

## **MATTHEW 25:31-46**

### **GETTING STARTED...**

Imagine having to play a game without knowing the rules. How difficult would it be for you to win? Impossible! How could you know what you were allowed to do, or even what would matter at the end. In many ways, Jesus doesn't want his disciples to have that experience. He is teaching his disciples what is going to matter at the end of the day. As Jesus concludes his teaching section on the end times, he closes by bringing together many of the themes he has dealt with. He is going to return and when he does he is going to bring in the Kingdom of God, but he will also bring judgment. And Jesus does not want his disciples to be unaware of what that will be like and so he gives them clear instructions on what is going to matter. Our faith will be shown through our love for one another. Our love for our brothers and sisters will reveal our love for God. When we stand before God, what we have done for Christ will matter!

### **READ THE TEXT: MATTHEW 25:31-46**

<sup>31</sup> "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. <sup>32</sup> Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. <sup>33</sup> And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. <sup>34</sup> Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. <sup>35</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' <sup>37</sup> Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? <sup>38</sup> And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? <sup>39</sup> And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' <sup>40</sup> And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.' <sup>41</sup> "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. <sup>42</sup> For I was

hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' <sup>44</sup> Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' <sup>45</sup> Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' <sup>46</sup> And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

## UNDERSTANDING THE WORD

1. What are the promises given to the sheep? What are the warnings given to the goats? Why does Jesus spend so much time focusing on the reality of heaven and hell in this passage and chapter?
2. Compare this passage with Matthew 7:21-23. How do these two passages help us understand the relationship between works and faith on the day of judgment?

## REFLECTING ON THE SERMON

3. What was the main point of the sermon?
4. What has God been impressing on your heart from the sermon?

## APPLYING THE POINT

5. How do we put this into practice?

*Agassiz* In what ways have you experienced the love of your brothers and sisters in Christ over this last year? In what ways have you extended love to your brothers and sisters in Christ this last year? Jesus uses our love for one another as a litmus test to indicate which group (sheep/goats, destined for heaven/destined for hell) we belong to. In what ways do you make this a priority in your life?

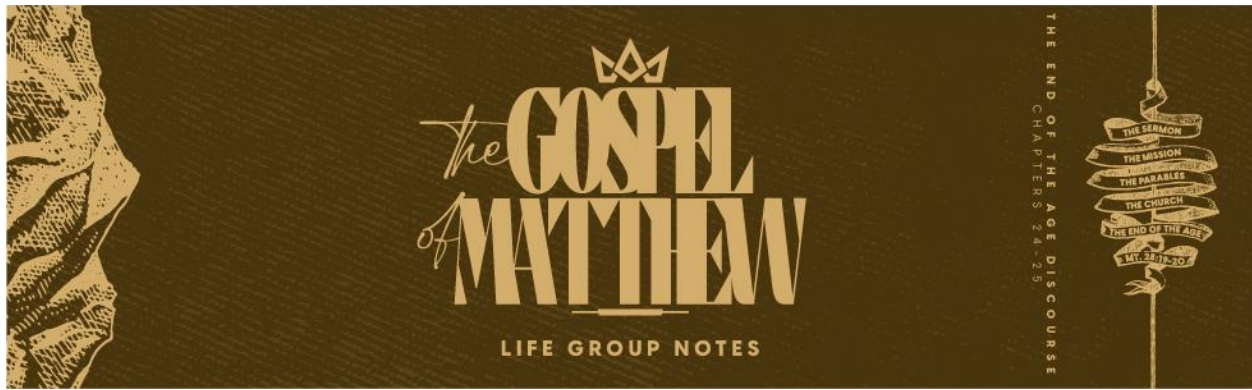
*Chilliwack* Perhaps you've heard someone say that they love Jesus but hate the church. How does this passage reveal that Jesus doesn't make room for that conclusion? And how does it motivate you to do good to fellow Christians? What indication do you get from the text that Jesus is not teaching works righteousness?

*Harrison/Lake Errock* Are you excited about the return of Christ? Why? What does it say about your relationship with Him? Have you seen fruit in your life and praised God for producing such an amazing display of His grace in your life? If not, Have you asked Him to come into your life and renew you into a child of God?

*Promontory* What is your typical reaction when reading difficult teachings of the Bible? How can we respond to this in healthy ways? What encouragements can you see in Jesus teaching on the sheep and the goats? What warnings can you see? How can we reconcile Jesus teaching with the rest of Scripture?

### **PRAYING & SHARING**

1. How can you share what you have learned with... another believer?  
An unbeliever?
2. Share and pray for one another in your life group. How can you specifically pray for and encourage one another in response to this text?



## How to Use this Guide

This guide is intended to help facilitate Central Life Groups as they meet to understand the Bible passage, discuss the sermon, and how to put it into practice in our lives. What is contained in this guide is not an exhaustive text analysis nor a full list of questions that can or should be asked during Life Group. This is simply a guide to help **start conversations that are centered on the Word of God.**

The Life Group Guide is separated into three main sections that are arranged with an intentional order: *Understanding the Word*, *Reflecting on the Sermon*, and *Applying the Point*. We want to first understand the Word of God, and then check that understanding by what has been preached, and then discuss how to put it into practice in our own lives. The order is intended to imitate the process of how the Word of God makes changes in our lives. Head, heart, hands, and all of it wrapped in prayer.

While the meaning of a text doesn't change, the way that we are called to apply it may look different from campus to campus, and even person to person. To reflect this distinction, you will see application questions from each campus in this guide.

Start with the question(s) from your campus and then look at others to see if they are helpful for your group. You may be surprised how similar or different they end up being and how the diversity brings a fuller understanding to how we can apply the Word of God.

Our goal is not that you answer every question in this guide, but that you are able to discuss the Word of God in a way **that helps everyone follow Jesus together!**

*“Great are the works of the LORD,  
studied by all who delight in them.” - Psalm 111:2*