



FAMOUS LAST WORDS

Parables of Jesus

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COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE - WEEK OF MARCH 29th, 2020

WARM UP QUESTION: Do you generally feel you are a good judge of character? How so? (5-10 min)

READ: Matthew 25:31-46

FOCUS: God wants us to be ready to receive and give His love whenever and however it's needed

OBSERVE (10 minutes)

This is both a parable and a prophecy of the return of the Son of Man, Jesus. His disciples are to wait and serve patiently in anticipation of reward at His return, when the unprepared and unrepentant will receive judgement.

1- WHERE SECULARISM FAILS

- Secularism fails because it tries to create Heaven on Earth without the King of Heaven, Jesus.
- Secularism fails because it has no answer to pain and suffering or hope of reward for helping those who are experiencing it.

"For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things." - Romans 1:21-23 ESV

2 - THE LOVE OF GOD IN CRISIS

- God's love is made clear in times of challenge and need.
- Jesus' calls us to the aid of others outside of our preconceived judgements
- Jesus refers to His brothers in need, and loving them is loving Him. Helping them is helping Him.
- The sheep and the goats both call Jesus 'Lord'
- The reward of the righteous is inheriting God's Kingdom, prepared for them
- The judgement of the selfish will be eternal punishment, prepared for the Devil & his angels

- The key is being what people need when they need it. (v. 43)
- Love has no formula, only the discernable character of Christ.

3 - THE GOSPEL AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME

- Meeting the present, temporary need of the least of these (weak, hungry, thirsty, and lonely) led to the future and eternal entrance into the Kingdom of God.
- The righteous did not recognize the least of these brothers as being Jesus, yet because of Jesus they served them.
- The wicked were punished for sins of omission, the righteous were rewarded for acts of commission.

- *“For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.” - Romans 5:6-11 ESV*

REFLECT AND DISCUSS (30 min)

- How is secular humanism different than God’s love in action?
- Who are the sheep and goats? How are the sheep and the goats different? How are they the same?
- Am I more prone to sins of omission or commission? How and why?

TAKE ACTION

- Be aware of your ungodly biases. Be proactive in your service.
- Hear a need, fill a need. Be proactive with what you have to serve those near you.

PRAY TOGETHER (10 min)

Heavenly Father, thank you for your mercy on me at just the right time, while I was lost in my sin and helpless. Forgive me for sins of omission and commission. Open my spiritual eyes to see You in each person. Deliver me from fear and empower me with your Holy Spirit to love the least of these. Amen.