

Don't Be A Goat  
Matthew 25:31-46

**Slide 1**

Jean Crist from Niagara Falls, New York, talks about her days in a Christian college, where the college president gave a weekly Monday morning chapel message.

On one occasion, the student body settled down for another session of daydreaming as he launched into one of those messages.

His pedestrian method of delivery made it difficult for students to focus on what he was saying.

As they fixed their gaze on him, their thoughts wandered to other things, but their minds had been programmed to listen for his always welcome conclusion, "Now we shall stand."

Time crept by and finally they heard the words they'd been waiting for. They all stood and found themselves facing a startled president who had asked in the course of his message, "*How shall we stand in the day of judgement...?*"

The Bible says that when Jesus comes again, He'll judge the world to determine who goes into His Kingdom and who's banished. So, how will you stand in that day of judgment?

It's a very important question to ask yourself, especially as we approach these last days before Jesus comes. Will Jesus let you into His Kingdom, or will He turn you away?

Turn to Matthew 25, where Jesus describes the criteria by which He'll judge who gets into His Kingdom or not.

Matthew 25:31-33, *“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.”*

We must understand that when Jesus returns to rule and reign on this earth, He'll separate the sheep from the goats.

## **Slide 2**

Jesus will divide everybody into two categories: those that get in and inherit His Kingdom; and those that He excludes.

During Jesus' day, sheep and goats grazed in the same pasture, but at night, the shepherd had to separate them, because the male goats were often hostile toward the sheep.

Also, the goats needed to be warm at night while the sheep preferred the open air. Goats just caused a lot of trouble for the shepherds.

In Matthew 13, Jesus talks about the same separation at His Coming. There, He describes the wheat and the weeds growing together in the same field, which He'll separate at harvest time.

In our current age, God allows good and evil to co-exist, but there's coming a time when He'll separate the two.

When Jesus comes, He'll separate the sons of the evil one from the sons of the Kingdom. He'll remove all evil from His Kingdom, and reign for a thousand years in perfect peace while Satan's bound.

Now, in Jesus' day, the Jewish Supreme Court, the Sanhedrin, put the prisoners they acquitted on the right of the president, while they put the prisoners they convicted on the left.

When Jesus comes, you'll want to stand acquitted with the sheep at His right hand, not condemned with the goats on His left.

Michelangelo worked for ten years on his final work, called Pietà Rondanini. He ended up trying to break it because it was full of impurities.

A servant managed to rescue the sculpture, which survives to this day. It still bears the marks of Michelangelo's chisel where he tried to destroy it.

Another sculptor, Lorenzo Dominguez, described the dilemma and unpredictability of working with stone. He said, "*The stone wants to be stone; the artist wants it to be art.*"

In the same way, God wants to create a work of art in each of His creatures. As He chips away, attempting to free His image within, your stony heart can either submit to His chipping or resist.

If it submits, features of the Savior begin to emerge. If it submits long enough, the Savior Himself emerges.

However, if it resists, and continues to resist, there will come a day when God lets the stone be stone.

C. S. Lewis said as much when he wrote that there are only two kinds of people in the end: Those who say to God, "*Thy will be done,*" and those to whom God says, "*Thy will be done*" or "*Go ahead and have it your way.*"

What will it be for you? His way or your way? For a time, God will allow both kinds of people to co-exist, but there's coming a time when He'll separate the two.

Just make sure you're the right kind. If you want to stand in the judgment to come, realize that Jesus will separate the sheep from the goats, so be a sheep.

### **Slide 3**

Make sure you're a child of God through Faith in His Son. Ensure that you're an heir to the riches of God's Kingdom by trusting Christ with your life.

*Matthew 25:34, "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.'"*

Only God's legitimate heirs inherit God's Kingdom. So, make sure you're an heir through faith in Christ.

*Speaking of fellow believers, Paul said in Romans 8:16-17, "The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory."*

*God's children are the meek found in Matthew 5:5, "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth."*

*These are also those found in Matthew 19:29, "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life."*

The meek and those who left everything to follow Christ, these are the ones who'll inherit the earth.

Those who yield to Christ, who surrender all to Him, will inherit the earth with Him. They will rule and reign with Him in His coming earthly kingdom.

If you haven't done it already, surrender your life to Jesus and inherit your place beside Him when He comes to reign on this earth.

Before her death in January 2020, Cathy Boone had been living on the streets for years, struggling with drug abuse and mental illness.

Her father said the tragedy was multiplied tenfold by the revelation that she died without collecting any of the inheritance she was due after her mother's death, over \$900,000.

Her father said, *"It just didn't make any sense to me. That money was just sitting there, and she needed help in the worst way."*

After he lost touch with his daughter, he was unsure if she even knew she was entitled to an inheritance, or if so, how to go about collecting.

After her mother died, estate representatives tried to contact her by phone and email.

They spoke to other family members, sent her messages on Facebook, and even ran ads in the newspaper... to no effect. When all that failed, they hired a private investigator, but came up empty.

How sad, but here's the good news for us! No matter what state you find yourself in this life, you have an eternal inheritance through faith in Christ.

Let Him start changing you from the inside out, so you can receive the Kingdom when He comes.

#### **Slide 4**

Matthew 25:35-40, *“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”*  
*“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”*

Earlier in Matthew, Jesus identified His brothers as those who follow Him and do God’s will. To be sure, He wants us to care for the poor and needy in this world.

According to the book of Revelation, during the tribulation believers will be unable to buy or sell unless they declare their allegiance to the antichrist through the “mark of the beast.”

As a result, since they won’t be able to buy anything from the merchants in the world, they’ll have to depend on each other for food, drink, housing, clothing, and healthcare.

The authorities will throw many people in prison for their loyalty to Christ, so believers will have to depend on other believers to visit them there. Believers will desperately need each other during the tribulation.

Yet, Jesus has charged us with sharing the good news of the Kingdom, regardless of the consequences. So, Jesus welcomes those believers who’ve cared for their fellow messengers of the King into His Kingdom.

While Matthew 25 relates to a time yet future, it encourages us to care for one another today. Feed the hungry. Refresh the thirsty. Clothe the naked. Welcome the stranger. Visit the sick.

You'll receive the kingdom, when you receive the King's messengers. As Jesus said, "*Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.*"

To receive the King's messengers, is to receive the King Himself. Matthew 10:40, "*Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.*"

Now don't mis-interpret what I'm saying here. You don't get into heaven because you care for people; you get in because you've already welcomed Jesus into your heart.

You see, the sheep are surprised when Jesus tells them how their ministry to His messengers ministered to Him.

They're NOT surprised to be at Jesus right hand, acquitted of all their sin. They're surprised that their ministry of care means so much to Him.

This demonstrates that they aren't seeking to earn their salvation or their entrance into Christ's Kingdom. They're doing what they do, simply because that's what they do as followers of Christ.

Jesus is changing their hearts, so they naturally, or should I say supernaturally, reflect His heart for people. They've already received Christ, so they naturally receive Christ's messengers.

As someone once said, "*It is faith alone that saves, but the faith that saves is never alone.*" True believers always express their faith in acts of compassion.

That's what God does for true believers. He sets you free to care even as He cares for you. The Holy Spirit, who dwells within every believer, won't let you off the hook.

His heart of compassion will move your heart to have compassion for those in need, especially for your brothers and sisters in Christ.

So, trust Christ with your life and be a sheep. Yield to Christ and receive the Kingdom. Receive the Kingdom because you receive the King's messengers. And receive the King's messengers because you receive the King.

## **Slide 5**

### Conclusion

If you want to stand in the judgment to come, be a sheep. Don't reject Christ and His messengers. Don't let an unbelieving heart keep you out of Christ's Kingdom.

*Matthew 25:41-46, "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.' "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?' "He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."*

Don't compel Jesus to reject you, because when you reject the King's messengers, you reject the King. The goats end up in hell, not because they refused to care, but because they rejected Christ.

They're not surprised to be at Jesus' left hand, condemned for their sin. However, they're surprised that Jesus took their rejection of His messengers so personally.



If they thought feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, and visiting the sick would gain them entrance into the Kingdom, they would've performed acts of mercy even though their hearts were far away.

But Jesus looks at the heart. He's not impressed with outward acts of piety. Rather, He rewards a heart that trusts Him.

You can't get into His Kingdom just because you look good on the outside. The only way to get in is to let Christ change your heart on the inside.

So, if you want to stand in the judgment to come, be a sheep; don't be a goat. Jesus will turn you away from His Kingdom if your heart's far from Him.

Celebrity status, acts of piety, good works are not enough. Instead, you must receive the King if you want to receive His Kingdom.

If you haven't done it already, invite Jesus to come into your heart so He can change you from the inside out.

If you let Him, Jesus will transform your goat-like heart into the heart of a sheep that follows Him.