

Sermon Notes – 06.04.2023 – Commands of Jesus – Care for Those in Distress

"Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me." Matthew 25:40

2 Corinthians 5:9-10 Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Lest we get caught up with visions of sheep, goats and thrones, this word from Jesus comes at the end of a string of judgement parables and is most likely meant to focus us on the certainty of a final judgement – Christ will return and make a difference between the righteous and the wicked. It will be stark, real, final, and eternal.

Matthew 25:31-46 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. **32** "All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; **33** and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. **34** "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation 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** 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, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You *something* to drink? **38** 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? **39** 'When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' **40** "The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.' **41** "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been 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; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.' **44** "Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take

care of You?' 45 "Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' 46 "These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Perhaps, the more I try to explain this passage, the greater risk I take that I will somehow undermine the effect that Jesus intended.

The actual event may look a bit different to us, but no one will be able to miss, that this is that – Jesus' Word Fulfilled.

This is one of those powerful illustrations that would be good for us to read vicariously (Use your imagination to picture yourself actually being there, because, one day, you will be.)

Our Righteousness is not produced by our works. Righteousness was imputed to us by Christ – His Righteousness in us.

2 Timothy 1:9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,

Titus 3:3-5 For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. 4 But when the kindness of God our Savior and *His* love for mankind appeared, 5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit,

But, why do we do the things that the Gospel of Matthew describes? Because we have been given a new heart that desires to please Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:9-10 Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him.