

Matthew 25.31–46

The Final Final

Heard MID-TERMS are OVER! But TAKE HEART FINAL Exams Coming!

Some Things I Miss about STUDENT LIFE...

STUDY All Night – Or do SOMETHING All Night – Zombie thru Next Day

EAT Anything I WANTED and Stay SVELTE > Obviously VERY LONG Ago!

1 thing DON'T Miss is Final Exams > But I STILL have a BIG FINAL Coming!

Final Sermon of Jesus in Matthew's presentation of The GOSPEL

SOMBER Story Unique to Matthew > Sheep and Goats > Not Strictly a Parable

1. Do you See His Glory? Worship Him!

a. All Power > Belongs to GOD > No One Else!!

v. 31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.

Jesus ROCKED House with this FINALE, Threw Out WORDS like Grenades!

SON of MAN: Doesn't that mean He's HUMAN? BOLD CLAIM He's GOD!

Applies Well-Known PROPHETIC VISION of Daniel to Himself...

“I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.”

Daniel 7.13,14

Jesus had AUDACITY to CLAIM that HE IS this DIVINE SON

This Eternal SON who Rightly is Given Dominion and Glory and a Kingdom
 Man GIFTED with All Peoples, Nations is CARPENTER from Nazareth
 WITH His Angels – NOT Among them > OVER THEM, Maker & God
 King & His KINGDOM Key Theme of Matthew, Son of David, David's Throne
 Making SUCH Claims would Get a Man KILLED in 1st C Jerusalem > IT DID!
 In this FINAL Sermon Jesus goes DOWN with BLAZE of GLORY!

Jesus will be KILLED for CLAIMING His Kingship

Rome: No KING but CAESAR / Israel: No OTHER God EMPTY Traditions

Jesus NOT a King they UNDERSTOOD, EXPECTED - or Even Wanted

The ONLY Throne they found for SON of MAN was to hang Him on CROSS

Before they NAILED Him there...

And the high priest said to him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." Matthew 26.63,64

b. All People

v. 32 Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

World will NO LONGER make DECISIONS for ITSELF > Jesus Sovereign

King of Every Nation & Person – Muhammed, Buddha, All Rulers and the Ruled
 Our World – Fractured, Fragmented – Divided by Color, Culture, Citizenship
 ONLY Important Division – On RIGHT or LEFT hand of King Jesus

For the LORD of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up...And the haughtiness of man shall be humbled, and the lofty pride of men shall be brought low, and the LORD alone will be exalted in that day...And people shall enter the caves of the rocks and the holes of the ground, from before the terror of the LORD, and from the splendor of his majesty, when he rises to terrify the earth... Stop regarding man in whose nostrils is breath, for of what account is he?
Isaiah 2.12-22

2. Do you Know His Grace? Work for Him!

a. Set Apart by the Gospel

vs. 33,34 And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the 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 NO MERIT or WORTH of their Own – Some will Receive His Blessing

Gospel of Matthew > This KING has been Calling His People to FOLLOW

People MARVELED at His Authority, Compassion, Wisdom, and Kindness

REASON King Came was to SET His People from Captivity to Sin & Death

“the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many”
Matthew 20.28

Jesus was principally concerned about man's relationship to God, not his environment; and his singular mission was to save his people from their sins not from their poverty or hunger. He allowed nothing to deter him from this mission
D. A. Carson

SON of MAN > LIFE'S MISSION of the CROSS Determined before BIRTH

“you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”
Matthew 1.21

Sheep are READY – WAITING for His Coming – Watching & Worshipping

Jesus declared, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.” Matthew 11.25,26

b. Sacrifice for the Gospel > These BELOVED are BUSY in BLESSING...

vs. 35,36 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.'

6 TIMELESS Needs in FIRST Century and Twenty FIRST Century

Nothing SEXY or FASHIONABLE about this SERVICE > MUNDANE NEEDS

LITMUS Test NOT Theology > It's TIME & TEARS! Something ALL HAVE!

MORE than just Giving 10 Kwai to the BEGGAR with the PUPPIES in WDK

...after you were enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, sometimes being publicly exposed to reproach and affliction, and sometimes being partners with those so treated. For you had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one. Hebrews 10.32-34

These SHEEP are Judged by their WORKS > Works an EVIDENCE of Grace

Judgment will be Based on Demonstrable Evidence > King SAW their LABORS

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2.8-10

Demonstrable Evidence of SALVATION

Bloodstained Cross – Empty Tomb – Spirit on Pentecost – Global Church

Sheep DISPLAY their KING Lives by their LIVING, SERVING FAITH

21. Q. What is true faith?

A. True faith is a sure knowledge whereby I accept as true all that God has revealed to us in His Word. At the same time it is a firm confidence that not only to others, but also to me, God has granted forgiveness of sins, everlasting righteousness, and salvation, out of mere grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits. This faith the Holy Spirit works in my heart by the gospel.

86. Q. Since we have been delivered from our misery by grace alone through Christ, without any merit of our own, why must we yet do good works?

A. Because Christ, having redeemed us by His blood, also renews us by His Holy Spirit to be His image, so that with our whole life we may show ourselves thankful to God for His benefits, and He may be praised by us. Further, that we ourselves may be assured of our faith by its fruits, and that by our godly walk of life we may win our neighbours for Christ. The Heidelberg Catechism, 1563

v. 40 And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

How to Interpret - v. 40 “the least of these my brothers”

1. *The words might refer to anyone who is hungry or has other physical needs.*

“In this story Jesus declared that it would be whether we fed or did not feed the hungry, whether we clothed or did not clothe the naked, whether we visited the imprisoned or did not, which would say what our final destination was going to be”
Desmond Tutu

“God will judge us in accordance with our reaction to human need” William Barclay

WIDELY Believed by MANY Christians > Widely Exploited by Many Beggars!

2. *“The least of these brothers of mine” = The Jews > Popular in AMERICA*

Dispensational View > Several Judgments, This One at Close of Tribulation

After Christians have been Removed from the World by the Rapture

3. *“The least of these brothers of mine” refers to all Christians.*

Not Mean God of Bible Unconcerned about Poor > Not TAUGHT in THIS Text

IN this SERMON – Gospel will be Preached Globally, AND Hated Globally

And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations... they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake. Matthew 24.14,9

WHEN He Sent Out GOSPEL Messengers he gave them PROMISE..

Jesus to Disciples, “He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me.... And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward.”
Matthew 10.40–42

Our Fate depends on how Relate to Christ AND His Gospel Preaching Followers
“brothers” means “disciples” > All who Follow Christ

...stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”
Matthew 12.49–50

for you have one teacher, and you are all brothers
Matthew 23.8

Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”
Matthew 28.10

Saul of Tarsus discovered he was NOT Just Fighting against CHRISTIANS

His FIGHT was REALLY Against the CHRIST HIMSELF...

And he (Saul of Tarsus) said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.”
Acts 9.5

v. 40 And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

“Our Lord is not expressly speaking of benevolence to the poor and suffering in general, but of kindness to his poor and suffering ‘brethren’ for his sake.”
John Broadus

“See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven....So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.
Matthew 18.10,14

We Demonstrate Our Attitude to Message by the Way Treat Messengers

How people of Nations Receive that Witness, Determine Final Destiny

Jesus WARNED His Servants will SUFFER

Now he calls Church to Give Comfort & SUPPORT

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. 1 John 5.1

3. Do you Love His Goodness? Walk with Him!

a. Dead to God

What about those who HAVE heard the Gospel and DONE NOTHING?

vs. 42-43 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.'

Most Striking Feature of These 3 Stories in Matthew 25

People think they are saved and that they are on their way to heaven

Very Often PALESTINIAN Shepherd in 1st C – Keep both Sheep and Goats

During the DAY > MIX Together Grazing

Nightfall > SEPARATE Sheep from Goats

5 Women Shut Out of Banquet > Hardly Believe Door been Closed to Them

Wicked Servant thinks he was SAFE by Burying the 1 Talent he was Given

These Goats do Not Understand the KING's Disapproval...

v. 44 Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?'

Delude Themselves by Such Comments > had No HEART to Help even a VIP

Saw NO RETURN for Such INVESTMENT > No Change of Personal Advance

GUY who Comes to church just to Build Client Base > No Business, Leaves

v. 45 Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’

There really Will Be a Surprise for Many on the Day of Judgment

For Many it will NOT be a Happy Surprise - Startled, Shaken, and Distressed

Stories of Final Judgment > Greek *Krisis*: Root Meaning word is “Division”

Crisis > Event that Requires us to Turn One Way or Another

Division between those Ready when Jesus Returns and Those who Not Ready

Women: 5 go into Wedding Banquet and 5 Shut Out

Servants: 2 are Commended and 1 is Judged

Sheep inherit Kingdom Prepared, Goats receive Punishment

v. 41 “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

Goats Ignored Needs of Christ’s Brothers are *Cursed* with *Eternal Punishment*

Condemned > Not doing Some Great Evil > Neglected Doing Good

People here Not Adolf Hitler or Some Serial Killer

They are the good people who occupy the pews of churches and serve on philanthropic boards. When Judgment comes, they are astonished. James Boice

Like Foolish Virgins Cannot Understand why DOOR Will Not Open for Them

Like Servant w/ 1 Talent surprised Master Rejected Zero-growth Performance

v. 46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Jesus More than Any Other Person in Bible speaks Most Clearly about Hell

v. 41 “Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels”

God PREPARED Heaven for PEOPLE > HELL for DEVIL & his DEMONS

Some People make TRAGIC CHOICE to join SATAN in his SUFFERING

Even in HELL God is KING > DEVIL is NOT the Boss, just BEATEN FOE

1. *Hell is a total separation* > Cut OFF from God and all that is GOOD

v. 41 “Depart from me, you who are cursed”

And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me...’

Matthew 7.23

“Not one goat will be left among the sheep, nor one sheep with the goats. ... There will be no middle company in that day.” Charles H. Spurgeon

2. *Hell is a bad association.*

Hell was “prepared for the devil and his angels” v. 41

Those who Refused Christ & Neglect Christ’s Followers > Be with Demons

NOT place where Devils Torment Sinners > Devil & Unbelievers Suffer Together

What a terrible association! What a destiny! To spend eternity shoulder to shoulder with an evil being whose one goal has been to defy God and bring others to share in suffering forever. James Boice

3. *Hell is suffering.*

v. 41 “eternal fire” // “burning sulfur” Revelation 20.10

Symbolic > Demons are Spirits & Cannot be Punished by LITERAL Fire

Purpose of Imagery > Horror Beyond what Literal Language can Convey

Words of Jesus > Very Son of God > Drank CUP of Wrath upon the CROSS

If Burning by Fire is Bad > Reality of Hell’s Suffering Immeasurably Worse

Result of this Experience an Eternal v. 30 “weeping and gnashing of teeth”

4. *Hell is darkness.*

After Fire > Darkness may Sound Good > Darkness shuts off All Sight of ALL
Left with Conscious, Mental Self in its Rebellion > You ALONE in Darkness

Out of the night that covers me,

Black as the Pit from pole to pole,

I thank whatever gods may be

For my unconquerable soul.

William Ernest Henley, “Invictus”

Devil’s LIE > Cursing God is More Like It > Empty Cry thru Dark Eternity

Punishment is Fixed Forever and No Words or Actions Will Ever Change It

What makes sin an infinite evil is that it is against an infinite God. James Boice

v. 46 Same Exact Word, Describe Duration of Hell as Believer’s Life in Heaven

Who shall describe the misery of eternal punishment? It is something utterly indescribable and inconceivable. The eternal pain of body; the eternal sting of an accusing conscience; the eternal society of none but the wicked, the devil and his angels; the eternal remembrance of opportunities neglected and Christ despised; the eternal prospect of a weary, hopeless future—all this is misery indeed: it is enough to make our ears tingle, and our blood run cold. John Ryle

“There seems to be a kind of conspiracy to forget, or to conceal, where the doctrine of hell comes from. The doctrine of hell is not “mediaeval priestcraft” for frightening people into giving money to the church: it is Christ’s deliberate judgment on sin. . . . We cannot repudiate hell without altogether repudiating Christ.”
Dorothy Sayers

“Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord GOD; so turn, and live.” Ezekiel 18.31,32

b. Delighted in God

Evidence of Credible Christian profession Not SPECTACULAR

Not how Many Churches Built, Sermons Preached, Millions Given

Little Things > Sharing Food, Giving Water, Welcoming Stranger, Offering Clothes, Caring for Sick, Visiting Prisoners

Things SO Little > Righteous do Not Even Remember having Done Them

vs. 37-39 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’

Things SO LITTLE Unrighteous do Not think it IMPOTANT Enough Do Them

IF they Imagined Little Things were BASIS for ETERNAL Destiny > Re-Think

Like MAN with 1 Talent – GOATS had NO JOY in God or His SERVICE

Saw HARD MASTER, Fearfully BURY His Talent because they DESPISE Him

Legalism is simply separating the law of God from the person of God. Eve sees God’s law, but she has lost sight of the true God *himself*. Thus, abstracting his law from his loving and generous person... This is the distortion, the “lie about God.” that has entered the bloodstream of the human race... God becomes a magnified policeman who gives his law only because he wants to deprive us and in particular to destroy our joy. The “lie” that we now believe is that to “glorify God” is not, indeed cannot be, to “enjoy him forever,” but to lose all joy.

Sinclair Ferguson

Desire to Do Good ONLY Comes Within > New Birth > Filling of Holy Spirit

SERVING God True Believers DELIGHT, CREATED for Good Works Walk In

“True disciples will pass an examination not because they are trying to pass an examination but because they *will* love his brothers and sisters—and therefore Jesus. Goats will fail because, of course, they *will not* particularly care for Jesus’ brothers and sisters, and thus will be rejecting the Messiah himself” D.A. Carson

PROBLEM Prosperity Theology > Does Not make People want More of God

People FOCUS on GIFTS and FORGET the GIVER

You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy;
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. Psalm 16.11

David Livingstone – Famous M to Africa – Well Respected Africa & home
DIED > British Gov't buried in home in England fitting Tribute for Service
African's who Loved & Appreciated Livingstone NOT Want Body Sent England
Wanted to Bury him where He Served in Land he Loved with People he Loved
Compromise: BODY in Westminster Abbey, HEART buried in AFRICAN SOIL

Where your HEART be BURIED? Who you LOVED, What have you Loved?

v. 34 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.

NOT FAIRYLAND or DREAM > REAL PLACE

NEVER seen Moscow or Mexico City KNOW Exist, Trusted People been There
Heaven is a Real Place > Jesus BEEN THERE Came from There to Tell Us

Jesus: "I am going there to prepare a place for you" John 14.2

WHERE GOING?

Few hours > NAILED to a CROSS > Not going to DECORATE HEAVEN
Kingdom ALREADY Prepared > NOTHING Can be IMPROVED

ONLY Thing NOT Ready US: Too Sinful! Unholy, Unworthy, UNWELCOME!

Sin's punishment must be paid and the wrath of God must be satisfied.

Only then can we be prepared to enter Heaven.

Dwight Moody: Story about RICH LAWYER > Had EVERYTHING but GOD
Fatal SICKNESS > *Doctor*: You've NOT Much LONGER for THIS WORLD
4 year Old DAUGHTER > Mother: 'Daddy is Going on Trip, Not Coming Back'
Daughter: "Papa, Do You have a HOME in THAT LAND You are GOING to?"

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Matthew 5.8

Matthew 25.31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. 34 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. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was 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, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ 40 And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’ 41“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ 44 Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ 45 Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ 46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”