

MATTERS OF THE HEART

LESSON 8: RED LETTER BUSINESS

The spiritual life is the life of Christ reproduced in the life of the believer by the power of the Holy Spirit in obedient response to the Word of God.

– DR. HOWARD HENDRICKS

CORPORATE SITUATION ROOM

George is a generous, Christian man that works in the marketing department for a construction company. Recently, he went to lunch with Chris, who works on one of their construction crews. Chris has had several challenges with his family, and he is over-extended financially in trying to care for them. George is moved by Chris' situation and helps him by buying a car to replace Chris's car that can barely get him to work. George explains that this gift is just between the two of them. Chris is overwhelmed by George's generosity.

As the weeks go by George is approached by the marketing director, Louis, who asks him about his generosity to Chris. George is shocked that he would even know about it but Chris in his enthusiasm has shared the story that has set him on a better path for his family. George tries to shrug it off with his boss but Louis presses in. He asks George if he would be willing to do a short video with Chris and tell their story. He would like to post this story on the corporate website to encourage other employees in how the company cares and go external to influence potential clients and staff to engage with their company. Louis tells George that he has already asked Chris who, in his enthusiasm, has agreed to share his story. George asks Louis if he can take the weekend to pray about this proposal.

- Q.** As Georges trusted friend how would you counsel him in making this decision?
- Q.** What are the implications in agreeing or rejecting the proposal?
- Q.** How does the method in which this gift was given affect the outcome?

MATTHEW 6:1-18

¹ "Be careful not to practice 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 honored 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.

Prayer

⁵ “And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷ And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

⁹ “This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today our daily bread.

¹² And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.’

¹⁴ For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Fasting

¹⁶ “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

- Q.** What idols do you have in your life if you seek recognition?
- Q.** Is there a time where others should know about your “acts of righteousness”?
- Q.** What are some indicators in your life that would determine your true motives?
- Q.** What do you do if your motives are not pure?
- Q.** What do you do if people figure out that you are the one?
- Q.** What is the fruit of pure motives?
- Q.** What does 2 Cor. 9: 6-15 tell us about motives?
- Q.** What are some ideas you have that can guard against wrong motives?