

Short Talk

(SHT027)

Acts of righteousness

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ALL AGE WORSHIP
RESOURCES.ORG



SHORT TALK: “ACTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS” (SHT027)

Aim of Short talk:	To encourage people to pray, give and fast secretly so that they might receive God’s reward rather than man’s reward.
Main themes:	Praying, Giving, Fasting, Rewards
Biblical references:	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18
Props:	Enough News-sheets / service leaflets / term cards for each member of the congregation, six small bars of chocolate and one massive bar of chocolate.

This morning I need six children willing to do a simple job for me.

- Come forward now. *(Wait for children to come forward)*

Please could you hand out this leaflet to every member of the congregation as quickly as you can?

(Children hand out leaflets)

- Come back to me when you have finished.

Thank you very much for doing such a great job.

- There is a reward for you for doing that so well. *(Give each child a bar of chocolate)*
- OK – if you would like to go back to your seats now thank you.

We all like rewards don’t we?

- We enjoy getting told, “well done,” when we have done something well,
- or being given a prize if we have won a race or a competition.

There are all sorts of rewards to be had through life aren’t there?

- Perhaps one of the biggest rewards we can get is when people think well of us.

We like it when the other kids at school think we are “cool.”

- We like it when people think we are good at our job and we hear them complimenting us in front of our colleagues.
- We like it when other parents think that we have brought up our children amazingly,

We can carry that enjoyment of people thinking well of us into our Christian life.....

- and before we know it we are telling other Christians in our Sunday school group,
- or home group,
- or during coffee after the church service about all the good things we are doing for others.

We might be tempted to tell them that we:

- Get up at 6am each morning to pray because we have such a long list of people to pray for,
- or that we have just given all of our pocket money for the last month to the Mission project.

Jesus tells us in the book of Matthew that there are three things that we actually need to learn to do in secret,

- without telling people around us that we are doing them.

We need to learn to:

- Give our money to others in secret,
- Pray in secret
- and Fast in secret.

You see the reason that Jesus tells us to do these good things in secret is not to be a spoilsport.

- It is because He knows that Father God has a much better reward for us than people thinking well of us.

Father God wants to reward us Himself whenever we give our money away to others,

- or we pray
- or we fast,
- but we can only receive His better reward if we are willing to do these things in secret.

Three times in Matthew chapter six Jesus says, "*Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you*" (Matthew 6:4, 6:18)

- Now Jesus isn't saying that we can only pray in secret, because he teaches us that it is important to pray together as a church,
- but what he is saying is that we don't go around boasting about our personal prayer lives....it is between us and God.

Now we don't know when or how God will reward us when we give, pray or fast in secret,

- but what we do know is that Father God has such a big and generous heart that His rewards will be much better than any we could ever dream of down here on earth.
- In fact if He was handing out chocolate bars this morning, I bet his chocolate bars are this size. *(Pull out large bar of chocolate)*

So can I encourage each one of us this morning to choose to live for rewards that come from God,

- rather than the temporary reward of people thinking well of us;
- and enjoy giving, praying and fasting in secret,
- knowing that our Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward us.