

Virtue Signal

With Barry Haynes and John Ratliff

Barry

Have you heard of the phrase virtue signaling? It's a phenomenon in our modern world where people have to tell you about the good that they're doing. Companies must tell you in their commercials about how they're helping the environment or they're helping this political cause or whatever it is.

And it seems that virtue signaling now is a sign of how good we are. But maybe, just maybe, it's a sign of how bad we are. Today we're going to look at some scriptures that talk about when we do our deeds of righteousness to be seen by men.

Stay with us after the break and we'll talk more about these scriptures.

John

If you have your Bible, I would invite you to open to the sixth chapter of the book of Matthew and Jesus actually touches on this very topic. We're going to read verses one through four where there Jesus says, 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.

Therefore, 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 the reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.

That your charitable deed may be in secret and your father who sees in secret will himself reward you openly. You know, it's interesting that you think about the idea of individuals and companies, as Barry mentioned a moment ago, that want to make sure that you know every good thing they do. And yet, really, whenever you think about the principle that Jesus lays down here, he's telling us that we need to do what we do for others, not to be seen by them, but so that we can be helpful in secret ways, really.

Barry

And if there is a passage of scripture that should just slap us in the face in this modern world, it's this one. Because we have adopted this idea

that we're supposed to be boisterous about what we do that's a good deed. You know, we do this to get the publicity.

And if somebody doesn't do something we like, we like to make that little comment on the section and say, well, I do this thing. Or, you know, I would have done it this way because it's so much better to help it out. And we think that in doing so, it really elevates ourselves.

But in this passage, Jesus just kind of blows that apart. I mean, he basically says, you know, that when you do that, you're just, you know, you're getting your reward in full. In other words, you know, you're getting this from men, but it is a very short-lived type thing.

John

Right. And we're not trying to judge the motives of people that do this at times. But, you know, you go on social media and stuff of that sort, and you see these videos of people that are videoing themselves, giving out money to people.

And what they're doing is building their likes, if you would. And really, there's no reward in that spiritually, because Jesus points out very clearly that you're getting the reward. It's the praise of men.

And again, I don't know why they do it, but even with that being the case, they are broadcasting it so that others can see it.

Barry

And I even think in this passage, Jesus is saying, when we do it to make ourselves feel better, we're almost missing the point. Because when he says, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Of course, that's, you know, that's a metaphor there.

You know what you're doing. But what he's saying there is you're almost not doing it to reward yourself. You know, you're almost doing it because it's your nature to do, not because you're thinking about the benefit of doing it.

And he said, that makes you more like God, because that's how God operates. God gives because he is God, not because of the person that he's giving it to. He does good things because he's a good God.

And I think that's even what Jesus is saying here. Don't try to look good, be good. Be good, and these things will come.

He's not sitting here saying, don't give to people. He's saying, when you give, don't do it because you're trying to get something out of it. Because you're trying to make something for someone else.

John

And that's a good point, too, when you think about doing something for others. So when we help someone, whenever we're trying to give them something they may need, we do it not expecting anything in return. We should be doing it because of our love for that individual, because we realize they need help.

And we shouldn't be concerned if others go about and see what we're doing. And even as Jesus points out here, he says there in the last verse, verse four, he says, when you do a charitable deed, when you are helping someone, you do it in a secret way, but yet God sees it. And he realizes what you did.

He knows the motive of why you did it. Someone once said that it's amazing what could get done if nobody cares who gets the credit. And amazingly, imagine what we could accomplish if we weren't broadcasting ourselves and trying to show others all the good things that we are doing.

Barry

You know, really what this comes down to is what we see the lead in the verse before in the previous chapter, to be perfect like our heavenly father is perfect. Our standard, it shouldn't be to impress men. It should be to be pleasing to God.

And that's the way we should live our lives. Thank you so much for joining with us in this time. We encourage you to go back and look at some other videos as we look through what Jesus has us to say.

We want him to be the guide for our lives and we want to make sure that everything we do is pleasing you. Thank you for joining with us and have a good day.