

# Matthew 6:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

## Analysis

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The phrase 'when thou doest thine alms' assumes believers will give—the question is not whether but how. Jesus condemns those who 'sound a trumpet' announcing their charity, likely metaphorical for public displays drawing attention. The synagogue and street giving ensured maximum visibility and acclaim. Christ's verdict is devastating: 'they have their reward'—present human praise exhausts their compensation. God gives no further reward for what was done for man's glory, not His.

## Historical Context

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Wealthy benefactors in ancient society gained honor through publicized philanthropy. Synagogues had collection boxes (shofar chests) with trumpet-like openings. Some suggest coins dropped in these chests made loud sounds, though 'sounding a trumpet' more likely means public announcement of giving.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. How can giving be done publicly when needed (for accountability or encouraging others) without the motive of seeking human praise?
2. What does 'they have their reward' teach about the eternal consequences of serving for human applause versus God's glory?

## Interlinear Text

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Ὅταν οὖν ποιοῦσιν ἐλεημοσύνην μὴ σαλπίσῃς  
**when** **Therefore** **do** **thine alms** **not** **do**  
G3752 G3767 G4160 G1654 G3361 G4537

ἔμπροσθέν σου ὥσπερ οἱ ὑποκριταὶ ποιοῦσιν ἐν ταῖς  
**before** **thee** **as** **the hypocrites** **do** **in**  
G1715 G4675 G5618 G3588 G5273 G4160 G1722 G3588

συναγωγαῖς καὶ ἐν ταῖς ῥύμαις ὅπως δοξασθῶσιν  
**the synagogues** **and** **in** **the streets** **that** **they may have glory**  
G4864 G2532 G1722 G3588 G4505 G3704 G1392

ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων· ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ἀπέχουσιν τὸν  
**of** **men** **Verily** **I say** **unto you** **They have**  
G5259 G3588 G444 G281 G3004 G5213 G568 G3588

μισθὸν αὐτῶν  
**reward**  
G3408 G846

## Additional Cross-References

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**Matthew 6:5** (Parallel theme): And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

**Matthew 6:16** (Parallel theme): Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

**John 5:41** (Parallel theme): I receive not honour from men.

**Hebrews 13:16** (Parallel theme): But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

**Luke 20:46** (Parallel theme): Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;

**Psalms 37:21** (Parallel theme): The wicked borroweth, and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.

**John 7:18** (Glory): He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

**1 Peter 4:11** (Glory): If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

**Ephesians 4:28** (Parallel theme): Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

**Hosea 8:1** (Parallel theme): Set the trumpet to thy mouth. He shall come as an eagle against the house of the LORD, because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law.