

Text: Matthew 25:31-46

Meaning: Jesus taught us how to live the blessed life

Big Idea: The Blessed Life

Objective: I want the hearers to live the blessed life

Theme: How?

THE BLESSED LIFE

Purpose: LOVE GOD. LOVE PEOPLE

Mission: GIVE HOPE. MAKE DISCIPLES.

Great COMMANDMENT

Great COMMISSION

Today – Great COMPASSION

READ MATTHEW 25:31-46

There are some Christians, and even some churches, that forget about this passage in Matthew. We love to talk about baptizing people and teaching the Bible in the church and helping people grow in Christ. But social concern and serving our fellow man should also be a significant part of the ministry of any church.

Matthew 24 – The disciples come to Jesus privately and ask him about the signs of the coming of His earthly Kingdom. Jesus then goes into specific detail about what the last days will look like. He essentially reads today's headlines. Wars and rumors of wars. Violence and Lawlessness in our world. Famines and earthquakes.

Many false Christ's, false Messiah's will rise up and try to lead the church away from the true gospel. Cosmic upheaval – stars falling from the sky and the powers of the Heavens will be shaken.

Matthew 25 – 2 parables revealing to us how we are to prepare for His return.

Parable of the Ten Virgins – keep your lamp lit while waiting for the Groom to arrive.

OIL of PRAYER, PRAISE, PEOPLE

Parable of the Talents – LEVERAGE ALL YOU HAVE FOR THE KINGDOM

CHURCH WE OUGHT TO BE MORE INVESTED IN THE CHURCH OF JESUS TODAY THAN EVER BEFORE!

Finishes the Chapter with a description of the judgment. THIS IS NO PARABLE. THIS IS REAL.

If we keep in mind the three groups in the account, it will help to solve this problem: There were sheep, goats, and brethren. Who are these people that the King dares to call “My brethren”? It seems likely that they are the believing Jews from the Tribulation period. These are people who will hear the message of the 144,000 and trust Jesus Christ. Since these believing Jews will not receive the “mark of the beast” (Rev. 13:16–17), they will be unable to buy or sell. How, then, can they survive? Through the loving care of the Gentiles who have trusted Christ and who care for His brethren.¹

¹ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 93.

The interesting thing about this judgment is that the *sheep* individuals are surprised at what they hear. They will not remember having seen the Lord Jesus Christ and ministering to His needs. But just as they lovingly ministered to the believing Jews, they did it to Christ. Their motive was not reward, but sacrificial love. In fact, these Gentiles took their own lives in their hands when they welcomed the homeless Jews and cared for them. "He that receiveth you receiveth Me," Jesus said to His disciples (Matt. 10:40); and surely this would also apply to His brethren.

The individuals designated *goats* were judged because they did not trust Jesus Christ and give evidence of that faith by caring for His brethren. They apparently received the mark of the beast and took care of themselves and their own, but they had no time for the Jewish remnant that was suffering on earth (Rev. 12:17). There are sins of omission as well as sins of commission (James 4:17). Not doing good is the moral equivalent of doing evil.²

AND HE TALKS HERE ABOUT:

THE REALITY OF HEAVEN

Jesus will tell His People, the people of God, those who have stayed faithful to Jesus through all the trial and tribulation:

WELCOME INTO THE KINGDOM! He says this Kingdom was prepared for the people of God before the foundation of the world! Somehow before the foundation of the world God knew about and was in on our salvation! One day all the pain and tribulation of this life is going to be over and we will be with the Lord!

² Warren W. Wiersbe, [*The Bible Exposition Commentary*](#), vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 93.

To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord, and one day all the evil and wickedness in our world will be judged and Jesus will be King forever!

Heaven is a REAL PLACE!

THE SOBRIETY OF HELL

Here is the more sobering part of this passage. Jesus says His people will go away into eternal life with Him, but those who deny His salvation will go away in eternal punishment.

Hell is a REAL PLACE!

Jesus here compares ETERNAL PUNISHMENT to ETERNAL LIFE. You cannot take it any other way.

James Packer, Your Father Loves You, Harold Shaw Publishers, 1986.

The New testament always conceives of this eternal punishment as consisting of an agonizing knowledge of one's own ill desert, of God's displeasure, of the good that one has lost, and of the irrevocable fixed state in which one now finds oneself. The doctrine of eternal punishment was taught in the synagogue even before our Lord took it up and enforced it in the Gospels. All the language that strikes terror into our hearts -- weeping and gnashing of teeth, outer darkness, the worm, the fire, gehenna, the great gulf fixed -- is all directly taken from our Lord's teaching. It is from Jesus Christ that we learn the doctrine of eternal punishment.

Notice Jesus says hell was prepared for the devil and his angels – NOT PEOPLE.

AC/DC Highway to Hell, LED ZEPPELIN Stairway to Heaven

Tells you all you need to know about how many we think are headed to each place.

WE LOVE TO TALK ABOUT A GOD OF SECOND CHANCES. IN ACTUALITY WE HAVE ONE CHANCE TO GET IT RIGHT.

QUITE POSSIBLY THE MOST SOBERING FACT ABOUT THIS PASSAGE IS THAT THESE PEOPLE WENT TO HELL BECAUSE OF WHAT THEY DID NOT DO, NOT FOR WHAT THEY ACTUALLY DID.

BELOVED, WE ARE EQUALLY AS RESPONSIBLE BEFORE GOD FOR OUR SINS OF OMISSION AS WE ARE OUR SINS OF COMMISSION. INTENTION NEVER REPLACES ACTION.

Love for God and love for people, as we saw last week, always moves one to Christian action!

This is the backdrop for Christ talking about serving the least of these. So, the idea here is that serving your fellow man, and living with a heart of sympathy and empathy toward others is PROOF THAT YOU POSSESS ETERNAL LIFE!

The separation between “sheep” and “goats” (v. 32) alludes to Ezek 34:17–19. Palestinian shepherds frequently had to separate their flocks this way. Sheep and goats freely intermingled and often looked quite similar in appearance, at

³ Craig Blomberg, [Matthew](#), vol. 22, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 376.

least from a distance. We too could probably not guess from superficial knowledge and external appearance who are truly God’s people, but he knows.³

Sheep and goats were sometimes herded together down a chute that was wide enough for only one animal at a time. A shepherd would sit atop the fence, swinging a gate back and forth to guide each animal through the appropriate opening to join its own kind.⁴

So many people ask HOW DO I KNOW I’M SAVED? Do you have a heart for God and a heart to serve your fellow man, to help people in Jesus name?

John 13:35 – By this will all men know you are my disciples if you have love one for another.

James 2:15-17

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 is that? ¹⁷ So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

1 John 3:17-18

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.

⁴ Stuart K. Weber, [Matthew](#), vol. 1, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 424.

VALUES OF THE BLESSED LIFE:

1. **GENEROSITY**

We are BLESSED to be a BLESSING!

The Lord gives resources to us – and that’s exactly what they are RE-SOURCES. They are to be RE-SOURCED to someone else. These resources are GIFTS, not WAGES!

NOTHING IS MINE

Psalm 24:1 – The earth is the LORD’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein

We don’t EARN GRACE or the FAVOR of GOD – He bestows it upon who He wills.

Some people say, “I’VE WORKED MY TAIL OFF TO GET WHAT I’VE GOT.” I would argue, “NO SIR, YOU’VE SIMPLY MADE THE MOST OF WHAT YOU’VE BEEN GIVEN!”

NOTHING IS TO BE WASTED

Jesus said it is more blessed to give than receive.

Proverbs 14:21 - *Whoever despises his neighbor is a sinner, but blessed is he who is generous to the poor.*

Proverbs 19:17 - *Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed*

1 Timothy 6 – Paul told Timothy to teach those who are rich in this life to be generous and ready to share.

Where your treasure is there your heart will be also.

2. **HOSPITALITY**

Jesus says here talks about strangers being welcomed into the family of God.

WELCOMED – speaks of bringing someone into your gathering or assembly.

Everyone in the church is great with helping folks in need, but not everyone is great with needy folks coming into the church.

James 2:8-9

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. ⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

3. **EMPATHY**

The focus in this passage is as much about RELATIONSHIPS as it is RESOURCES.

The idea here is as much about the completion of a process as it is a one-time event. The idea is – I was hungry and thirsty and you did what was necessary to relieve me from that state. I was naked and you helped alleviate that continual need. I was a stranger to your social network but you brought me into it. I was sick and you nursed me to health. I was in prison and you mentored me toward wise living.

YOU CAME INTO MY LIFE AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME AND STAYED UNTIL I WAS MADE WHOLE.

Righteous people don’t do these things to be noticed or applauded. They do it out of the overflow of a heart full of the Spirit.