

“Watch out! Don’t do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. When you give to someone in need, don’t do as the hypocrites do—blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. But when you give to someone in need, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.” Matthew 6:1-4 NLT

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I LOVE this “secret” giving clause that Jesus speaks to. It is both exciting and challenging to do this well. It’s exciting because, as has been said, “It is far more blessed to give than receive.” When there is an opportunity to give, I feel so empowered, yet so thankful. I don’t have to imagine being on the receiving end because for ONE WHOLE YEAR I was out of work, with no visible means of income. And, in that year, God supernaturally supplied through PEOPLE! I had to learn to receive it as though it was from God because if I imagined I was getting it from friends, I would try to reject it. Checks would show up in the mail. Money would be deposited into our account because of some pass “error” in banking, taxes or mortgage issues (those felt like the Community Chest in Monopoly). I got over being humiliated by receiving, yet still giving was by far MORE FUN. And, it has its challenges to be secret. Our family has been “caught” more than once trying to sneak cash into someone’s mailbox. We just ran away giggling. There are also some tricks to figuring out how to get money to folks that we felt God had directed us to, but we had no real means of contacting them. We’ve had to be snoops around their friends or families without making it obvious that we wanted to “bless” them. And, folks who have given us money know that it is such a fun, but serious game to be played. One of the ways it helps keep it simple, fun and non-trumpety is to give it and forget about it. Let God deal with the whole idea of how someone might spend it or if their life, motives or behaviors are “worthy” of “my” gift - oh gag, that’s just creepy. When we give, we bless, and let God sort out what happens on the receivers end. I know this... we DO NOT give to get! We get to give!

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Dad,

I know you are a giver. I also know you created us to be givers. But wow, these fun, Christlike ideas can be complicated! I can totally see how this can get me sidetracked or sideways about motives and perceptions and make this about me and not you. I don’t want that. Thank you for the inspiration and tips on giving. Help me keep it simple and fun, as well as being obedient. Sometimes follow through and timing are hard for me.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root