

Do You Want It Now or Later?

Be careful not to do your “acts of righteousness” before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. **—Matthew 6:1**

Who doesn’t appreciate an accolade or two, but are you willing to become a small fish in a big pond? In other words, when all you have done has gone unnoticed and you do not get recognition, what matters most to you—receiving an immediate reward (man’s recognition) or a heavenly reward (God’s recognition)?

If Paul had said, “I have planted and God gave the increase,” there would be room for self-importance. How humbling it is that God uses more than one person in another’s conversion! There is not a single one of us who owes his or her conversion and growth just to one person. In my case I could speak not of a dozen but of fifty, maybe a hundred, all of whom have had a powerful influence on me. The test is the willingness to be a small fish in a big pond.

What if I am not noticed for all the hard work I do? My effectiveness must be determined by (a) my willingness to be insignificant and have an insignificant part, and (b) my willingness to have an unnoticed part. Great men show themselves small when

they

become too worried about their place in history.

But what does it matter? In a short time we will all stand before

the judgment seat of Christ, where it will all come out.

People who are

so eager to have their biographies say this or that about themselves

will find out that one day we will all know the real truth anyway! The

question is, if I am a peacemaker, will I keep quiet about it?

If I am

persecuted, will I keep quiet about it? If I am pious, if I pray, fast,

and give sacrificially, will I keep quiet about it? If I am determined

to get noticed, well, I will probably get it, but that means I get paid

now, but recognition in this life is a very low pay indeed.

Excerpted from *When God Says "Well Done!"* (Christian Focus Publications Ltd., 1993).