

THE COVERT DISCIPLE



Questions for Application for the Week of March 31, 2014 Part 1 - When You Give - Matthew 6:1-4

1. In Matthew 6:1 it appears like Jesus is contradicting what he instructed us to do in Matthew 5:16. Compare and contrast the two passages. What are the distinctions between them and how do you keep both commands?

2. For Jesus' original listeners, "giving" to the synagogue would have been a routine part of life. Today statistics would indicate that Christians do not hold the same conviction, yet, Jesus' instruction in Matthew 6:2-4 assumes that his people will give. Reflecting on what God has given you, what do your giving patterns communicate about what you value and what might you begin to do differently moving forward?

3. The "hypocrites" loved the attention they received for their generosity (Mt. 6:2). In what ways do people or organizations praise us for our giving today and is there a difference between recognition or thankfulness for one's generosity and being "praised"? What is it?

4. Jesus encourages us when we give to, "not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing" (Matthew 6:3), which seems like it would be incredibly difficult to do! Obviously Jesus is being dramatic to make a point. What will honoring this instruction look like in your life? In what ways do we as followers of Christ practically get this done?

5. Quite often in the Old Testament the realization that God saw things done in secret was a terrifying prospect. In Matthew 6:4, Jesus uses the same truth as an encouragement. How should the prospect of a heavenly reward encourage us when we give? Why is it so easy to doubt the veracity of this promise living in our culture today?