

Reaching The Lost
Commissioned for Greatness Part 2

The Parables of Matthew 25

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Overview

Last week, we talked about Reaching the Lost through sharing the good news of Jesus Christ and 5 steps to witnessing to individuals as found in Acts 8:26-40.

This week we will continue our study of reaching the lost by taking a look at the Parables that Jesus spoke in Matthew 25.

There are two parables that we will study: **The Parable of the Bags of Gold** (Matthew 25:14-30) and **The Sheep and the Goats** (Matthew 25:31-46). This week we will look at The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats. Next week we will study The Parable of the Bags of Gold.

Words Without Action

Sharing the good news of Jesus Christ is the essential ingredient when witnessing to others. However, there is more to reaching the lost than simply sharing the Gospel. We all know people who just seem to refuse to hear the Gospel. This is because people have to be conditioned to receive the Gospel. There are three primary parts to this conditioning.

- (1) The Holy Spirit must open the person's heart.
- (2) The person must be seeking.
 - (a) A sense of remorse for sin
 - (b) A desire to know God
 - (c) A realization that he or she needs a savior.
- (3) The person must come to understand that God loves and accepts him or her, regardless of mankind's view of himself or herself.

This week we will continue discussing how to witness to others by showing the love of Christ.

Let's now take a look at the Parable of The Sheep and the Goats.

Matthew 25:31-46 (NIV)

The Sheep and the Goats

31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 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.

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. 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.’

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, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’

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. 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.’

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?’

45 “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.’

46 “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

In Jesus’ parable, he makes it very clear that if you are to be His disciple, you are to reflect His love to mankind.

Jesus came to demonstrate God’s love and grace. As we all know, Jesus spend time showing his love to those that most would consider unlovable.

Too often, people have an encounter with a Christian that is less than loving. The message of condemnation and judgment is passed down to one who is already feeling hopeless and condemned; isolating him or her even more.

In our previous lesson, we touched on the Great Commission and our commission for greatness.

Jesus Christ gave the church (you and me) the Great Commission as found in Matthew 28. The mission of the church is to:

1. Make disciples
2. Baptize
3. Teach them to obey Christ.

In addition to the Great Commission, Jesus tells his disciples the following in John 13:34-35:

34 “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

The Apostle Paul reemphasizes this in his letter to the Romans where he states the same words as Jesus, in 22. Matthew writes:

9 The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not covet,” and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” 10 Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

Romans 13:9-10 (NIV).

When Jesus was questioned about the most important commandments: (Matthew 22:37-40)

37 Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Loving our neighbor is God’s desire and it is one of the basic needs of the human race; **everyone** has a God given need to feel loved and accepted.

1 John 4:8 and 1 John 4:16 states that **“God is Love”**

God designed each human being with the basic need to be loved, which is in essence a desire to know God, who is love.

John also write in 1 John 4:16:

“Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them” (1 John 4:16, NIV).

As we approach Christmas, a time to celebrate the birth of the Savior of the World, the church must be the force that God calls us to be, bringing the message of the Savior, not the accuser, to the world.

What does Jesus tell us to do as His disciples?

- (1) Feed the hungry (v. 35)
- (2) Give water to the thirsty (v. 35)
- (3) Welcome the outcasts (v. 35)
- (4) Clothe the needy (v. 36)
- (5) Care for the sick (v. 36)
- (6) Visit the captives (v. 36)

These seem like basic humanitarian efforts that we all understand, but as a Christian, how often do we think that someone else will do this, therefore, pass it off to someone else?

As a church, Christ commands us to love our neighbor as our self. Paul and Jesus state that in doing so, we sum up the entire moral law of the Ten Commandments.

If we want to reach the lost, then we need to show the world who Jesus Christ really is. We need to be an extension of His love to those who would be considered outcasts today. Those who are often neglected and rejected by the Church need to be shown the love of Christ through the body of Christ.

Christ has equipped you to do great things. As a believer, you can do some, but you are not equipped to do all that Christ has called the church to do. Christ Commissioned us for Greatness. As the body of Christ, we can do greater things.

Christ designed the church to function collectively, where all of the gifts work together to demonstrate His love to the world.

Ecclesiastes 4:11-13 Says

11 Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? 12 Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Matthew 18:20 Says

20 For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”

Conclusion

You are part of the body of Christ. The body was commissioned to show the love of Christ to the world. Together, the church can impact many. We must put our faith into action if we are to condition those who do not know the Savior by showing them the love of the Savior.

Here are some ways in which we can do this:

(1) Do you know of anyone or a family who is in need?

(a) Clothing, Food, Medicine, Housing, Etc.

(2) Do you know of anyone who needs chores done that we can help with?

(a) Setting up Christmas lights

(b) Going to the grocery store

(c) Picking up medication

(3) Has Christ put anything on your heart that we, the body of Christ, can come together on and show the love of Christ?