

MESSAGE 8-20-17
THE GREAT STANDARD FOR HEAVENLY CITIZENSHIP

The Bible describes this Judgment as the Sheep Goat judgement.

Jesus tells about this time in Matt. 25:31-46

Matthew 25:31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

Matthew 25:32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

Matthew 25:33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

Matthew 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Matthew 25:35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

Matthew 25:36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Matthew 25:37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

Matthew 25:38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

Matthew 25:39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

Matthew 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Matthew 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

Matthew 25:42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

Matthew 25:43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

Matthew 25:44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

Matthew 25:45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

Matthew 25:46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Matthew 25:31-46 is commonly referred to as the Sheep goat judgment. This is that great judgement where Jesus will separate the saved from the lost. The only ones that will be allowed into the Kingdom will be those who are His. These are called His sheep. This judgment will take place just before our Lord sets up His millennial kingdom.

There is a great expectancy in the day that we live concerning the Lord's return. I am convinced that His return will be soon. We read in Daniel..

Daniel 12:4 But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

We realize like never before that all the knowledge of the world is at the finger tips of the average citizen of our nation. The Internet has changed the way people do business.

I have people calling all the time to from all over the country to buy or have a piano moved.. The internet can be used for good or bad, but I am sure in the end it will turn out bad.

People are traveling to and fro like never before, some people actually travel to and fro from the airport like people used to commute by car. I have a missionary friend who is able to travel anywhere in the country for \$75.00 as a retired Army officer.

As the world unites and gets smaller and smaller, it seems it is not godliness that is spread but instead wickedness like a cancer multiplies quicker than righteousness. This is why God brought the flood, and divided the nations at the tower of Babel. We are seeing the world become like the days of Noah, and the tower of Babel. This is a great evidence of the end times.

Never before in the history of our nation have we seen such a disdain for Christianity, and godly principles. The problem we have today is that the ungodly crowd is proliferating faster than God's people. When the world unites, and people intermingle, godliness is not promoted but wickedness seems to prevail.

We realize that God has a plan for this planet. 1st God is going to take out of this world His Church.

Then there will be a 7 year tribulation period.

After the tribulation Jesus will bodily return to earth and then will judge the nations. NOT ONE UNSAVED PERSON WILL BE ALLOWED INTO THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM.

During this judgment that Bible Scholars have commonly referred to as the sheep goat judgment, Jesus is going to put everyone to the test to see if they are worthy of being citizens of the eternal kingdom of God.

REALIZE: That this Sheep Goat judgment will take place right after the tribulation period. Everything we see going on today is but a precursor of the tribulation period. During the trib it will be difficult to serve the Lord.

No Sunday School Teachers.
No Singing in the choir.
No Church as we know it now.

With the absence of a New Testament Church it will be difficult to really know who believes and who doesn't. So the Lord boiled all the tests of a true believer down to one common denominator AND let me suggest that this one common test is the greatest attribute of a Christian's true fruit.

This morning we are going to share what is the greatest test of your worthiness of being a citizen of God's Kingdom..

THE GREATEST STANDARD FOR HEAVENLY CITIZENSHIP

Notice, that Jesus uses the illustration of sheep and goats as an illustration of His citizens versus those who are not His.

If you talk to a person who raises sheep or goats they will tell you the differences. Though they look alike they have different natures. The Lord likens His people to sheep and those that are not His people to goats.

Goats are more aggressive than sheep.
Sheep by nature will follow the shepherd.

A goat may or may not follow.
Sheep tend to follow their shepherd.

A goat may seem nice one minute, then the next minute may push with its horns.

Sheep will want to part of the flock.
Goats are more independent and tend to be more adventurous.

Sheep tend to stay close to their young.
Goats, will often leave their baby goats to run off.

I. THE GREATEST EVIDENCE THAT A PERSON IS WORTHY OF GOD'S REWARDS IS BASED ON HOW THEY TREAT GOD'S SHEEP.

Sheep are: Meek, mild, not aggressive in temper, or moods.
Goats: More aggressive, nasty, tend to push and fight more.

GOATS TALK DIFFERENT: Sheep go Baaaa,
Goats have a deeper guttural Maaa sound.

GOATS EAT DIFFERENT: Goats leaves eat anything, candy wrappers, give it to the goat.
Sheep need green pastures.

GOATS PLAY DIFFERENT: Horns: Push and shove.
Sheep will herd together find comfort in flock and with shepherd.

GOATS TEND TO WANDER: Wild goats will migrate to high places and mountains cliffs.
Sheep will herd together even in the wild.

SHEEP TEND TO FOLLOW THE SHEPHERD BETTER;
JOH 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

Jesus says, that to be one of his citizens in that eternal kingdom you need to have the characteristics of a sheep and not a goat.

II. THE GREATEST TEST OF OUR WORTHINESS OF REWARDS WILL BE JUDGED ON THE BASIS OF HOW WE TREATED THE BRETHREN OF CHRIST:

Matthew 25:31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:
Matthew 25:32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

Matthew 25:33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.
Matthew 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:
Matthew 25:35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:
Matthew 25:36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.
Matthew 25:37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?
Matthew 25:38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?
Matthew 25:39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?
Matthew 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Notice, how the Lord mentions.. that the way these people treated his servants was the greatest evidence that they were his sheep.

1. THE REASON FOR THIS IS THAT HOW WE TREAT THE BRETHREN IS HOW WE TREAT CHRIST:

How do we judge who is a good person?
How do we judge who is worthy of our friendship?
How do we judge who is a likable person who isn't?
How do we judge who we would want as a comrade and who we wouldn't?

We all have our subjective opinions.
These subjective opinions are determined by:
Our upbringing.
Our cultural background.
Our prejudice, our bias, etc.

Two people.
One claims to be a Christian but we don't like them.
Maybe we come from different culture, etc.
One is a non Christian by profession yet is likable in our opinion.
Remember we are commanded to love the brethren.

Jews had this problem with gentile believers. Remember the Jews had a lot of tolerance for different doctrinal beliefs. They accepted the Saducees' crazy ideas. I believe they would have allowed people to believe in Christ, but what was offensive was that the teaching that Jew and Gentile alike, were able to be accepted into the body of Christ. Also, Jesus was a threat to their positions. They said..

John 11:48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

I believe the reason Trump is having such a hard time politically is because he is a threat to so many politicians position of power. He is telling people he wants to drain the swamp. What does that mean? People get fangs when they think their position and power is threatened. Not that Trump is so righteous it is just that he threatens the establishments and seems to be

holding a lot of biblical and conservative positions. In our humanistic world that cannot be tolerated.

There was an establishment in the days of Christ. This was the Jewish religious leaders who also were political leaders.

Jews were prejudice against then Gentiles.

Culture, eating habits, style of life.

The way they talked their personality was repulsive.

When Jesus said things like this it could not be tolerated in their minds:

John 10:16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

This was a great offense to the Jews and motivated great persecution in the early part of the church. Saul or Paul was a great example of this early persecution. This was all until he met Christ on the Damascus road.

Acts 8:3-4

Acts 8:3 As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

Acts 8:4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.

Acts 9:1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,

Acts 9:2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

Acts 9:3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

Acts 9:4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, **Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?**

Acts 9:5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said,

I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

Acts 9:6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

Jesus says that all those who have publicly professed him as savior and have genuinely received Him are part of Him. What you do to them you do to Him.

Matthew 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Application: When you judge people based on your own personal bias this is wickedness and having partiality, and being a respecter of persons. This is you determining what is right and wrong. James warns us about having a Christian attitude in the church:

James 2:1 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with **respect** of persons.

James 2:2 For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;

James 2:3 And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

James 2:4 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

James 2:5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

James 2:6 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

James 2:7 Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

James 2:8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

James 2:9 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

When Jesus says to his sheep:

Matthew 25:34 Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

He is saying they showed the most basic form of faith that any Christian could show. They showed their faith by this simple work of love and compassion on one of his persecuted saints. That will be enough in that day to allow them into the millennial Kingdom.

It is basically the same thing that James said when he wrote..

James 2:17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

James 2:18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

James 2:19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

James 2:20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

There are a heap of goats in the church today. People who think they are the Lord's sheep. They are deceiving themselves.

But instead of saying, Baaa.

They say Maaa.

They have horns and push and have a mean spirit.

I am not the judge but sometime it may be that a lot of people who were in church thinking they were part of the fold are going to have a rude awakening.

The goats have a mean spirit and often go their own way.
The sheep are meek and follow the shepherd.

Jesus used an analogy that the people of his day would have understood. Today, not being herdsmen it is harder for us to understand. A person has one goat and a few sheep and wonders about the analogy. Have a herd of goats and sheep and you then can learn how the sheep tend to stick together and the goats sometimes are more independent minded.

We need to have a mutual love and care for each other in the church.
We need to not have a mean nasty spirit.

Also, we need to not have partiality. As James says, be careful we are not partial, and as he says James 2:4, become judges of evil thoughts?

Evil thoughts, meaning not seeing as God sees, but looking for personal gain or benefit from individuals. Jesus treated the rich man that came to him equal with the woman at the well.

2. OUR KINDNESS TO THE LEAST OF GOD'S PEOPLE WILL NOT GO UNNOTICED.

Matthew 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Matthew 25:35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

Matthew 25:36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Matthew 25:37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

Matthew 25:38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

Matthew 25:39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

Matthew 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

NOTICE THE LEAST OF GOD'S BRETHREN:

During the tribulation period even though the government and vast majority of people will hate Christians, there will be a group of people that in their heart will sympathize with their cause.

What will be admired about these people is that they love Jesus enough to suffer for Him. Some people will like that about them and they will try to help them even though that may endanger them with the world.

NOTE: One of the greatest qualities of a Christian is his willingness to be associated with the people of God even though the world has a disdain for God's people.

It is amazing how the world has a double standard for its own.

I see more and more animosity towards anyone that holds biblical standards. All this is leading to the end times when God's people will be persecuted.

Matthew 24:12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

Every time a well known Christian conservative stutters, it makes headlines. There is a double standard. The world loves its own.

I BELIEVE:

The one of the greatest weights in the Judgment day for reward or loss will be given on the bases of how you treated Christ's Brethren. And the greatest temptation you will face is to have bias against God's people because of pressure from worldly influences.

Jesus said we ought to treat the least of his brethren or sheep with dignity.

When we think of the least of God's brethren I think of the first ministry I had in my home Church. I Was to play the piano for a retarded class. When we came into the class my job was to play the greeting and a few songs.

The first song we did every morning was the good morning song.

Good morning good morning we're glad to see you here.
Good morning good morning God bless you friend so dear.

Then the students would always greet my wife and I...
Good morning MR & MRS BRISTOL... *(Bissol)*

Do you know that God is more impressed if you do some nice thing for some of those retarded kids than if you took some prominent celebrity out for Dinner.

In that you've done it to the least of my brethren.

Years passed and my in laws visited a family in Bensalem and the family mentioned that their Son attended a Shepherds Class at Langhorne Church. My in laws mentioned our name and the retarded son came out and said, Mr and Mrs.. *(Bissol)* Bristol. He may have been the least of the brethren but he was still one of God's sheep.

Sad it is that we have such partiality in the church of God. Everyone should be loved and welcomed if they are here to learn of Christ and grow in the Lord.

3. OUR UNKINDNESS TO THE LEAST OF GOD'S BRETHREN WILL NOT GO UNNOTICED:

Mark 9:41 For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

Mark 9:42 And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

So many people are losing eternal reward I don't believe I would be a pastor and here today if I had refused to work in that class:

It's below a lot of people to teach a children's class or retarded class.

Who are the least of Christ's Brethren:

The ones who are not as comely and smart or maybe the type of people you just wouldn't fit in with.

It amazes me how so many in the church just cannot show kindness to each other. Again, I wonder who are his sheep and who are the goats?

The Most fruitful thing we can do for eternity is to strengthen and encourage the brethren.

In time the sheep will be manifest and the goats will be exposed.

One of the greatest attributes of a Christian is not how you fit in with non Christians but how you treat Christ's servants.

I was new Christian and took a construction job.
Friday was pay day and the boss would send out for a 6 pack.

I ate my lunch out on the curb by myself. Two other men from the Church joined in. They fit in with those who mocked and scorned. They thought I was narrow and made fun of me.

That winter the one fellow fell off a roof and broke his arm.
The other fellow's marriage and life went ship wrecked.
Today neither one of them are doing anything for God and have drooped out of church.

In that you have done it unto the least of my brethren you have done it unto me.

III. DON'T ALLOW THE TRICKS OF SATAN KEEP YOU FROM DOING GOOD TO THE BRETHREN OF CHRIST:

1. REMEMBER THAT EVEN THE LEAST OF GOD'S BRETHREN ARE WORTH DOING GOOD FOR:

Galatians 6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Galatians 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Just because the world homes in on Christians who are a bit repulsive and makes light of all Christians because of it, this should not deter you from associating with Christians.

The world loves to find some fault in Christians and tries to intimidate us. But remember that God does not see as we see.

You may think a person who is an unbeliever is a better person than some Christians, but the determining factor is their opinion of Christ not how nice they treat you. Nor is it how likable they are.

NOT YOUR THOUGHTS.
NOT YOUR OPINIONS.

Kids always want to look in and be with other kids who are popular. Remember that the most important thing is to be popular with GOD!

God hates when we judge with human eyes and partiality. OH THAT WE WOULD SEE AS CHRIST SEES.

2. *DON'T ALLOW YOURSELF TO CONFUSE THE GOATS OF THIS WORLD AND THE TARES OF THIS WORLD WITH CHRISTIANS.*

A. *Goats are aggressive, attack others, and do not have the same spirit that the sheep have.*

They may both look alike.
They may both be in the same pasture.
They may both occupy the same church.
Don't confuse the two.

Beware When you see so called Christians: act as follows they may indeed be goats:

a. *Attacks other people verbally or otherwise ?*

b. *Immoral life ungodly life style:*

I Corinthians 5:9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:
I Corinthians 5:10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.
I Corinthians 5:11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.
I Corinthians 5:12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?

It is impossible to keep the tares and goats out of the church!

Let the two grow together. God allows them in to try our hearts, to see what is in us. He was testing me when I worked with those two backslidden church goers. It is necessary that offenses come.

Which reminds me.

PSA 119:165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

When I went to work with those two men from my old church and they sided with the non believers, this was all a test of my faith. So many will give in.

A Characteristic of sheep is that they are hardy and can endure a lot of bad weather. Their thick wool coat allows them to stand up to harsh weather. Goats are temperamental and are always looking to hide in shelter. By the way sheep are the smartest of all the cattle. Even though they may not look it! We should be be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

**c. The goats have unscriptural attitudes, doctrine.
Goats will eat anything. You can feed a goat a candy wrapper and they'll eat it.
Sheep will only eat in green pastures.**

3. If you judge the goodness of a person on the basis of any other standard than their love for Christ you will be tempted to mistreat some of God's sheep:

Mark 9:38 And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us.

Mark 9:39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.

Mark 9:40 For he that is not against us is on our part.

Mark 9:41 For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

Mark 9:42 And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

Forget personalities, forget appearances, looks, and outward appearances.

Cut right to the chase. God's sheep love the good Shepherd, they follow the good Shepherd! Do they love Christ? This is the most important thing. We need to love the brethren..

IV. DECIDE TO MAKE PREPARATION TO MEET THE LORD BY DOING SOME ACTS OF KINDNESS TOWARD THE BRETHREN OF CHRIST:

Matthew 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Matthew 25:35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

Matthew 25:36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Matthew 25:37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

Matthew 25:38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

Matthew 25:39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

Matthew 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

What good deeds can you do for God's people today?

1. GOD'S PEOPLE HAVE DEEP NEEDS AND HUNGERS. Physical needs today.

James 2:15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

James 2:16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

2. GOD'S PEOPLE NEED YOUR VISIT'S AND ACTS OF KINDNESS.

Remember that the brethren here were persecuted preachers who were imprisoned for preaching the Gospel.

3. TODAY WE HAVE A CHURCH WHERE IT SHOULD BE EASY TO CHANNEL OUR EFFORTS TOGETHER TO DO ACTS OF KINDNESS FOR GOD'S PEOPLE:

Missions work.
Helping others.
Praying for others.
Giving.

Greatest evidence of our Christianity.

James 1:27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

As we love one another and do acts of kindness to each other then the world will want what we have.

John 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

John 13:35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO OBEY THESE VERSES?

Going out of the tribulation period, when the Lord gets down to the bare bones of judging God's people.