and so wants to reward us!

Dr Martyn Lloyd Jones “*Let us remember that we are always in the presence and sight of God, and let us live only to please Him.*”

### Application:

Please select from the following questions, encouraging all to take part, to be honest.

1. Was there anything shared on Sunday that needs clarifying for you?
2. What was the main thing God said to you on Sunday and what are you going to do as a result?
3. How can we do our good works in secret (6:1) and yet also do them so that people see them (5:16)?
4. How do you feel knowing that God sees everything?
5. In what ways do rewards motivate you or have you not really thought much about them?
6. Pray for one another... to know strength in the secret times