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Series- Putting Feet to Faith:

Becoming a Matthew 25 Church

Part 4- A Word to the Goats

Matthew 25:31-45

I want to remind us that God is no universalist. All people on the planet will not be treated alike when we stand before God. I remind you of the clear separation of people in this text. Look at verses 32-33.

The King’s words to those on his left are not the same words to those on his right.

To the goats, the King said (v.41)

1. Depart from Me- This is the opposite of the King’s words to his sheep. The sheep hear, “come”. The goats hear, “go (away)”

The same expression is used in Matthew 7:21-23 where Jesus addresses religious people who have no relationship with the Christ.

***21****“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.* ***22****Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’* ***23****And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’*

1. You are cursed- Again, this is the opposite of what the sheep hear. Note verse 34. The sheep are called “blessed”. The goats are called “cursed”. The goats hear a negation of all that the sheep heard.

2 Peter 3:9:

*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is long suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*

By the choices we make, we can *decide* which words we will hear from the King: words of blessing or words of condemnation.

Q: What is the reason for these words of condemnation rather than commendation?

A: The goats’ lack of sensitivity to the poor, the disenfranchised, the least of these.

In the **Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary**, the writers have Jesus saying,

*In the disguise of these poor members of Mine I came soliciting your pity, but ye shut up your bowels of compassion from Me: I asked relief, but you had none to give Me. Take back therefore your own coldness, your own contemptuous distance: Ye bid Me away from your presence, and now I bid you from Mine- depart from Me, ye cursed!*

**Adam Clarke (The Adam Clarke Commentary):**

*No work of piety has proceeded from your hand because the carnal mind, which is enmity against me, reigned in your heart; and ye would not have me to reign over you.*

The goats are condemned because they are insensitive to needy people. They ignored people and in so doing, ignored the Christ!

The hungry needed feeding.

The thirsty needed drink.

The strangers needed taking in.

The naked needed clothing.

The sick and the incarcerated need visiting.

The goats, apparently, ignored them all.

The goats are not condemned because they are substance abusers or drunkards or thieves or murderers or unethical or embezzlers or rapists or pedophiles or philanderers. No, they are rebuked because they are insensitive to the needs of others.

The goats are not condemned because of what they did- **co**mmission. They are rebuked because of what they *failed* to do- **o**mission.

Let us examine ourselves. Do we care about the welfare of those around us? If not, let me close with two practical suggestions.

1. Study the life of our Lord Christ and imitate Him.

**Luke 4:16-19**

***16****So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.* ***17****And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:*

***18***

*“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,*

*Because He has anointed Me*

*To preach the gospel to the poor.*

*He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,*

*To proclaim liberty to the captives*

*And recovery of sight to the blind,*

*To set at liberty those who are oppressed.*

***19***

*To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*

**Luke 14:12-14**

***12****Then He also said to him who invited Him, “When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid.* ***13****But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the [a]maimed, the lame, the blind.* ***14****And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”*

2. Study the Bible and see what it says about the disenfranchised, the marginalized, the least, the lost. Study it and then seek to implement and obey.

**Deuteronomy 15: 7-8, 11**

***7****“If there is among you a poor man of your brethren, within any of the gates in your land which the Lord your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor shut your hand from your poor brother,* ***8****but you shall open your hand wide to him and willingly lend him sufficient for his need, whatever he needs.*

***11****For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore, I command you, saying, ‘You shall [a]open your hand wide to your brother, to your poor and your needy in your land.’*

**Proverbs 19:17**

***17***

*He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord,*

*And He will pay back what he has given.*

**Proverbs 21:13**

***13***

*Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor*

*Will also cry himself and not be heard.*

**1 John 3:17**

***17****But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?*

May God use us all in the lives and circumstances of the needy and may we represent Christ to them.

Amen