

Go Unnoticed

Last week we discussed opportunities and focused on those *unique* and *missed* circumstances where an occasion presented itself to serve God and others. Today's lesson is somewhat a continuation of this theme. This past Thursday's Daily Berean actually triggered it. The following is an excerpt from that article from CGG and written by the late John Ritenbaugh:

Thus, Paul advises in Ephesians 5:17, "Therefore . . . **understand** what the will of the Lord is." As we live our lives each day, we should never let what God says slip from our minds. His point is that we need to make the most of every opportunity because time is inexorably moving toward God's desired end, and it will not stop and wait for us. We do not want to be left behind! **No occasion is too insignificant to do the right thing**. Time is precious! We, like God, must take it very seriously. We must not make the mistake of relegating Christian living to a mere couple of hours on the Sabbath. Christianity involves *every* aspect of life. Personal study and prayer are times of clarifying God's will. **But we must not neglect the doing of His will as occasions arise - and they will arise every day. Woe to us if we disregard them, for they comprise the very circumstances that challenge us to**

overcome and grow in our seeking of God. (Today's Berean from Thursday 08/20/26)

It can be difficult to understand what the will of God actually is ***if*** you don't know God and His Word. This is just a weekly reminder of how important growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ truly is. Not just coloring in scriptures in your Bibles but knowing, understanding, and *LIVING every word of it.*

How many times in your life can you recall a missed opportunity and realize it after the fact? We all have. We can begin to play Monday morning quarterback in our minds of how we could have responded differently and perhaps changed the situation. Maybe we backed the wrong candidate in an election (been there and done that), denied service to someone when we could have helped (anyone ever ask you to help them move?), you get the idea.

It is beneficial when God uses these incidents to humble us and we can learn from our mistakes, sadly, most do not. They will justify their own actions or try to "catch

the train” after it leaves the station. The motive will always come down to the individual's heart and **that is what God sees. He knows our hearts.**

1 Samuel 16:7- “But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look on his face, nor on his height because I have refused him, for *the LORD* does not see as man sees; for man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.”

We have discussed numerous times in the past whether it is more valuable to be right or righteous. In our day to day lives, we may find ourselves wanting to be recognized or receive validation and approval from others. This in itself is not sinful but the desire can at times lead us in a direction away from God’s way and the character of Jesus Christ. Self-reflection is an everyday process and not just reserved for the months preceding Passover. God’s Word clearly guides and tells us what is profoundly important, love, a humble heart, and growing in our relationship with God.

Jesus Did Not Seek Glory for Himself

Jesus did not go door to door. He did not boast of His own accomplishments but only to do the will of God the Father.

John 4:34- “Jesus said to them, “My meat is to do the will of Him Who sent Me, and to finish His work.”

John 5:30- “I have no power to do anything of Myself; but as I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father, Who sent Me.”

John 6:39-40- “And this is the will of the Father Who sent Me: that of all whom He has given Me; I should not lose any but should raise them up on the last day. And this is the will of Him Who sent Me: that everyone who sees the Son, and believes in Him, may have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

John 7:16-18- “Jesus answered them and said, “My doctrine is not Mine, but His Who sent Me. If anyone desires to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it is from God, or whether I speak from My own self. The one who speaks of himself is seeking his own glory; but He Who seeks the glory of Him Who sent Him is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.”

Jesus Did Not Seek to Be Noticed

Jesus did not boast whenever He performed a miracle. He did not expect applause or praise from the crowds. He often tried to disappear into them after performing His miracles.

Matthew 8:2-4- “And behold, a leper came and worshiped Him, saying, “Lord, if You will, You have the power to cleanse me.” Then Jesus stretched out *His* hand *and* touched him, saying, “I will. Be cleansed.” And immediately *he was* cleansed *from* his leprosy. And Jesus said to him, “**See that you tell no one**; but go and show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a witness to them.”

Mark 1:42-45- “And as soon as He had spoken, the leprosy immediately departed from him, and he was cleansed. Now after strictly commanding him, He sent him away at once, And said to him, “**See that you do not say anything to anyone**; but go *and* show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.” But after leaving, he began to proclaim *it* extensively and to spread the matter abroad, so that He was no longer able to enter

the city openly but stayed outside *the city* in desert places; and **they came to Him from every region.**”

John 5:12-13- “Then they asked him, “Who is the One Who said to you, ‘Take up your bedroll and walk’? ” But the man who had been healed did not know who it was, **for Jesus had moved away,** and a crowd was in the place.”

God Loves a Cheerful Giver

2 Corinthians 9:6-8- “But this *I say*: the one who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and the one who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully. **Each one as he purposes in his heart, so let him give, but not grudgingly or by compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver.** For God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you so that in every *way* you may always have sufficiency in all *things*, and may abound unto every good work,”

Giving is another area where self-centeredness can surface. Often those who give to a worthy cause or a charity will boast on the amount or what services were provided. Their actions can carry substantial influence within communities or even God’s Church. Anyone who practices such actions, God **knows their hearts**. It can

cause people to become “respecters of persons.” We all know how God feels about those who do. How many times have we discussed this? Do you grasp the importance of this?

James 2:9-10- “But if you have respect for persons, you are practicing sin, being convicted by the law as transgressors; For *if* anyone keeps the whole law, but sins in one aspect, he becomes guilty of all.”

Romans 2:11- “Because there is no respect for persons with God.”

Giving must come from the heart, not for reward or “give to get, or to be noticed,” but to serve God and those in need. We are commanded to give when the opportunity arises.

Proverbs 3:27-28- “Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do *it*. Do not say to your neighbor, “Go and come back again, and tomorrow I will give,” when you have it with you:”

I shared this scripture with a former boss regarding his judgment on a subordinate. He denied the good that was due and judged unfairly. God’s judgment upon him

came swiftly within a matter of weeks as he lost a fiancé, a house, and had a vehicle breakdown out of state. God is not mocked (**Galatians 6:7**).

These actions join our faith with works, which we know, one without the other is dead. Do you think there is a correlation between poor judgments and spiritual trials?

James 2:14-17- “My brethren, what good *does* it do, if anyone says *that he* has faith, and does not have works? Is faith able to save him? Now then, if there is a brother or sister who is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; be warmed and be filled,” and does not give to them the things necessary for the body, what good is it? In the same way also, faith, if it does not have works, is dead, by itself.”

When we *give* in the right manner, we trust in God, we can use our own influence for good to lift others and have God’s light shine in their lives. We reflect the blessings God has given us in the ability to give and that our influence reflects our love and faith in Jesus Christ.

Matthew 5:16- “In the same way also, you are to let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works, and may glorify your Father Who *is* in heaven.”

Colossians 3:23-25- “And whatever you do, do heartily, as to the Lord and not to men; Knowing that you shall receive from *the* Lord the recompense of the inheritance, for you are serving Christ the Lord. But the one who does wrong shall receive *for* the wrong he has done, and there is no respect of persons.”

Titus 2:7- “In all things you yourself set an example of good works; in doctrine uncorrupted, serious-minded, *and* sincere;”

I pray the theme of “no respect for persons” is ringing in your ears. God wants our love, trust, and obedience. The only *notice* we need to be concerned with is what God sees in us. It is God’s approval that will always matter, **not man’s**.

Acts 5:29- “But Peter and the apostles answered and said, “We are obligated to obey God rather than men.”

Please God or Men?

Seeking attention isn't always wrong. *Everyone* needs affirmation and or praise occasionally **so long it is not your original purpose**. Taking pride in a job or workmanship giving the glory to God for the ability, is a good start. The focus on self-promotion rather than giving God the glory can lead to a development of expectancy. Do we have a problem with entitlement in society today? We certainly do. Just look at the area in which we live.

There are constant prompts throughout God's Word that remind us of the importance of being humble and selfless. Instead of a focus on the self, we are called to shine the light on others, meeting their needs when possible. In doing so, we develop stronger relationships and demonstrate the giving character of Jesus Christ. God takes notice when *we do* and certainly *sees when we do not*.

1 Thessalonians 2:4- "But even as we were approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, we speak in this manner: **as those who please not men, but God, Who proves our hearts.**"

Galatians 1:10- “Now then, am I striving to please men, or God? Or am I motivated to please men? For if I am yet pleasing men, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

We do not help others for praise; we do so to glorify God.

Matthew 6:1-5- “Beware *that* you do not bestow your alms in the sight of men in order to be seen by them; otherwise, you have no reward with your Father Who *is* in heaven. Therefore, when you give *your* alms, do not sound the trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may have glory from men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward. But *when* you give your alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, So that your alms may be in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret shall Himself reward you openly. And when you pray, you shall not be hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, in order *that* they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward.”

Matthew 6:16-18- “And when you fast, do not be as the hypocrites, dejected in countenance; for they disfigure their faces in order that they may appear to men to fast. Truly I say to you, they have their reward. But *when* you fast, anoint your

head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to men too fast, but to your Father Who *is* in secret; and **your Father Who sees in secret shall reward you openly.**”

I’m sure we have all known or encountered people that have feigned fatigue or illness to get attention. My kid brother used to get my grandma to put his arm in a sling for a cut finger. Extreme but again, you get the idea. Drawing attention to one’s self for helping others may get you the attention from God that you don’t want.

Hebrews 10:30-31- “For we know Him Who has said, ” ‘Vengeance *belongs* to Me. I will recompense!’ says *the* Lord.” And again, **“The Lord will judge His people.”** *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*”

Luke 16:15- “And He said to them, “You are those who justify themselves before men, **but God knows your hearts**; for that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination before God.”

There are those who attempt to do God's will only when it will benefit them. Many of those false teachers and preachers we see on TV are experts at this conduct. Like the hypocrites just mentioned, they have their reward.

Humble vs Pride

We have discussed this topic *dozens of times*, but it is critical to remember that any spiritual growth depends on our humble hearts and attitudes. This trait comes from our identity in Jesus Christ and not by the praise or accolades of others. Putting others ahead of ourselves is difficult if the focus is on the self.

Philippians 2:3-5- “*Let nothing be done through contention or vainglory, but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself. Let each one look not only after his own things but let each one also consider the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus;*”

God's Word tells us to value humility and a contrite spirit. When we serve others as Christ served all of mankind by His sacrifice, we too can reflect His love to others. Expressing this quality in our actions, we may draw others to Him rather than throwing our arm out of socket patting ourselves on the back.

Isaiah 66:2- “For all these things My hand has made, and these things came to be,” says the LORD. “But to this one I will look to him who is of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembles at My Word.”

Proverbs 11:2- “When pride comes, then shame comes; but with the lowly *is* wisdom.”

James 4:6- “But He gives greater grace. This is *the* reason it says, “God sets Himself against *the* proud, but He gives grace to *the* humble.”

Losing the need for self-self-promotion allows us to trust in God to lift us up in His way and in His time.

James 4:10- “Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you.”

Pride is a faith killer and stumbling block to any spiritual growth. Failing to hold ourselves to God’s standards by comparing ourselves to others will produce spiritual disaster.

Luke 18:7-14- “And shall not God execute vengeance for His elect, who cry out to Him day and night, and patiently watch over them? I tell you that He will execute vengeance for them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, shall He find the true faith on the earth?” And to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, He also spoke this parable: “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one was a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed with himself in this manner: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men— extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers—or even as this tax collector. I fast twice in the week, and I give a tithe of everything that I gain.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat himself on the chest, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner.’ I tell you; this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. **For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled; and the one who humbles himself shall be exalted.**”

2 Corinthians 10:12- “But we dare not join ranks with or compare ourselves with those who are commending themselves; for those who measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves with themselves, have no understanding.”

We no longer need validation for our earthly efforts as our focus on serving and pleasing God is our primary goal. If we are actually keeping the “Greatest Commandment” self-promotion is unnecessary. Our love for God will outweigh our love of self.

Ephesians 2:10- “For we are His workmanship, being created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them.”

Galatians 2:20- “I have been crucified with Christ, yet I live. **Indeed, it is no longer I; but Christ lives in me.** For *the life* that I am now living in *the* flesh, I live by faith—that *very faith* of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

If we have truly been crucified with Jesus, we no longer need any recognition from man. Plain and simple.

Colossians 3:1-3- “Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God. Set your

affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth.

For you have died, and your life has been hid together with Christ in God.”

Seeking approval from man can lead to regret and disappointment. Pleasing God will bring us to a place of peace, joy, and satisfaction. Aligning ourselves with the will of God can take our focus away from the self. Our identity *in* Him is demonstrated by His love for us in that He gave His only begotten Son (**John 3:16**).

Overcoming pride is difficult especially when your relationship with God is weak. When we concentrate on our objective in serving God and those He sends, the need for recognition and praise from man diminishes. There is no trophy, ribbon, award, or anything on earth that will ever compare to being lifted by God Almighty. The ultimate prize He gives is eternal life.

Seeking to live in God’s will sets us free from the bondage of being “noticed” by man. Our fulfillment will only come through our relationship with God. He is the only source of joy and peace. Jesus sought no fame or glory but gave all glory to God the Father.

1 Corinthians 1:31- “So that, as it is written, “The one who glories, let him glory in *the* Lord.” Amen.

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