

MESSAGE NOTES:

Matthew 25:31-46

The Sheep and the Goats

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

³⁴ "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

⁴⁰ "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

⁴¹ "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

⁴⁴ "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

⁴⁵ "He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

⁴⁶ "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

STUDY GUIDE:

STEP ONE: Icebreaker (Optional):

- If you were sharing a meal with Jesus, what food and drink would you give Him?

STEP TWO: Prayer & Scripture Reading

- Ask someone in your group to pray to open your time together.
- Ask another person to read **Matthew 25:31-46**.

STEP THREE: Discuss Questions

1. What was challenging, encouraging, confusing, or stood out most to you from this past weekend's teaching?
2. The original hearers of this parable would have known the expectations for caring for the needy in society. According to the prophet, Isaiah, what is the criterion for judgment as described in Isaiah 58:7-10?
3. Since what we do matters, how do you reconcile this truth with what Paul says in Galatians 3:11 that salvation is by faith in Christ alone? How does your faith in Christ influence how you care for people in need?
4. In this parable, who do each of the characters represent: Shepherd, sheep, goats, and King?
5. What do you think is the significance of the King placing his favored ones on His right? (Read Matthew 26:64, and Psalm 110:1 for clues.) Where do you see this kind of preferencing in society?
6. Read Matthew 25:46 again and discuss the two options that Jesus describes for the eternal destination of people. What do these look like and how do people get there?
7. How does believing in the gospel compel us to serve hungry, thirsty, estranged, or imprisoned people out of love for God? Pray for someone who may need your help this week.

STEP FOUR: Prayer

- Ask someone in your group to close in prayer.