

Our main focus in life should be getting to heaven. In Matthew 25, Jesus gives us part of that blueprint.

JESUS IN DISGUISE



Matthew 25: 31-46

“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?’ And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’ Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.’ Then they will answer and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?’ He will answer them, ‘Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.’ And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

In Matthew 25, Jesus warns us: *“Out of my sight, you condemned, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels! I assure you, as often as you neglected to do it to one of these least ones, you neglected to do it to me. These will go off to eternal punishment.”* In these verses Jesus explains what may happen to those who neglect the poor. At first glance, this is intimidating. But consider, rather, that it is God’s way of showing love for us. God is getting our attention for the good of the poor and the salvation of our own souls.

A recent survey explained that less than 10% of Christians tithe. This begs the question, “How do the other 90% feel when they read Matthew 25?” Christians must take scripture seriously for God is speaking to us.

There are many opportunities for Christians to serve the poor locally and internationally. There are soup kitchens, food shelves, free clothing outlets, shelters for the homeless, places like Birthright designed to help expectant mothers, shelters for abused women and transition homes for ex-convicts which are all in need of assistance. There are many opportunities to love our neighbor by getting involved with one or more of these organizations and/or supporting them financially.

As the prophet Isaiah writes in chapter 58: 10-11, *“If you bestow your bread on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted; then life shall rise for you in the darkness, and the gloom shall become for you like midday; the Lord will guide you always and give you plenty even on the parched land. He will renew your strength, and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring whose water never fails.”*

“Do you want to honor Christ’s body? Then do not scorn Him in His nakedness, nor honor Him here in the church with silken garments while neglecting Him outside where He is cold and