

## “Parable of the Sheep and Goats”

### Introduction – Matthew 25:31-46

As we have been digging into the parables here in Matthew 25 I want you to notice the progression here. The parable of the ten virgins emphasizes to be ready when the bridegroom (Jesus) returns to not get tired and distracted. The parable of the talents emphasizes the using of our time, money, talents and authority appropriately! To not sit back and let the world go by! As we come to the parable of the sheep and goats the difference in them making it into Heaven is to what they did and didn't do!

So here we go!

### I. THE SHEEPS CHARACTER – VERSES 31-40

#### Matthew 25:31-40 (NIV)

**31** “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. **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, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’”

As we read this passage it is very clear the importance of living out our faith! As the Lord's half-brother James says:

**James 1:22-25 (NIV)**

**22** Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. **23** Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror **24** and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. **25** But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.

**James 2:14-24 (NIV)**

**14** What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? **15** Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. **16** If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? **17** In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. **18** But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. **19** You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder. **20** You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? **21** Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? **22** You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. **23** And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called God's friend. **24** You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.

So let's look at the things the sheep did that make the difference:

**1. FOR I WAS HUNGRY AND YOU GAVE ME SOMETHING TO EAT**

This is why Christians are involved in food shelves and sending food through missionary programs to provide for others in countries where food is not easily accessible.

Listen to Proverbs:

**Proverbs 14:17 (NIV)**

**17** A quick-tempered man does foolish things, and a crafty man is hated.

Jesus speaking in the Sermon on the Mount:

**Matthew 5:16 (NIV)**

**16** In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Jesus practiced what he preached:

**Matthew 14:14-21 (NIV)**

**14** When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick. **15** As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a remote place, and it’s already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.” **16** Jesus replied, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.” **17** “We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish,” they answered. **18** “Bring them here to me,” he said. **19** And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. **20** They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. **21** The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

He fed the 5000 and also another time of 4000 (ref Matthew 15:29-39).

In the gospel of John Jesus emphasizes about people just coming to be fed in the natural. He then teaches the most important thing is the spiritual recognition of who He is!

He is the bread of life!

**John 6:26-40 (NIV)**

**26** Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. **27** Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.” **28** Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” **29** Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.” **30** So they asked him, “What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? **31** Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’ ” **32** Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. **33** For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” **34** “Sir,” they said, “from now on give us this bread.” **35** Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. **36** But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. **37** All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. **38** For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. **39** And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. **40** For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

The apostle Paul also recognized the tendency of our old sinful nature to just be takers of God's people's assistance:

### **II Thessalonians 3:6-10 (NIV)**

**6** In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. **7** For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, **8** nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. **9** We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. **10** For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat."

Sadly there are many that just want to take and not help others! We're not talking about people who are physically unable to work but healthy people who feel: "**THE WORLD OWES THEM A LIVING**" were not obligated to keep them in that attitude.

## **2. I WAS THIRSTY AND YOU GAVE ME SOMETHING TO DRINK**

### **Matthew 10:42 (NIV)**

**42** And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."

Jesus again emphasizes the importance of not just physical water but recognizing who He is at the most important:

### **John 4:13-14 (NIV)**

**13** Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, **14** but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

The apostle Paul brings it across in this way about our call to take care of even our enemies:

**Romans 12:17-21 (NIV)**

**17** Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. **18** If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. **19** Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord. **20** On the contrary: “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.” **21** Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

**3. I WAS A STRANGER AND YOU INVITED ME IN**

This is our call to have Gospel Missions to house the homeless. This is what we are trying to do here in Sawyer County to help this population. There is a definite shortage of places to put people in a place that is warm, be fed and taken care of in their basic physical needs. Again, not to enable them to keep doing the activities that many times have made them homeless but to plug them into problems where they can get help to overcome.

Listen to Isaiah declare:

**Isaiah 58:6-7 (NIV)**

**6** “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? **7** Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?”

Moses was instructed:

### **Leviticus 25:35 (NIV)**

**35** “If one of your countrymen becomes poor and is unable to support himself among you, help him as you would an alien or a temporary resident, so he can continue to live among you.

The writer of Hebrews shares:

### **Hebrews 13:1-2 (NIV)**

**1** Keep on loving each other as brothers. **2** Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.

## **4. I NEEDED CLOTHES AND YOU CLOTHED ME**

As we see in all these passages the need to practice our faith! This is why New Reflections Thrift Store and the Salvation Army Thrift Store are here is to provide clothing for those needing it! When people needing clothes come – we clothe them!

Jesus stated:

### **Luke 3:11 (NIV)**

**11** John answered, “The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same.”

## **5. I WAS SICK AND YOU LOOKED AFTER ME**

The call for compassion! This is why throughout the churches history hospitals were started by churches! Missionary organizations – Samaritans Purse, Mercy Ships, etc. are fulfilling this call. Chaplains in hospitals, church people visiting, pastors and anyone that can help!

This is why we pray for the sick:

### **James 5:14-15 (NIV)**

**14** Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. **15** And

the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.

## **6. I WAS IN PRISON AND YOU CAME TO VISIT ME**

The House of Hope is a ministry that reaches into the jails! Pastors and lay people going to jails visiting and having bible studies! This is an awesome ministry that sees amazing results! It is many times where people hit rock bottom in their lives and look to Jesus and His people for help!

Just listen to Hebrews:

### **Hebrews 13:3 (NIV)**

**3** Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering.

So Jesus is making it very clear here to look at all these people as actually looking at Jesus Himself!

### **Matthew 25:40 (NIV)**

**40** **“THE KING WILL REPLY, ‘I TELL YOU THE TRUTH, WHATEVER YOU DID FOR ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE BROTHERS OF MINE, YOU DID FOR ME.’**

So we want to be sheep! Not goats! Don't be an old goat! 😊

## **II. THE GOAT'S CHARACTER**

### **Matthew 25:41-46 (NIV)**

**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, ‘I tell you

the truth, 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.”

The point is very clear “the difference” is between what they did and didn’t do! Our faith must be lived out! It must be practiced! Our eternity depends on it!

## **Conclusion**

Keith Green song “The Sheep and The Goats”