

Bible Quiz

What does the parable of the sheep and the goats mean ?

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(Peter Lok) 駱沅祺

lokpeter@outlook.com

Bibleao.com

Question: What does the parable of the sheep and the goats mean?

The parable of the goat and the sheep appears in Matthew 25 as part of Jesus' description of the Last Judgment, especially in the parable of "separating the goats and the sheep."

Jesus said that when He returns, He will divide humanity into two groups just as a shepherd separates goats from sheep. The sheep represent those believers and those who do good deeds who will receive eternal life, while the goats represent those who refuse to help the poor, the sick, prisoners, and strangers who will be denied eternal life and face eternal punishment.

The parable focuses on the combination of behavior and faith, rather than referring to the "saved" population alone. Jesus pointed out that those who practice love and mercy are those who truly trust Him, and this goes hand in hand with the practice of faith and behavior.

So, this is not a reference to the saved population, but rather a distinction between those who are saved and those who are not saved. The saved are likened to sheep, and the unsaved are goats.

The parable of the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25:31-46 is a vivid picture of Jesus Christ's eschatological judgment, revealing God's standard of judgment for human behavior and the importance of love and mercy in God's eyes. Here's a detailed elaboration of this parable:

1. Scenes of judgment (vv.31-33).

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory with all the angels, he will sit on his glorious throne." : This describes the glorious coming of Jesus Christ in the last days as King and Judge.

"And all the nations shall be gathered together before him. He will separate them as shepherds distinguish sheep from goats; Set the sheep on the right and the goats on the left." : This indicates that all men will be judged before Christ, who will divide the people into two categories as a shepherd distinguishes between sheep and goats.

2. The standard of judgment (vv. 34-40).

"Then the king will say to him on his right hand, Come and inherit the kingdom that was prepared for you from the foundation of the world; For I am hungry, and you give me food, and when I am thirsty, you give me drink; I am a stranger, and you keep me to stay; I am naked, and you clothe me; I am sick, and you take care of me; I am in prison, and you have come to see me." This reveals that the standard of judgment is based on people's behavior towards those in need.

"And the righteous answered and said, Lord, when did we see thee hungry, and give thee food, and thirst, and give thee drink? When will I see you as a stranger, and keep you in lodging, or naked, and clothe you? When did you see you sick, or in prison, and came to see you? The righteous are amazed at their good deeds because they do not realize that they are serving Christ Himself.

"And the king shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done unto me. This shows that Christ identified himself with those in need, and that service to them was service to Christ.

3. The outcome of the trial (vv.41–46).

"Then the king will say to him on his left, Depart from me, you cursed! Enter the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels! For I am hungry, and you do not give me food, and when I am thirsty, you do not give me a drink; I am a stranger, and you will not keep me to stay; I am naked, and you will not clothe me; When I am sick or in prison, you do not come to me." This describes the judgment of those who have no mercy and love.

"And they shall answer, saying, Lord, when did we see thee hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and not serving thee? They are equally confused by their behavior.

"And the king shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye do not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye shall not do unto me. Again, this emphasizes that neglect of those in need is neglect of Christ.

"These shall go away into eternal punishment; and the righteous shall go into eternal life." This proclaims the final result of the judgment, eternal life for those who do good and eternal punishment for those who do evil.

The meaning of the parable:

The Importance of Love and Mercy: This parable emphasizes the importance of love and mercy in God's eyes. True faith is not just in words, but in deeds.

Responsibility to those in need: Christians have a responsibility to care for and help those in need, regardless of their status and status.

Christ's Identification: Christ identified Himself with those in need, and his service to them was his service to Christ.

Judgment in the Last Days: This parable reminds us that one day we will all stand before Christ for judgment, and our actions will be the basis for judgment.

In summary, the parable of the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25 is what Jesus Christ taught Christians. Remind us to treat those around us with love and compassion.

The parable of the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25 is an important reminder and vigilance for saved Christians, and it has the following aspects to the salvation of Christians:

1. Testimony of deeds after salvation:

Although Christians are saved through faith in Jesus Christ, the saved life produces the fruit of works.

The parable of the sheep and the goat emphasizes that Christians' love and concern for those in need is an outward testimony to the truth of their faith.

This is not to say that good deeds lead to salvation, but that true faith naturally flows into acts of love and mercy.

2. The Practice of Love:

This parable reminds Christians that love is not just an emotion, but a practical action.

Jesus identified Himself with those in need, and as such, our service to them is our service to Christ.

This motivates Christians to actively care for the disadvantaged in their daily lives and put their faith into action.

3. Reminder of Trial:

Although eternal life as a Christian is certain, we still face Christ's judgment on how we respond to God's love and how we treat others.

This parable reminds Christians to always be vigilant and live a life worthy of the grace to which they are called.

Though salvation is by grace, it is by faith. But our deeds after salvation are also part of our account before the Lord.

4. Examination of the Spiritual Life:

This parable is a mirror through which Christians examine their own spiritual life.

Do we really care about those in need? Are we willing to give our time and energy to help them?

By reflecting on these questions, Christians can gain a deeper understanding of their faith and grow in love.

Summary:

The parable of the sheep and the goats is not for Christians to be saved by works, but to remind them that true faith produces acts of love.

This parable motivates Christians to practice love and mercy in their lives and to live a life that is consistent with the likeness of Christ.

At the same time, it also reminds all Christians to constantly examine whether they continue to follow in the footsteps of the Lord after being saved, and whether they live out the love and mercy of the Lord in their lives.