

Matthew 25:31-46

How what you do reveals the real you

Jesus speaks of judgement with a story about the separation of sheep from goats. The judgement will take place when the Son of Man comes in glory. Those who failed to see and respond to the needs of people around them, have failed to see the Son.



REFLECT

Set a timer for three minutes and list the many different ways you can think of that God has blessed you. After you've counted your blessings, turn the paper over and spend three minutes listing ways you could bless others.



BAKE



Make some simple soda bread buns:
<https://www.easypeasyfoodie.com/easy-white-soda-bread/>
 Soda bread doesn't keep, so they should be given away and consumed that day. Who will you share them with?

Learn



Learn the BSL sign for 'sorry.' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SIQCAOfKvds>
 Pray: Dear Jesus, sorry for the times when I don't help those in need. Please help me to serve others. Amen.

Bible notes



This reading may leave us feeling a little uncomfortable. But the readings throughout Matthew 25 have all been travelling in this direction. Are we ready to face the Son of Man on his return? The problem in the 21st century is that we've been waiting for 2,000 years and nothing seems to have happened or changed.

First, remember that this is a parable – a story to help us understand something, rather than a description of an event. Second, the key to the story is verse 40. The measure of true faith is not the heart alone, but the body too. As James says, faith without deeds is dead (James 2:14-26). What we do, the way we live, is the outward sign of the inner truth of our faith, and makes our true identity visible to everyone. It is too easy to internalise faith as merely belief. But true belief shapes and forms who we are and what we do. It demands a lifestyle that gives body to our faith. The parable picks up on an image that Jesus' hearers would have understood – of judgement as a courtroom drama with God as the judge. But like all parables, even though the scenario may be familiar, it changes before our eyes. Judgement is not based on the obvious: how religious are you? The point is not that we find salvation for ourselves, but that salvation is given to us. Indeed, it is offered to all. And it is all about Christ the King, how we live as Jesus' subjects, and how we serve our him in our daily lives.

First impressions

- How would it make you feel to receive a gift like this?
- What do your actions, individually or as a church, reveal about you?
- In a modern and local version of Jesus' parable, who would the people in need be?



A prayer

Loving God,
 help us to be 'doing' people and not always 'thinking about it',
 help us to be 'sharing' people and not hoarders or hiders,
 help us to be people who know we are blessed in abundance by you
 and, through the power of the Spirit, are eager to pass those
 blessings on.
 We ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.

DRAW



Draw an outline of a person. Inside the outline, write or draw what other people see and know about you. Now, turn your paper over and think of one or two aspects – behaviours, attitudes, motivations – that others don't see; and, in particular, something you would like to change for the better or you wish wasn't hidden. Write or draw this on the back of the person outline.
 Pray: Lord God, help me grow and change to become more like your son, Jesus. Amen.