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Sermon Notes

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Judgment Day

Matthew 25:31-46

What do you think Judgment Day will be like?

The Bible makes it plain that s a day is coming when God will judge all humanity...

When the apostle Paul stood among the Greek philosophers on the Areopagus in Athens, he warned them of the coming judgment day:

Acts 17:31 [God] has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed.

When Paul stood before the Roman governor Felix on trial for his life, Paul turned the tables and warned Felix plainly about Judgment Day:

Acts 24:25 As Paul discoursed on righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and said, "That's enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you."

Felix dismissed Paul because the topic of Judgment Day made him feel uncomfortable... but the concept cannot be easily dismissed... Judgment Day is most certainly coming

Jesus Christ, at the end of His discourse on the Mount of Olives, warned His disciples about the events surrounding His Second Coming... He finished with a potent description of Judgment Day... a teaching often called "The Sheep and the Goats"

It is sometimes wrongly called the "Parable of the Sheep and the Goats"... but it is no parable... it is a straight description of elements of Judgment Day... it uses a simile... a figure of speech that compares two things often using the words "like" or "as":

Matthew 25:32-33 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. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

What is compared? The SEPARATION of the righteous from the unrighteous, the believers in Jesus Christ from the unbelievers, the saved from the lost, the redeemed from the unredeemed

Recently I saw yet again a bumper sticker that used the various religious symbols in the world to spell out the word "COEXIST"... the crescent moon formed the "C" and represented Islam; the peace sign formed the "O" and represented an end to all war; the "X" was made out of the star of David, representing Judaism; the "I" was dotted with a Wiccan symbol, representing paganism and witchcraft, the "S" was made out of the "yin/yang" circle representing Confucianism; and the "T" of course was the cross of Christ, representing Christianity

The bumper sticker is printed by the "Coexist" foundation, which is seeking to promote peace and understanding among the world religions, especially by dialogue

Jesus told the parable of the wheat and the weeds in which the wheat represented the sons of God, and the weeds the sons of the devil, and said that both have to grow together until the harvest time

The harvest is the end of the age... Judgment Day

Until then, Christians have to coexist with God's enemies... those who hate Jesus Christ and will not bow their knees to Him... Jesus said we have to COEXIST until then...

But on Judgment Day at last the goats will be separated from the sheep FOREVER:

Matthew 13:41-43 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴² They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

Matthew 25:31-46 is the plainest description of Judgment Day that ever came from the lips of the Judge, Jesus Christ... we would do well to heed it carefully!

I. The Glory of Christ on Judgment Day

Matthew 25:31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

A. The Judge: Jesus Christ

1. It is the unique privilege and glory of Jesus Christ to judge the world

John 5:22-23 Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father.

2. Jesus Christ will be the Judge of all the earth... every single human being will stand before Him on that dreadful day

B. The Time of Judgment: When He Comes

1. The Second Coming of Christ

2. Does this rule out a Millennium? No...
3. Honestly, I have a hard time fitting all the chronology together without violating the plain sense of one passage or another
4. However, since the Millennium is not even mentioned at all in Matthew 24-25, it is not necessary for me to fit them together in this sermon this morning
5. It is clear that Judgment Day will follow the return of Christ to the earth in glory

C. The Glory of Christ at the Judgment

1. Christ laid His heavenly glory aside when He came to the earth the first time
2. He was born of a human mother, Mary, in a rude stall where animals were bedding down for the night... laid in a manger where they were fed their fodder
3. He looked like any other man

Isaiah 53:2 He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

4. This was especially true as He was dying on the cross... bloody, in agony, a repulsive sight...
5. BUT at the Second Coming Christ will shine with a radiant glory that cannot be described
 - a. Paul says

1 Timothy 6:16 [God dwells in] unapproachable light

There is a brilliant, radiant glory that would act like a wall around the divine person... you can't draw close because of the searing holiness of His person

- b. In Isaiah 6, the six-winged seraphim cover their faces, so they are not overcome by the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ
6. Christ's glory at the Judgment will be even more ominous and overwhelming, not less so...

In many cultures, earthly judges robe themselves with costly robes that set their appearance apart from normal people... in the United Kingdom especially, judges wear lush robes of ermine and costly silk... when a judge appears in a court room, everyone in the court is commanded to rise in honor of the judge

If these are the trappings of earthly judges, how much more the glory of the Judge of all the earth... Christ will come in His glory, and sit on a glorious throne

The throne itself will exude the power and righteousness of the Judge who sits on it

Hebrews 1:8-9 But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom. ⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy."

D. The Angels at the Judgment

1. Christ will be surrounded by radiant, powerful warrior angels

Matthew 25:31 When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

Daniel 7:10 A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.

AMAZING!!! 100 million mighty, radiant, powerful beings!

2. These warriors are MIGHTY... they are warriors, not sissy angels; almost every time an angel appears in the bible, the people to whom they appear are overcome with dread and terror
3. The book of Daniel portrays one angel as so terrifying in his glory that he fell at his feet as though dead and could barely speak
4. The book of Revelation describes one angel this way

Revelation 10:1-3 Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was robed in a cloud, with a rainbow above his head; his face was like the sun, and his legs were like fiery pillars. ... He planted his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land, ³ and he gave a loud shout like the roar of a lion.

5. These are the warrior servants, angels who MOVE people according to the will of God
 - a. They are dispatched to gather the elect in the Rapture
 - b. They are also dispatched to gather all nations to stand before Christ
 - c. They will be the powerful agents of his wrath when the goats are cast into hell... they will be the ones to bind people hand and foot and throw them in the lake of fire

II. A Comprehensive Judgment: All Nations, All Deeds, All Motives

Matthew 25:32 All the nations will be gathered before him

A. All Nations Gathered Before Christ

1. The word nation means an ethnically identifiable people group... identified by their language, culture, history, geography, worldview
2. Throughout the gospel of Matthew, it is clear that Jesus has ALL nations on His mind
 - a. Matthew 12:18-21 Jesus will proclaim JUSTICE to the nations and in His name the nations will put their hope
 - b. Matthew 24:14 The gospel of the Kingdom will be PREACHED in the whole world as a TESTIMONY to all nations
 - c. Matthew 24:9 The messengers of the gospel will be HATED by all nations on account of Christ
 - d. Matthew 28:19 The Great Commission

Matthew 28:19-20 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

3. Jesus is a WORLD-WIDE Creator, a WORLD-WIDE King, a WORLD-WIDE Savior, and a WORLD-WIDE Judge
4. Every single solitary person who has ever lived in EVERY nation on earth, from every ERA of HISTORY will stand before Christ's Judgment Seat
 - a. Plato, the Greek Philosopher of the 4th century BC, will stand before Christ's Judgment Seat
 - b. Julius Caesar, the Roman conqueror of Gaul, will stand before Christ's Judgment Seat
 - c. Shakespeare, the British poet and playwright will be there; so will Voltaire, the French cynic and skeptic; Mao Zedong and Josef Stalin—two Communist atheists—will stand before Christ; Osama Bin Laden will stand before Christ, and so will George Bush and Barack Obama; AND so will the most common street urchin in Budapest and the lowest beggar from Calcutta... no one escapes, everyone will be there!!
5. The word "GATHERED" implies something happening to you... the nations will be gathered as if by force... there is no choice but to heed this

summons... no one will be able to say “I refuse to stand before a Christian judgment; I am a Muslim and I will only stand before Allah”... no, dear friend, you will stand before Jesus, like it or not

6. The AGENTS of the gathering are certainly angels...

Matthew 13:41-42 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴² They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

7. So the angels will gather every single human being that has ever lived and compel them to come stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ

8. COMPREHENSIVE judgment as to WHO IS THERE... but also, comprehensive as to what is open to view

B. All Deeds Assessed by Christ

1. The sheep and goats are assessed by their actual deeds... deeds done in the body... whether they feed the hungry, clothed the naked, welcomed the stranger, etc.

2. Nothing escapes notice... everything is fair game... even the smallest details

Matthew 12:36 But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken.

3. The heavenly history books are completely accurate and comprehensive

Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

C. All Motives Exposed by Christ

Proverbs 16:2 All a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the LORD.

1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts.

III. A Divisive Judgment: Sheep and Goats Eternally Separated

Matthew 25:32-33 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. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

A. Mixed Now, Divided Then

1. We live in a pluralistic country, which celebrates our diversity of thought and opinions
2. Radically different religions can peacefully live side by side in America... COEXIST, as we've said
3. But TRUE BIBLICAL Christianity is the one religion in the world which openly embraces COEXISTENCE for all the world religions... we MUST coexist... until the end, that is
4. In the parable of the wheat and the weeds, both servants of God and servants of Satan coexist side by side until the end of the world; the servants of the Master want to root up the weeds, but the Master says, "No you may root up the wheat with them..."

Matthew 13:30 Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn."

B. Surviving in an Impure World

- It is unbelievers who make police forces, courts, laws, jails necessary in the numbers they are
- It is because of unbelievers that so many laws need to be written
- It is unbelievers in Hollywood and New York that plan how to assault us with immoral images to make a buck
- It is unbelievers in foreign lands who arrest, imprison, torture and murder Christians
- It is unbelievers that make the alluring, sinful, enticing system known in Pilgrim's Progress as "Vanity Fair"
- It is unbelievers that make even going shopping in the mall a potentially negative and maybe even dangerous excursion

Summary of the Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds:

The Kingdom of Heaven grows and flourishes surrounded by constant human opposition, advancing in a mixed world made up of children of God and children of the Devil, and it will be that way until the end of the world. Thus the children of the Kingdom are tormented and tested daily by being surrounded by ungodly enemies of the Kingdom.

This parable explains the halting and struggling progress of the Kingdom... a mixed history of three steps forward two steps back... a constant struggle on the human level, surrounded by people who hate us, who seek to allure us away from God, who do damage and hurt to our souls by their ungodly example and clever enticements based on the lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, and boastful pride of life.

However, at the end of the world this mixed experience will end forever: the wicked will be tormented forever in hell, while the righteous will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father.

C. Division Taught in Many Places

1. The Sermon of John the Baptist

Matthew 3:12 His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

2. The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares

Matthew 13:41-43 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴² They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

3. The Parable of the Dragnet

Matthew 13:48-50 When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. ⁴⁹ This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

From the moment that Christ separates the sheep and the goats, the mixed nature of the human race will be over forever...

D. Division is Perfect

1. The sheep are the sheep, and the goats are the goats

2. Essential to this is the perfect knowledge Christ has of each of His sheep...

John 10:14 "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me

3. He also knows the goats but far differently

Psalms 138:6 Though the LORD is on high, he looks upon the lowly, but the proud he knows from afar.

4. The angels will make no mistakes... all the sheep will be gathered on one side, and all the goats gathered on the other

E. Division is Eternal

1. They will never meet again... they will never be mixed again... they will never look upon each other again
2. I've seen some wrenching scenes in movies in which loved ones were torn apart from each other... in movies about WWII, the Nazis were especially vicious in separating families... the train would pull in to Auschwitz, the doors of the cattle cars would open, and immediately the SS Guards would rip families apart—men on one side, women on the other; those who could work separated from those who couldn't; some never laid eyes on each other again
3. This separation is far more significant... and it will be ETERNAL! The sheep and the goats will never be together again
4. Amazingly, the sheep will never miss the goats... not for a moment!
5. The goats are characterized by one thing: they NEVER LOVED Jesus Christ
6. The sheep will love Christ from that moment on with a perfect passion that will eclipse all others

1 Corinthians 16:22 If anyone does not love the Lord-- a curse be on him. Come, O Lord!

F. Division is Unequal: Sheep on the Right, Goats on the Left

1. The right hand is the position of favor, of blessing
2. The sheep are clearly the beloved and the honored of the human race

IV. The Basis of the Judgment: Blessing of God Resulting in a Lifestyle

Matthew 25:34-36 "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. ³⁵ 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, ³⁶ 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.'

A. First Basis: Eternal Predestination

Matthew 25:34 "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father...

I SAY THIS BLESSING FROM THE FATHER BEGAN IN ETERNITY PAST

Take your inheritance... the Kingdom prepared FOR YOU since the creation of the world

1. Clear teaching of Scripture... this division of sheep and goats existed in the mind of God before the world began
2. The "Elect"... those chosen by God for heaven, not hell
3. The first blessing the Elect receive: unconditional election, not based on merit, but based on God's sovereign grace
4. Kingdom "prepared for YOU since the creation of the world"
 - a. It is prepared for Christ's sheep, those He knows by name
 - b. God's infinite knowledge and wisdom... it is impossible to think He doesn't know the name of each one of His sheep!!
 - c. This Kingdom has been being prepared for a specific group of people, with their own stories and their own glories and their own agonies and struggles and conquests
5. The Kingdom is presently being prepared... it is growing and developing and being prepared NOW... because we the elect are coming to Christ one at a time all over the world

Matthew 20:23 Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father."

Matthew 22:2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son.

John 14:1-3 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

6. The glory of heaven is growing and developing with the specific histories of the elect... how they come to faith in Christ, what they do by faith for His Kingdom, how they adorn the place with their deeds of courage and love... that is how the place is being prepared!!
7. BUT the clear primary basis of the separation is the eternal blessing of God in predestination... they were blessed by God from the foundation of the world

since the Kingdom was prepared FOR THEM since the foundation of the world

B. Second Basis of the Separation: Blessing of God in Life

Matthew 25:34 "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father

1. The BLESSING of God starts in eternity, but the extends into time
2. None of the sheep would ever have come to Christ without the sovereign grace of God in his/her life... the BLESSING of God the Father

Matthew 16:15-17 "Who do you say I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.

John 20:28-29 Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Romans 4:7-8 Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. ⁸ Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him."

3. They were blessed by the hearing of the gospel... the power of God for their salvation
4. They were blessed by the twin graces of repentance and faith in Christ
5. They were blessed by God taking out the heart of stone and giving the heart of flesh
6. They were blessed by God with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus
7. On the basis of these earthly blessings, everything good about the sheep flows... apart from God's grace in Christ, the sheep would have been NO DIFFERENT than the goats

C. Third Basis: Faith in Christ the King

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...

1. The key concept here is an INHERITANCE... that which is PROMISED to the sheep... a Kingdom

2. This is clear evidence of the grace of God in the lives of the sheep... a Kingdom was PROMISED to any who would believe in the KING... Jesus

Mark 1:15 "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

3. They believed the gospel, trusted in the King and entered the Kingdom spiritually, looking ahead to the promise of a full experience of the Kingdom later
4. It doesn't matter how many poor people you feed, how many homeless people you shelter, how many sick people you heal... apart from faith in Christ no salvation is possible
5. Yet, this idea of INHERITANCE is a key to Christ's mind... for the inheritance is given only to the heirs, and we can only become heirs in Christ's Kingdom through faith in Christ the King

Romans 8:16-17 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs-- heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ

1 Peter 1:3-4 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade-- kept in heaven for you

6. Furthermore, notice that Christ calls them "the righteous"

Matthew 25:37 "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?"

- a. This title is no throwaway, nor mere flattery
- b. This is JUDGMENT DAY, and the account calls them RIGHTEOUS in God's sight
- c. The Bible reveals

Romans 3:10-12 As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; ¹¹ there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. ¹² All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."

- d. So only by the imputed righteousness of Christ can these sinners be called righteous

Romans 3:22 This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.

D. Fourth Basis: Lifestyle of Christ-Focused Good Works

1. True faith always results in a lifestyle of Christ-focused good works

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

2. Notice: these works are CHRIST-FOCUSED... everything the sheep do, they ultimately do for Christ's pleasure, Christ's glory, to minister to Christ's people

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, ³⁶ 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.' ³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' ⁴⁰ "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

3. Clearly, the righteous sheep WANTED to please Christ with their actions... and Christ Himself focuses on this desire... to minister to Christ's sheep was the same as ministering to Christ Himself
4. This ministry was simple, practical and physical
 - a. The hungry were fed in Christ's name
 - b. The thirsty were given drink in Christ's name
 - c. The strangers were invited in in Christ's name
 - d. The naked were clothed in Christ's name
 - e. The sick were cared for in Christ's name
 - f. The prisoners were visited in Christ's name
5. In every case, the sheep were truly ministering to Christ by doing these good works
6. Notice that, while they desired to minister to Christ and His people, there is a genuine humility that comes with looking at their own works as woefully inadequate: we NEVER feel we've done enough

Matthew 25:37-39 "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ When did

*we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹
When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'*

7. Jesus makes it plain that such ministry done to other BELIEVERS is really ministry done to Him

Matthew 25:40 The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

8. I deny that that means we should ONLY do mercy ministry to other Christians... we can minister to the man on the Jericho Road in Christ's parable of the Good Samaritan without checking his ID first to find out if he's a believer... however, true Christians always care whether the people they minister to eventually trust in Christ or not, and hope that the mercy ministry will be used by God to lead them to faith
9. We will talk more next time about "mercy ministry" and the Sheep and Goats passage

E. The Opposite for the Goats

Matthew 25:41 "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.'

1. Not chosen by God the Father... cursed not blessed
 - a. Cursed in Adam
 - b. Cursed by the Law
 - c. Cursed by their sins
 - d. Cursed in death
2. Not blessed with repentance and faith
3. Rejecting Christ the King
 - a. Notice they call him "Lord" then... when they see Christ's glory as He sits on the throne

Matthew 25:44 "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?'

- b. BUT they refused to call Him "Lord" or call on the name of the Lord while they lived

Voltaire said he would destroy the religion of Jesus with his own hands within twenty years

Thomas Jefferson said the doctrine of the Trinity and of the deity of Christ was a myth of the order of Minerva springing physically from the brain of Jupiter

Mark Twain said Jesus Christ was a thousand billion times more cruel than any other figure because he created hell

Benjamin Franklin said this about the deity of Christ:

“As to Jesus of Nazareth...I have...some doubts as to His divinity, tho’ it is a question I do not dogmatize upon, having never studied it, and think it needless to busy myself with it now, when I expect soon an opportunity of knowing the truth with less trouble.”

Richard Dawkins, atheist and arch-defender of evolution said he doubts Jesus ever even existed

All of these men will call Jesus “Lord” on Judgment Day... so will Muhammad and Buddha and Gandhi and all the others

Philippians 2:10-11 at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

BUT while they lived on earth, they REFUSED to bow the knee to Jesus and confess him as Lord

4. No Christ-focused good works

- a. They may very well have fed people, or clothed people or met needs for people
- b. There are many secular aid agencies that do amazing works for the poor and needy, especially during crises
 - i) International Red Cross: 97 million volunteers worldwide; do nothing in the name of Jesus Christ... but go to earthquake zones or areas destroyed by warfare or famine or typhoons or monsoons and try to alleviate suffering; without question they have fed the hungry and clothed the naked, but NEVER IN JESUS’ NAME
 - ii) United Nations Aid Agencies are in some of the most troubled places in the world, alleviating human suffering; but the people who do so are not doing so in Christ’s name
 - iii) How about the FEDERAL GOVERNMENT itself? Again, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, caring for the sick and for prisoners... none of it done in Jesus’ name and for His glory
- c. Other charities began Christian but have an open-door policy for non-Christians to do good works

- i) Habitat for Humanity... MANY non-Christians have labored to build houses for the poor and needy through this essentially Christian ministry
- d. There are many non-Christian religions that have aid agencies: Red Crescent, the Islamic version of the Red Cross... does the same kind of work in Islamic countries
- e. There are many famous rock stars and movie stars and other popular celebrities whose personal morality in other areas is abysmal, but who demonstrate tremendous compassion for AIDS victims or orphans or the homeless... it is no surprise when Brad Pitt or Angelina Jolie or George Clooney or Elton John throw their celebrity behind some worthwhile charity... but it is also clear that none of the good works done by non-Christians are done to minister to the person of Christ... for His glory... for the advance of His Kingdom
- f. SO... the King will tell them this:

Matthew 25:41-43 *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. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ 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.'*

- g. They also will reply the same way:

Matthew 25:44 *"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?'*

- h. And the King's summation will be stark as well:

Matthew 25:45 *"He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'*

- i. These goats may have done a river of good works; but they never SAW JESUS in any of the people they helped... Jesus was NO ISSUE to them in life... but He will be the central issue on Judgment Day
- j. Simply put... anything not done in obedience to Christ's commands, for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom, for the blessing of Christ's people, and by the power of Christ's Spirit is NO GOOD WORK AT ALL... and will be blown away like the chaff

V. The Outcome of Judgment Day: Eternity in Heaven or Hell

Matthew 25:46 *"Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."*

- A. The Division Between Sheep and Goats is Eternal
- B. No Appeal Process... No Need for One...
 - 1. Christ's Justice will be perfect, and altogether righteous
 - 2. No one will have reason to question Christ's Judgments
- C. Every Single Person on the Face of the Earth will end up either in heaven or hell
- D. Two More Sermons
 - 1. Next time: "Whatever You Do for the Least of These" (an assessment of Mercy Ministry in light of Judgment Day)
 - 2. The Following week: "Hell is Real" (unfolding the doctrine of hell, especially from Matthew 24-25)

VI. Applications

- A. Come to Faith in Christ
 - 1. When the nations are gathered before Christ on Judgment Day it will be too late to repent... NOW is the time
 - 2. Judgment Day is inescapable, and will be comprehensive... we will have to give an account for every careless word we have spoken
 - 3. The only possible way to survive Judgment Day is to come to the cross of Christ and find forgiveness for sins there
- B. Christians: Ask God to make Judgment Day vivid and real in your mind every day by faith... visualize it in your daily quiet time; say to the Lord in prayer, "God, get me ready for Judgment Day"... help me to know if I am one of your sheep
- C. Christians: Be RICH in good works
 - 1. Next time we'll talk about mercy ministry... but it is clear enough for us to say lavish generosity on Christians and outsiders alike

1 John 3:16-18 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

- 2. There are church members in our midst who are struggling financially... either through unemployment or underemployment... find out what each other's needs are and meet them... you'll never lose your reward

3. Be active in SUMMER SIZZLE... go on the outreach today and share the gospel; be involved in the church cookouts next Saturday... ask Matthew Hodges for more information
4. NEW MEMBERS and OLD MEMBERS: Get active in one of our Ministry Teams... be involved in hospitality to our visitors; be involved in International Student ministry; be involved in women's ministry; get active and minister to the members of FBC and reach out to unbelievers around us

“Whatever you do for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you do for me.”