

MESSAGE BIG IDEA

The way of Jesus exposes our misguided pursuit for significance and invites us into a better way.

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 6:1-6, Numbers 6:23-27

ICEBREAKER

Share a moment when you did the right thing even though no one was watching.

OPENING THOUGHT

Who we are when no one is looking. New Testament scholar Scot McKnight makes this observation about good acts or works: “The act itself is not the problem, nor even its visibility, but instead the act itself is transformed into hypocrisy and self-preoccupation when the intent is attraction to oneself.” Why does our motivation matter?

BIBLE DISCUSSION

1. Read Matthew 6:1-6. What do these passages say about motivation? What do they say about God?
2. Read Numbers 6:24-26. What does this passage say about how God sees us?

LIFE APPLICATION

3. Jesus wanted us to do the right thing with the right motive – to please God, not to impress others. What could it look like to do the right thing with the wrong motive with regard to generosity, service, or other acts of spirituality?
4. We are hard wired to desire affirmation. One of the most common remarks of a child is, “Watch me! Watch me!” But the “watch me” of childhood becomes the adult’s unspoken, but just as deep, “notice me.” Where do you see “notice me” playing out in your life?
5. The problem is not our desire for affirmation, but where we go chasing it. How could knowing we are hard wired to be noticed by God shift your understanding of affirmation?
6. Intimacy with God is the most valuable prize, not the praise of others. How could you pursue intimacy with God this week?

CHALLENGE

God is always with us. In a culture obsessed with selfies and “notice me”, God says, ‘I already see you fully and completely. I know your best moments and your worst ones, and I still call you beloved.’ Take time at the end of your session to practice silence & stillness, to enter into an awareness of God’s presence, resting in God’s love. Commit to practicing silence & stillness over the next week, intentionally meeting this desire to be seen and noticed by being seen and noticed by God.