



Mid-Week

Bible Study and Prayer
Wednesdays 6:45pm – 8pm



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How to Spot a Hypocrite pt. 1 - Giving (Giving to the Poor)

Matthew 6:1-4 (NKJV) *[with explanatory notes]*

- 1 "Take heed *[beware]* that you do not do your charitable deeds *[good deeds]* before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven.
- 2 Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet *[Everybody would say, "There's the Pharisee. Isn't he a generous man? Look what he's given to the poor."]* before you¹ as the hypocrites *["an actor who puts on a show, who plays a part on stage"]* do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men *[recognized and honored and praised by men]*. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. *[While this type of arrogant acting may gain the applause of man, it does nothing to merit the approval of God.]*
- 3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, *[let it be spontaneous, not calculated. When your left hand passes money to your right hand, it is calculated. When the money leaves your pocket, without passing it from your left hand to your right hand, it is spontaneous.]*
- 4 that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.

Hypocrisy: The story is told of an eastern ascetic holy man who covered himself with ashes as a sign of humility and regularly sat on a prominent street corner of his city. When tourists asked permission to take his picture, the mystic would rearrange his ashes to give the best image of destitution and humility.

Since the fall of man there have been hypocrites. Hypocrites are mentioned in Scripture from Genesis through Revelation. Cain was the first hypocrite, feigning worship by offering a kind of sacrifice that God did not want. When his hypocrisy was unmasked, he killed his brother Abel out of resentment ([Gen. 4:5-8](#)). Absalom hypocritically vowed allegiance to his father, King David, while plotting the overthrow of his regime ([2 Sam. 15:7-10](#)).

The supreme hypocrite was Judas Iscariot, who betrayed the Lord with a kiss. Ananias and Sapphira hypocritically claimed to have given the church all the proceeds from the sale of some property, and lost their lives for lying to the Holy Spirit ([Acts 5:1-10](#)).

Hypocrisy is never treated lightly in Scripture. Through Amos, God said, "I hate, I reject your festivals, nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer up to Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them; and I will not even look at the peace offerings of your fatlings. Take away from Me the noise of your songs; I will not even listen to the sound of your harps. But let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" ([Amos 5:21-24](#)). All of those religious acts had been prescribed by

¹ G. Campbell Morgan tells us that the Pharisees of the day, carried silver trumpets, and when they would go out to give money to the poor, they would blow the trumpet. And, when they would blow the trumpet the needy would come and while the people were there watching, then the Pharisees would distribute money to the poor. They would sound a trumpet so everybody could see them doing this thing. There's nothing wrong with giving to the poor. There is nothing wrong with giving to the poor publicly, there is much wrong with giving to the poor in order to be seen of men.

God; but because they were performed insincerely and were not accompanied by righteous living they were not acceptable to God. The sacrifices, offerings, and songs were not given to God's glory but to the people's own glory and self-satisfaction.

- *A true Christian is not shaken by hypocrites because he knows at least one person who is not a hypocrite – himself.*
- *A Hypocrite is someone who has everything in the Showcase and nothing in the Warehouse!*
- *The Russian author Turgenev wrote, "I do not know what the heart of a bad man is like, but I do know what the heart of a good man is like, and it is terrible."*

"Is there a little Pharisee in me?"²

- A. Have I ever failed to obey because I feared rejection by others?
- B. Do I often do service for God and others that goes unreported?
- C. Is my private life consistent with my public image?
- D. Am I wounded when others get credit for what I do?
- E. Have I ever stopped serving or attending because of the lack of praise and recognition.
- F. Have I ever accepted praise and recognition for what someone else did?
- G. Do I love the praise of men more than the favor and praise of God?

Arrogant Giving vs. Acceptable Giving

Jesus expected the Christians of His day to be involved in reaching beyond themselves and helping those who needed their help, and we have no reason to believe that He expects any less from those of us today who claim to be His children.

The Word of God has always spoken of the importance of doing good to those in need. Consider [Deuteronomy 15:10-11](#); [Psalm 37:21](#); [Proverbs 14:31, 19:17; 31:20](#); [Ephesians 4:28](#); [Hebrews 13:16](#); [Titus 3:8](#); [James 2:15-16](#); [1 John 3:17-18](#).

While our giving is to be characterized by compassion, it is also to be conducted with caution (Psalm 112:5). We must not let our sentiment overrule our sense. We must exhibit good judgment in our giving. Because some people have no conscience, God's people must be aware of professional con men and scam artists.

The Bible is clear in its teaching of our responsibility to give to those in need, and to fail to do so puts us in direct disobedience to the commands of our heavenly Father.

Three Surprises in Heaven:³

- 1) There will be those who receive a reward I thought wouldn't get one
- 2) There will be those who don't receive a reward I thought would surely receive one
- 3) The greatest surprise may be if I myself hear Jesus say, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Did you hear about the hog farmer who refused to have anything to do with his church because all he ever saw was a bunch of hypocrites who belonged to it? He always named two or three. One day his pastor came by to buy a hog from him.

After looking over the farmer's entire herd, the pastor pointed to a scrawny, sickly, ugly little runt and said, "I want that one. He is the scrawniest runt I've ever seen."

"But look over here at all these fine, fat pigs," said the farmer. "That's alright," said the pastor. "I want the runt."

After the purchase was completed, the pastor then said, "I am going to haul this runt all over the place and tell everyone that this is the kind of hogs you raise."

"Wait a minute," the farmer burst out. "That's not fair. I raise fine hogs. An occasional runt doesn't ruin my whole reputation and mean that I don't really raise fine hogs."

"I know that," said the pastor, "but I am only following your example. Just because there are a few hypocrites in our church does not mean that the whole church is made up of hypocrites."

² Adrian Rogers

³ R. T. Kendall, adapted from Martin Luther