

Gospel of Matthew “A Life Set Apart”
Matthew 25:31-46
May 5, 2024

Matthew 25:31-46

31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 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. 33 And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. 34 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. 35 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, 36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ 37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ 40 And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers,[f] you did it to me.’ 41 “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. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, 43 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.’ 44 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?’ 45 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.’ 46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

The Son of Man, all angels and a throne.

Matthew 7:21

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 10:32-33

32 So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, 33 but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

“All nations” is that absolutely everyone

Matthew 16:27

27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

Matthew 25:34

34 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.

A statement of ultimate generosity and grace.

"Faith is a living, restless thing. It cannot be inoperative. We are not saved by works; but if there be no works, there must be something amiss with faith." - Martin Luther

Galatians 5:6

6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

1 John 3:14-18

14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. 15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

16 By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. 17 But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? 18 Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

The Christian life naturally works towards the good of others, especially those in need.

James 2:1-5

1 My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. 2 For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, 3 and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," 4 have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?

James 2:14-18

14 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good[b] is that? 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

Matthew 25:41-45

41 "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. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, 43 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.’ 44 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?’ 45 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.’

Matthew 7:22-23

22 On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ 23 And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

“The elect will be ignorant of their virtues and the outcasts of the greatness of their sins.” - Blaise Pascal

Good righteousness sees little righteousness in itself and is surprised when recognized.

The second group made acts of service a way to be significant but the sheep have made acts of service a way to make someone else significant.

Grow Group Discussion Question

- What did God say to you through His Word during our Sunday gathering?
- What is the importance of works in our lives? How would the “sheep” and “goats” view good works differently from each other?
- How does truly knowing Jesus and believing the gospel lead us to acts of love and care for others?
- Have you ever seen or known someone who embodies Christ-like love for “the least of these”? What are the clearest practical opportunities in your life to care for “the least of these”?
- Love is not efficient. Things adjust and plans change when you begin to love deeply. How open to messiness are you?
- A discipleship question we ask at Rivertree is, “Was I more generous this year than last year?” Share your thought about this question and how you might answer it?
- How can your Grow Group support you in applying this passage to your life this week?