

Shayla: Can Christians let others know of their good works? Isn't that "tooting your own horn"?

Midrash:

- **Matthew 6:3-4 HCSB** But when you give to the poor, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, (4) so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

We are to publicly demonstrate our conversion and its ramifications. John the Baptist called people to undergo public baptism to show others that they had repented of their sins and turned to God.

- **Matthew 3:5-6 HCSB** Then *people from* Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the vicinity of the Jordan were flocking to him, (6) and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins.
- **Matthew 3:8 HCSB** Therefore produce fruit consistent with repentance.
- **Mark 1:5 HCSB** The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were flocking to him, and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins.
- **Luke 3:8 HCSB** Therefore produce fruit consistent with repentance. And don't start saying to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones!
- **Luke 3:10-14 HCSB** "What then should we do?" the crowds were asking him. (11) He replied to them, "The one who has two shirts must share with someone who has none, and the one who has food must do the same." (12) Tax collectors also came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" (13) He told them, "Don't collect any more than what you have been authorized." (14) Some soldiers also questioned him: "What should we do?" He said to them, "Don't take money from anyone by force or false accusation; be satisfied with your wages."

In the Master's conversation with Nicodemus He said,

- **John 3:20-21 HCSB** For everyone who practices wicked things hates the light and avoids it, so that his deeds may not be exposed. (21) But anyone who lives by the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be shown to be accomplished by God."

In the parable of salt and light Jesus said,

- **Matthew 5:13-16 HCSB** "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt should lose its taste, how can it be made salty? It's no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled on by men. (14) "You are the light of the world. A city situated on a hill cannot be hidden. (15) No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house. (16) In the same way, let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

The Lord's teaching on giving to the needy in the text which concerns you deals with the motive of the public exposure. If we are doing it "to be admired" by "blowing trumpets...to call attention" to our acts then we have received all the reward we will get. Self-glorification is its only reward.

We need to be sure that God is glorified in all we do. God created the opportunity. God gave the resources. God gave the know-how. God protected. God directed. Let any public witness to good works be stated succinctly and simply as a matter of fact.

The very following passage (Matthew 6:5-8) states that our prayers should be private – but we make allowances for public prayer. The point of these passages is thus to determine the intent of our heart, not to deny the possibility of public acknowledgment of good works.