

Open Your Heart and Mind

- If you are willing, would you share a story when someone gave benevolently to you?

Finding God in His Word (Read Matthew 6:1-4)

- Clearly all people can do good things (i.e. helping the poor) without knowing God. What do you think is the difference, or why do you think it matters, to do this kind of good as a Christian?
- What spiritual disciplines, acts of righteousness, do you practice?
- Why do you think discipleship demands visible, public engagement within our world?
- Jesus warns to not do acts of righteousness to be seen by others, and we made five observations from that key principal. Of the five, what stood out to you most? What do you find the most challenging? What would you add as understanding regarding this principal?
- How do you understand what Jesus has to say about secrecy in practicing a spiritual discipline?
- In what way(s) is giving to the poor a spiritual discipline? What makes giving benevolently an act of worship?
- Think of someone you know “toots their own horn”. Why would Jesus chastise those who seek man’s praise? Why can seeking the praise of men, especially in practicing spiritual disciplines, be an issue Jesus wants to see addressed among his kingdom citizens?
- Motive matters. This will show up in all three of the examples that Jesus, and therefore applies to any spiritual discipline we might practice. Why do we need to be aware of our motive I practicing spiritual disciplines. Share with one another how you measure your motives.
- Why is the praise of others such an alluring desire rather than seeking the praise of God alone?
- Pastor Malcolm mentioned that God’s giving rewards for practicing spiritual disciplines with God-centered motives is a picture that justice, in the end of all things, will be done by God Why would the giving of rewards, or the giving of judgments for that matter, be a picture of God’s ultimate justice?
- Pastor Malcolm listed four rewards God may give for those who give to the poor with God-centered motives. Discuss these rewards together. What other rewards have you experienced as you have given benevolently to the poor in your life?

Live the Christ Life

1. Where is God speaking to you with regard to practicing benevolent giving to the poor?