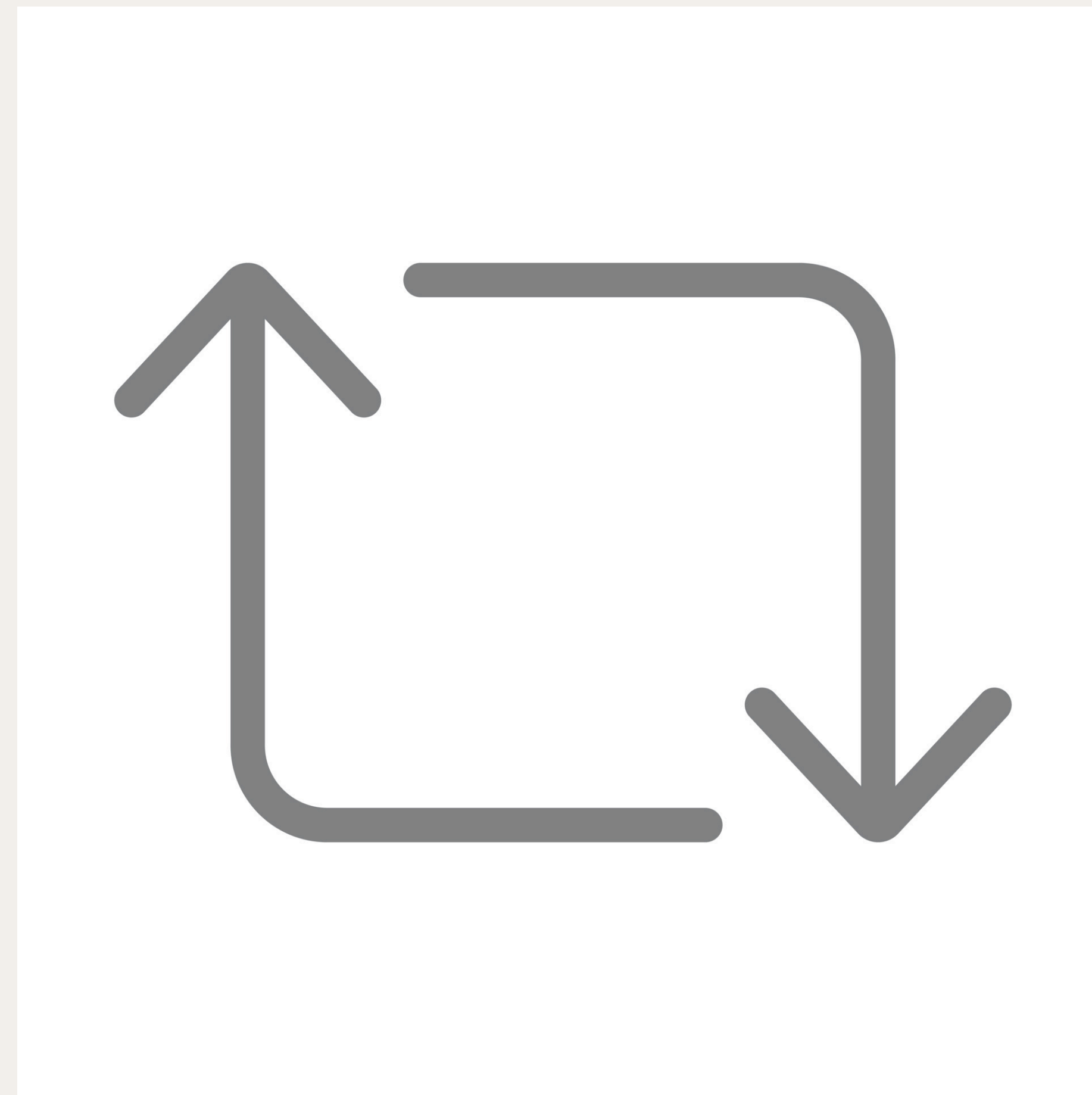


# MATTHEW







Living from the  
secret place

# Theatrical Righteousness



# Structure of 6:1-18

- Bad Practice: “Don’t do this...”
- Good Practice: “When you do this...”
- Contrasting Rewards: Public/Secret, Human/God’s eyes



# How Not to Practice Justice







# Performative Spirituality



Then Jesus told them, “Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” They were discussing among themselves, “We didn’t bring any bread.” Then they understood that he had not told them to beware of the leaven in bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Matthew 16:6, 12

They do everything to be seen by others: They enlarge their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels. They love the place of honor at banquets, the front seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called 'Rabbi' by people.

Matthew 23:5-7



How can you believe, since you accept glory from one another but don't seek the glory that comes from the only God?

John 5:44

Their outward display of religiosity was enviable in its apparent holiness...behind this religious facade, however, was an emptiness of deadly proportions. Their profound religiosity was a self-generated effort at attaining holiness for themselves rather than the fruit of a life in loving union with God.

Robert Mulholland



# How to Practice Deeper Justice

Keeping the left hand from knowing what the right hand is doing means first of all seeking to be urself-conscious and urself-impressed. Our social justice work or our financial generosity (the one hand) should not be credited to our spiritual standing before God (the other hand). Not only should there be no external trumpets, but there should not even be any internal music...Jesus wants to liberate us from having to be impressive to anyone, including ourselves.

Dale Bruner

The kind of people who have been so transformed by their daily walk with God that good deeds naturally flow from their character are precisely the kind of people whose left hand would not notice what their right hand is doing. As, for example, when driving one's own car or speaking one's native language. What they do they do naturally, often automatically, simply because of what they are pervasively and internally. These are people who do not have to invest a lot of reflection in doing good for others. Their deeds are "in secret" no matter who is watching, for they are absorbed in love of God and of those around them. They hardly notice their own deed, and rarely remember it.

Dallas Willard



The genuine deed of love is always a deed hidden to myself.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

The theater of God is in the hidden corners.

John Calvin

Whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

Hebrews 11:6

# The Secret Place of Thunder



I relieved your shoulder of the burden; your hands were freed from the basket. In distress you called, and I delivered you; I answered you in the secret place of thunder...

Psalm 81:6-7

A performative life might lead others, at least momentarily, to think you are impressive or give you a brief sense that you are going to be okay. But these benefits are fleeting. It will not lead to a deep and abiding sense of God's presence, an experiential grasp of his love, and healing from your insecurities.

John Starke

# Jesus & The Secret Place

When Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water. The heavens suddenly opened for him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming down on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased.”

Matthew 3:16-17



Jesus, however, would not entrust himself to them, since he knew them all.

John 2:24



# Invitation

Get to the secret place



**Audit your spiritual  
practices**

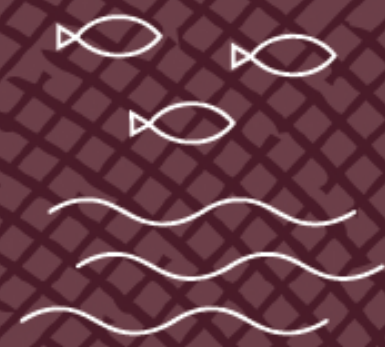
# Questions:

- Could there be attention deficits from my story driving this behavior?
- What's the payoff driving my actions (emotional, relational, psychological, etc)?
- Where do I notice exaggerated emotions like fear, anger, jealousy, sadness, or shame?
- What's the hidden, competing commitment?
- Who is this really for?
- Whose attention am I seeking?
- Would I still do this if nobody ever found out?



Do something without  
telling anyone





# MATTHEW

