

“Jesus Is The King” Delivered by E A Terry 11/26/17 Christ the King Sunday

Ezekiel 34: 11 – 34; James 2: 14 – 26; Revelation 19: 11 – 21; **Matthew 25: 31 – 46 (Sermon)**

This account is referred to as the Parable of the Sheep and Goats.

It begins with a shepherd separating his goats from his sheep and then the shepherd imagery quickly changes to King Jesus judging His subjects.

Notice the inclusiveness in this passage; “All the angels” and “all the nations” come before King Jesus for judgment.

The tense of the Greek word used for nation tells us it is all the peoples of the nations being judged – not the nations themselves.

We also need to notice that all of the people, both the ones on Jesus’ right and left, refer to the King as Lord showing they know who Jesus is and they acknowledge Jesus’ authority over them.

Next we need to notice the severity and finality of the judgment.

There is no more one last chance.

This is it.

The people who were not concerned over the suffering of those around them received their just reward of eternal fire.

This is definitely not a desirable place.

There are several spiritual truths that I want us to look at in this parable.

First it is important for us to see the kinds of things the people are commended for and condemned for.

These are all simple acts of kindness that address typical types of human suffering.

Jesus mentions feeding the hungry; giving a drink to the thirsty; showing hospitality to strangers; clothing the naked; caring for the sick; and visiting people in prison.

This parable describes acts of mercy and kindness we all can do every day.

These acts of kindness do not depend on our wealth, ability, or intelligence; these acts are simple acts freely given.

Any one of us could easily be involved in a number of these simple acts of kindness without stressing our time or our money.

God calls us to simple service.

Jesus does not tell us to fix all the world's problems in one shot; rather Jesus invites us to make a difference in simple acts of kindness one person at a time.

The second truth in this parable is the commendation and condemnation of the King is not for the act itself, but rather the condition of a person's heart.

They were judged on their concern for their neighbor.

I say this because their acts of kindness were automatic.

It was a way of life for them.

Their acts of kindness were spontaneous.

The sheep asked, "Lord when did we see you in... and minister to them?"

They recognized a need and they met it.

Their nature was love and compassion

However, we need to be very careful.

In no way should this passage be interpreted as teaching that salvation comes through good works.

That would be contrary to all teachings in the Bible. For the Christian our salvation is assured.

We were declared righteous when we accepted Jesus as our Savior and Lord.

We know from Romans 8:1 that “there is no condemnation for those in Christ”.

Christians will stand before Jesus for our rewards not judgment.

However The Book of Revelation tells us that the non-Christians will be judged on their deeds.

But, no matter how many and how good the deeds are their works of righteousness have already been determined by God to be lacking and they will spend eternity in Hell. (Revelation 20:12)

Remember the only people who will spend eternity in Hell are the ones who refused or neglected to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

The next truth in this parable is Jesus The King of King identifies Himself with the poor, the needy, the suffering, and the lonely.

Also please notice that Jesus equates our acts of kindness on behalf of those in need around us as acts of kindness given to Him.

In verse 25 we read, “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.’”

When Jesus said, “If you did it to the least of these...” Jesus was referring to the poor, the oppressed, the down and out, the friendless, people who could never repay these acts of kindness.

Next we need to look at the motivation behind these acts of kindness.

The sheep responded out of love in their heart.

As we respond to God's love for us, the love of God living inside of us begins to reach out.

This kind of spontaneous Christian love begins at home in the unconscious acts of helping our spouse and our children.

This kind of spontaneous Christian love then quickly spreads to our church family and then it spreads down the streets of our neighborhoods.

As we continue to respond to God's love, this love then spreads to the slums downtown and then to people across the ocean.

The love of God living inside of us reaches out to all kinds of people and we reach out without even thinking about it.

You see when we love Jesus, we will respond to The Indwelling Holy Spirit living in us, and we begin to see all people as God's precious children.

I believe another key to understanding this teaching is that the goats ask the same question that the sheep did, "Lord, when did we see you in need?"

You see their hearts were so callous they did not notice the hungry people around them; they were too busy to visit the sick; they were too proud to go into a prison; they were too stingy to give some money; and they were too sophisticated to be seen with or associate with the outcast people

I believe this text is especially appropriate around Thanksgiving and Christmas.

You see if we are truly thankful for all that God has done for us we will automatically want to reach out and minister to those in need around us!

As Christians we are called to reach out to those around us who are less fortunate in the name of Jesus and we all should want to minister to them because we are so thankful for The Lord saving us and for blessing us.

The greatest lie that the devil has ever sold to the Church is that ministering to people is exclusively the pastor's job.

While the Elders join the pastor in leading people to Jesus, the Deacons join in visiting the sick, and the Sunday School Teachers teach about Jesus these are also the jobs of every member of the church.

Every Christian is called to join in ministering to the needs of those around us.

Ministry is every Christian's job.

This is not a new concept.

This was the same model Jesus used.

If you will, please take out your bulletin and look at the list of the church staff.

You will notice that each member is listed as minister of Mt Paran Presbyterian Church.

You have always had this title and you have always had this responsibility.

Mt Paran Presbyterian Church has 250 ministers since each one of you is a minister.

If the church is going to be effective in influencing our culture and saving America every believer is going to have to live out our faith in the workplace, at school, in the gym, at the grocery store, and in our neighborhoods.

Jesus needs Christian lawyers, Christian doctors, Christian nurses, Christian teachers, Christian carpenters, Christian truck drivers, and Christian politicians.

We all need to make our life's work count for Christ.

When you minister to a person's physical and emotional needs out of love and compassion they see the difference Jesus has made in your life and many times they will want to know how and why you care and why you can love so much.

You see many times those acts of kindness provide us with an opportunity to minister to that person's spiritual needs.

People do not care how much we know until they know how much we care.

In 2nd Corinthians 5:20, we read that we are ambassadors for Christ.

An ambassador is an official representative of a country.

An ambassador job is to communicate their country's policies and defend their country's actions.

Likewise as an ambassador for Christ, Christians represent The Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

So I ask you. How effective are you at representing The Kingdom of Jesus Christ?

You see your individual ministry is in your home, your workplace, your school, and in your neighborhood.

Did you ever look at going to work each day as an opportunity to serve Jesus?

Colossians 3:23 -24 states, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."

You see Jesus needs devoted Christians in all walks of life.

- We minister to the people around us because we love our Lord
- We minister to the people around us because we love our neighbor
- We minister to the people around us because we are compassionate and want to improve their quality of life

- We minister to the people around us because we do not want them to suffer in Hell for eternity
- We minister to the people around us because we want them to experience the abundant life that is available in Jesus Christ

We all need to remember that when we focus on ourselves, on our problems, and our frustrations we drain our spiritual energy.

When our spiritual energy is low we do not do a good job of ministering to the people around us.

That is why we all need to turn our problems and our frustrations over to God.

We need to let go and let God take care of our problems and frustrations.

In Matthew 11:28 – 30, Jesus said: “Come unto me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

The rest that Jesus promises His disciples is much more than physical rest.

The rest that Jesus promises is rest from our guilt knowing that Jesus has forgiven us; rest from our problems knowing Jesus will take care of us; rest from our anxiety knowing that Jesus is in total control of the future; rest from our enemies knowing Jesus will protect us; and rest from our mistakes and failures knowing that Jesus is the God of second chances.

It is also very important to empty our lives of all bitterness, resentment, hatred, problems, and frustrations so that we can be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Remember in Ephesians 5:18 we are commanded to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

If your heart is filled with bitterness, resentment, hatred, problems, and /or frustrations there is no room left for the Holy Spirit in your heart.

Even though our text describes the final judgment scene in heaven this passage of scripture teaches us to look for and to find Jesus Christ today in all our day-to-day contacts.

“If you have done it unto the least of these brothers of mine you did for me.”

If Jesus The King of King identifies Himself with the poor, the needy, the suffering, and the lonely can we as His disciples do anything less?

You see it was not wrong doing that evokes the sever censure of The King, but rather the failure to recognize a brother in need and to meet that need.

The sin of omission is just as serious as the sin of commission.

In our text for today we see the goats on Jesus' left experienced eternal punishment for failing to notice the many opportunities they had to share the kindness that Jesus had shown to them.

It is obvious from our text for today that Jesus Christ will carry out God's judgment on the world.

Romans 14:7 tells us that we will all stand before Jesus and give an account of our stewardship.

You see Jesus will not be impressed with how much I have done but rather how much I could have done.

In verse 46 we see the punishment of the uncaring is as never ending as the heavenly bliss the righteous will experience.

Can you imagine any greater feeling or any greater reward than The King of Kings telling you “Well done you good and faithful servant”

Can you imagine any worse feeling than The King of Kings telling you, you ungrateful servant.

You did not share the love, the compassion, the friendship, or the blessings that I freely gave to you.

Sharing the unconditional love of Jesus and the kindness Jesus has shown us with the people around us is service to our Lord Jesus Christ.

AMEN