**Going deeper in Matthew 25:31-46**

**INTRODUCTION**

Jesus has been talking with His disciples about the end of the age which is a reference to His death and resurrection and the eventual consummation of the Kingdom of Heaven. He ends the discussion by describing what will happen when He returns to bring the Kingdom into fulfillment.

**READ** – *Read (passage) aloud. Read it several times. Listen for what the Spirit of God is saying, don’t just think about it.*

31 When the Son of Man comes again in His glory with all the angels with Him, He will sit in a position of ultimate power in glory. 32 Every single nation will be gathered before Him and He will separate them one from another as a shepherd divides His sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the sheep on His right and the goats on His left. 34 Then as the King He will say to those on His right, “Come! You are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the very foundation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you took me in. 36 I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you attended to me. I was in prison and you visited me. 37 Then those who are right with God will ask, “Lord when did we see you hungry and feed you or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you as a stranger and took you in? Or naked and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and attend to you?” 40 And the King will answer them and say, “Listen to me, “Whenever you did it to the least of these, my brothers and sisters, you did it to me.” 41 Then He will say to those on His left-hand side, “Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his legions. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food; I was thirsty and you gave me no 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 attend to me.” 44 Then they will answer and ask, “Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger, needing clothes, or sick or in prison and did not attend to you?” 45 Then He will say, “Listen to me! Whatever you did not do for the least of these you did not do for me.” And these will go away to eternal punishment and the ones right with God into eternal life.

**ENGAGE** – *Questions for going deeper. God is speaking… to you.*

1. The righthand side is a position of honor and authority, but it can also be a sign of love since it was believed (incorrect physiologically) that the heart was on the righthand side. What does that say about the importance of what He will say about the sheep and goats?

2. What is the significance of the kingdom being prepared from the foundation of the world? Have you ever prepared something (a gift, a special trip, or something special) for someone way ahead of time? What was it and what motivated you to do it?

3. Are there any strings attached to what is given like “God helps those who help themselves?” Or anything else about earning it first? Why do you think that is?

4. Who does Jesus identify as His brothers and sisters (family)?

5. What is the difference between the sheep and the goats?

6. What value does the Lord of All give to those who are hurting?

7. What are practical ways that you can live this out? How are Heather Askew and those serving in Thailand that we see in the interview this morning living that out? If you are in a small group what are ways that you can live this out as a group?

**PRAY** – *God has spoken. So, reply.*

\*Praise the Lord Jesus for all that He has given you. Ask Him to give you a grateful heart.

\*Ask the Holy Spirit to give you eyes to see the Lord Jesus in one person in need this week.

\*Ask the Holy Spirit to empower you to make a difference in that one person’s life.

**LIVE** – *This is where the rubber hits the road.*

The difference between the sheep and goats is very simple. It is all about what they did or did not do. What will you do this week?