

Devotion Tuesday 8 March 2022

Matthew 6: 1 – 4

6 'Be careful not to practise your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

2 'So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honoured by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Another one of the spiritual practices of Lent is giving to the poor. While we should always be aware of those less fortunate around us and be helping where we can, Lent is where we make more of an effort. Maybe we are not always able to afford to give money but there is always some way that we can reach out and help someone else. We can give of our skills and talents and we can give of our time. How can you reach out and help this Lent?

Jesus speaks in the text above about our motivation when we do reach out and help. It is quite impossible to not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing but what Jesus is getting at is that we shouldn't be broadcasting all our good deeds so that we get the recognition for them. When we help others with the attitude of "look at me, look at me, see how good I am", it's all about me, it's not really about caring about the other person, it's not really about the grace of God. We have become a society where it is all about me. We post selfies on so many platforms, we tell the whole world what we are doing that often we lose sight of our real motivation. We should be helping people because we are already so blessed by God and therefore we want to reach out and bless others. Helping others is our gift of gratitude to God, not because we want something out of it but because we have already received so much. It's not about how many 'likes' we get, there's only really one 'like' that matters and God is not going to thumbs up it on your Facebook page.

Take some time today and examine what your motives are for helping and doing good and if you're not doing anything to help others, make it your pledge this Lent to start.

Prayer

Almighty God, thank you so much for everything you have done for us. Thank you for the way you bless us in so many, many ways. Help us to reach out in gratitude to bless others and to share your love with them.

Today Lord we pray for the innocent caught in conflict around the world,

We pray for childhoods lost,
For children forced to take up arms,
For children whose education and innocence are lost because conflict,
We pray for all those whose ordinary lives (which we take so for granted)
Have been upended as they flee their homes or bunker down in fear.
We pray for foreigners, especially our own citizens who are caught in these conflicts,
Give them safe passage out of the violence and bring them home.
Prince of Peace, hear our prayers,
Bring stability to areas wracked by violence,
Bring an end to war and conflict
And protect the innocent and keep them safe.
In Jesus name,
Amen.
Rev KS Brown