

E-Series

Sheep and Goats

31 "When he finally arrives, blazing in beauty and all his angels with him, the Son of Man will take his place on his glorious throne. **32** Then all the nations will be arranged before him and he will sort the people out, much as a shepherd sorts out sheep and goats, **33** putting sheep to his right and goats to his left. **34** "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Enter, you who are blessed by my Father! Take what's coming to you in this kingdom. It's been ready for you since the world's foundation. **35** And here's why: I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me a drink, I was homeless and you gave me a room, **36** I was shivering and you gave me clothes, I was sick and you stopped to visit, I was in prison and you came to me.' **37** "Then those 'sheep' are going to say, 'Master, what are you talking about? When did we ever see you hungry and feed you, thirsty and give you a drink? **38** And when did we ever see you sick or in prison and come to you?' **39 40** Then the King will say, 'I'm telling the solemn truth: Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me - you did it to me.' **41** "Then he will turn to the 'goats,' the ones on his left, and say, 'Get out, worthless goats! You're good for nothing but the fires of hell. **42** And why? Because - I was hungry and you gave me no meal, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, **43** I was homeless and you gave me no bed, I was shivering and you gave me no clothes, Sick and in prison, and you never visited.' **44** "Then those 'goats' are going to say, 'Master, what are you talking about? When did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or homeless or shivering or sick or in prison and didn't help?' **45** "He will answer them, 'I'm telling the solemn truth: Whenever you failed to do one of these things to someone who was being overlooked or ignored, that was me - you failed to do it to me.' **46** "Then those 'goats' will be herded to their eternal doom, but the 'sheep' to their eternal reward."

—Matthew 25:31-46 (*The Message*)

“When he finally returns...” That’s how this passage begins. When who finally returns?

The answer has to be Jesus, right? Yes, but the last person to be mentioned before this verse is the master from the previous parable who went on a journey. Before he left, he split up all his property (in the Greek it is literally his “living” or his “life”). He entrusted it into the hands of his servants and left.

The fact that this passage follows right on the heels of that parable may help us understand the parable a little better. In fact, this passage may flesh out how we are to “invest” what our Master has entrusted us with, namely his ministry. How do we invest our talents like the two servants who doubled their master’s money? How do we multiply Jesus’ ministry? Well, we do it by acting like the sheep. We feed the overlooked and ignored when they are hungry. Give them a drink when they are thirsty. Visit them when they are sick or in prison. The goats and the servant who buried his master’s money are in the same boat. They are (according to *The Message*) “good for nothing but the fires of hell.”

So what do we do with a message like this? How does this affect your daily life? Practically, how do you live this out?

Trying to be a good sheep,
Pastor Michael

