

The Sheep ■ & The Goats ■ | ■ Matthew 25:31-46

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Preacher: Pastor Patrick Dailey

- [0 : 00] Welcome to Ontario Community Church, where we are encouraging, equipping, and engaging lives for Christ.! I'm Pastor Patrick Daly, and each week I share sermons that balance the grace and love of Jesus Christ with the truth of the Word of God.
- Together, we'll explore Scripture using observation, interpretation, and application. This helps us discover practical ways to live out our faith every single day.
- Let's dive in together into God's Word. So at this time, I'd like to go ahead and let's dim the lights real quick. I have a video for you.
- And this video, I hope you enjoy it. This was also, this was made by artificial intelligence, which is kind of a pretty incredible thing that we can help bring Scripture to life.
- So, I hope you enjoy. Lord, when did I see you hungry?
- [1 : 12] When did I see you thirsty? Oh. When did I welcome you, a stranger?
- When did I see you? You're needing clothes. When were you sick, Lord?
- And when were you in prison? Whatever you did for the least of these, you did for Christ.
- It's really powerful how technology changes so quickly.
- It was just a couple years ago where you might have seen that famous Will Smith trying to eat spaghetti. And you could tell it was made by a computer.
- [2 : 25] You could tell it was fake. And we're hitting a point where it's almost, it looks pretty realistic. And like any tool, whether Google or the internet or any sort of technology that we have, it is important for us to use the tools that we have for good.
- Like any tool, we can use it for good or we can use it for evil. And this is one of the examples. You've seen the short video of the children in the marketplace.
- You might have seen one of the other videos that I've had. And here is another video showing the realness of this parable of the sheep and the goats.
- Of how important it is for us to consider our neighbor. We are saved by grace through faith, you see. And we are called to grow in Christ, to be transformed by Him.
- And in that, there should be this continued growth process to become more like Christ. To where we exhibit love and kindness and generosity.
- [3 : 33] And also standing firm on the truth of God's Word. It is this great balance between grace and truth. And part of this love, becoming more like Christ, is to feed those that are hungry.
- To help those that are thirsty and to welcome those who are a stranger. It kind of hits home when you see images like that.
- Thinking of how can we as Christians, as the body of Christ, consider our neighbor. We have to think how we were once lost.
- But now we are found. That we were once blind. And now we see. That same kind of love that God has for us.

Is the kind of love that we should exhibit for others. We did the scripture reading today. From the Gospel of Matthew.

[4 : 32] Now, you don't have to raise your hand. I'm sure that most of you have read. Have seen films. Or have at least know.

Have some understanding about the sheep and the goats. And this part of the Gospel of Matthew. It helps us. We see that there's this sort of trifecta that's happening.

This continuing of parables. Of these short stories. That are simple. But yet they have such depth. It is part of the grand narrative.

What I want you to understand. When you consider. When you consider God's word. It is all part of a love story. Between God and his people.

The salvation story. Where God sends his son into the world. The miracles that Christ perform. Healing the sick. Walking on water.

[5 : 32] Turning water into wine. And teaching crowds as well. And let's not forget, of course, the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. All showing part of this narrative that God has in love for humanity.

And from the beginning. From the very foundation of the earth. God had a plan. For us. For you. And it's important for us to recognize.

That God loves you. No matter what it is you have been through in life. No matter what sort of pain or suffering or anguish you have experienced.

In those times where we feel alone. In those times where we have been betrayed by people. Or even when we've had a good life. God is there for us.

And he is extending an invitation for you. To come to the wedding feast, as it were. This invitation is a time for us to decide.

[6 : 38] Are we going to respond? For many of us, we may have received an invitation to a party. If you haven't, let's talk sometime. I'll invite you.

Let's make a party sometime. So you at least experience it. Amen? Receiving an invitation is something that is remarkable. It is powerful. It is powerful. For you to be invited.

To celebrate someone's anniversary or someone's birthday party. It is very similar when it comes to the Lord. That he invites you into salvation.

Into the vineyard. Into the wedding feast. there's many different images that we can think of, we can consider. And when we go into this parable here, the sheep and the goats, it is important for us to recognize how many of you know, and we should all know this, but if you don't, that's okay.

So don't raise your hand. So how many of you know the story of the flood of Noah and the ark? Some of you may have heard this when you were a child, or maybe it's the first time you have heard it, where there's a great flood that happens.

[7 : 48] Well, there is an echo and a connection that we find that there is a time for us to get to safety, for us to get to security before a grand storm comes.

Storm that is going to happen. This flood that is representing judgment that happens for the people on the earth. And it's hard for us to understand why would there be a flood?

And I'm not going to go so much into that, but for us to understand at least that there was a time for safety. There was a time for people to get into the ark.

A time before the storm. And in this parable, we see that God gives us time, but he does not give us forever. There is a certain amount of time for us to respond to Christ's salvation, to respond to the invitation, and for us to think, do I want to have Jesus at the center of my life?

Do I want to have Christ as my Savior and Lord? Do I want to know Jesus and be in his presence, to know him and be in that relationship with him?

[9 : 06] Well, maybe you have already responded to that invitation. Maybe you haven't. Maybe there's a time where you've had an invitation card, and you're like, I don't want to go.

Let's be honest here. We've gotten those. Maybe it's your class reunion. Whatever it may be. Maybe it's that friend you didn't really care for, and now they want to be friends.

Whatever it is. Maybe you have that card, that invitation, and you haven't even thought about it. But in any case, God has extended that invitation for you to know him, and to be in a relationship with the creator of the heavens and the earth is profound.

It is remarkable. You mean to tell me that God who made the universe, the planetary systems, the black holes and the nebulae, I'm not even going to pretend I understand these things.

But the same God that made all of this, made us, and invites us to his wedding feast, praise God. We thank him for that.

[10 : 11] And so, there is, have you responded to that invitation from Christ? I want you, let's open our Bibles real quick to the Gospel of Matthew chapter 25.

And I want to kind of show you what is happening here. We can go to that next slide as we're turning our Bibles, or the ESV Bible is page 987, or you're welcome to use whatever Bible of your choice.

It's important for us as Christians, as we grow in Christ, to recognize the patterns and the consistency within Scripture. For many of us, we may read the same verse over and over, and yet God will speak to us at a certain moment in our lives.

Amen? It is truly remarkable. So, page 987, the Gospel of Matthew chapter 25.

It begins with the parable of the ten virgins. How many of you remember that one? Just going over it real quick, was there's these ten virgins, and they're waiting for the feast.

[11 : 19] They're waiting for the bridegroom to return. And what's strange is there's some of them that were prepared, and they had oil in their lamps, and some of them didn't. Well, can't you share?

The oil is a representation of the Holy Spirit and how they were filled, so to speak. And they were ready, right?

That's the main theme from that parable, is preparation. Ready the way for the Lord, as it were. Considering how Christ is teaching, the importance for us to be prepared when Christ returns.

Amen? And then it leads us into the parable of the talents. Many of us know that. We've gone over this before. Where it talks about how God gives us our time, our talent, and our treasures.

And we are to steward what God has given to us, our very life, our very resources, and how important it is for us to audit what God has given to us.

[12 : 15] Consider your gifts. Consider your time. Are you at least giving something back to the Lord who gave you everything? That's important for us to think about. So this would be what we would think of as the stewardship.

And then, turn over a page, and to page 988, we have the final judgment then. Where? Well, this is where I'm mentioning this triad, this triad of parables that are happening.

The ten virgins, the talents, and the sheep of the goats, they're all connected about one thing that's happening. The final judgment and the return of Christ. For the talents, it's the return of the master.

For the ten virgins, it's the return of the bridegroom. And then in verse, when we see, in verse 31, when the Son of Man comes in His glory and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

That is a beautiful image of what is to come. Amen? Very important for us. It is connected. And what I want you to really think about when we think of these three parables is that we are in a certain time period, as it were.

[13 : 27] Some of us may know of it as the church age. Some of us may know it as the age of salvation or the day of grace. Whatever you want to call it, it is important for us to know that there is an allotted time before time is up.

It's just like any invitation that we receive. The party is going to be on Tuesday. You're not going to respond on a Wednesday, right? Unless you lost your mail. I get it. Okay? But the idea is that there is a time.

A time for you to respond to any RSVP, right? To RSVP, to a letter, to pay your bills on time. We think of that when it comes to the earth. But there's a time for us that God allows us here on the earth to respond to His salvation in faith.

The age of grace, the time of salvation before the return. And so, the Son of Man arrives in glory with the angels. We find that in Daniel and also in Revelation.

We're not going to turn there, but it's very important to see that consistency, the mentioning of the Son of Man. Then going into verse 32 where it says, before Him will be gathered all the nations and He will separate people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

[14 : 46] Now, very often in parables we have found there's this separation, right? There is the separating of fish, right? There's the separating of the sheep and the goats. There's the separation that happened between the foolish virgins and the wise virgins, right?

The Scripture likes to talk a lot about these distinctions between the righteous and the unrighteous. It's important for us to see this judgment, as it were, that is going to happen.

The shepherd in this case is separating the sheep. The right representing honor and representing shelter and safety and from the goats representing exposure and judgment.

A fun fact that I found about sheep and goats, if you ever found a shepherd, separating that in biblical times and even now, is that sheep have what?

What do you want from sheep that you cut and you use it for clothing? I'm giving tons of hints here. You want wool, right? And you use wool for clothing, right? And the idea is that when you have sheep, well, they're warm because they have all this wool all over them.

[15 : 53] And goats, on the other hand, are more vulnerable than they are of sheep. I found that to be very interesting that when you found shepherds doing that, that was a common thing that happened then and can be.

I mean, there are shepherds still today, but very interesting to see that, that there's this exposure to the elements, as it were. When we think of Christ, the great shepherd, separating the sheep of the goats, how they are exposed, as it were.

Now, we're not going to say that wool is protection and whatnot, but it's still interesting nonetheless. And so, we even consider the separation of the wheat and the weeds, if we remember that, right?

How the chaff is going to be burned. And we think of how the wheat is stored up and placed into a barn. All of these things are happening, right? We go into verse 33.

He will place the sheep on his right and on his left, the goats on the left. Then the king will say to those on his right, come, you are blessed by my father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you.

[16 : 55] How many of you have your Bibles open? What does it say? From when? From the foundation, right? Of the world. And that's so important. It should give us comfort to see the consistency that's found within Scripture that God had a plan all along.

Now, here's the crazy thing about God is that how many of us understand God fully? Don't raise your hand. I should put my hand down for a second here. That God is so vast.

He's limitless. And it kind of, it really messes with your mind when you think about how much God loves you and how God is beyond the space and time continuum. Right?

That God is outside of that and that his ways are higher than our ways and yet we're called to seek the higher things. We're called to seek the things of God.

That really humbles you for a moment. If it doesn't humble you, then look in a telescope sometime. Look at a microscope sometime. I'm always shocked when I go on YouTube and I see these videos of the, it shows a little dot of the earth and then it shows like this black hole that's about, you know, 50,000 times the size of earth.

[18 : 08] And I'm like, that's just a black hole. That's not even considering galaxies and the universe. And that certainly doesn't even factor in how big our God is who made all of that with such intentionality and with such intricacy.

We think of, it's more known in, for those of you who study apologetics, it's known as the clock and the clock maker. We look at a clock, we know that somebody had to at least program the digital, right?

But the idea is the clock is ticking and somebody has to have the right tools and have everything needed in order for it to work. And so, going back here, we see that as, as we go into verse 34 onward, let's go to verse 35, for I was hungry, you gave me food, I was thirsty, you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.

There are six mercies that are mentioned here, okay? And these six mercies are, look, these are examples of how we can minister to other people, right?

When's the last time you ran into somebody, don't answer this, the last time you ran into somebody who was hungry or somebody who needed a drink, you know, they were thirsty, they're out in the field, I mean, with the weather, how it's been, you know, there's a lot of them out there.

[19 : 39] It's certainly been hotter. People need, they need a drink of water kind of thing. The stranger and welcoming. How many of you have met someone who's new to the area and you want to welcome them, have that sense of hospitality for others?

Naked in clothing, that's kind of a harder one, but it still exists today. Much like all of these, aren't people still hungry? Aren't people still hungry? I'm thirsty. Don't people still need clothes? They absolutely do.

We think of basic needs. Now, we also have sick and visitation and prison and care. It's important for us to note when we consider those that were in prison, it's very different than how we understand prisons today.

In prisons today, you have a bed, you have, typically, you have meals and stuff, at least when we think of how things should be run. Now, when we're considering in biblical times, though, they were just locked away and for you to give someone food or drink or clothing, that was showing love because they didn't have it.

And so, we think of that kind of hospitality, that type of love that we have for other people. It's exhibiting the love of Christ sort of thing. And so, it goes on in Scripture here where the six mercies are met, right, where Christ is saying, look, you did all of these things.

[21 : 00] You considered my neighbor. And so, what I want you to realize when you're reading this is how don't take this as, well, you're saved by all of that work.

No. This work is because you have been saved, when we think of us as Christians, because you have been saved by grace through faith, you therefore should grow and do good in the name of Christ.

Unfortunately, there are people who will read this and say, well, you gotta only focus on doing good. You gotta only focus on that and not focus on Christ, which certainly there are still needs of people that need to be met.

I'm not denying that. But when it comes to Scripture and when it comes to us following in the footsteps of Christ, the first thing we must do is to receive that gift and respond to the invitation of Christ.

And when we consider all of these works, there's works that there is work that we should do for others, which shows the fruit that we bear.

[22 : 07] For those of you, you may think of how Scripture talks about the seed planted into the ground and growing and bearing fruit. Very agricultural language.

But that is a representation of how we receive salvation, we receive the Word, it grows in us, we grow, and we bear fruit. What an amazing opportunity for us to serve our neighbor.

That's a way to produce fruit. And that's very powerful for us to have that care and that compassion for people. It goes on later on in the text where basically you have those, the goats, that are not really, they're not caring.

They're not caring for those in need. And you have the sheep that, well, they know their shepherd, amen? They know what to do. And that's very beautiful because we go on even into the ending.

Truly I said to you, as you did not do it for one of the least of these, you did not do it to me as he's speaking to the goats, as it were. Verse 46, and these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

[23 : 20] And so, for your homework sometime, go to Ezekiel 34. We don't have time to go over to Ezekiel 34. But go into that part of the text and you'll see that even in the Old Testament there was mentioning a final judgment of sheep and goats.

It's really remarkable. Especially when it talks in verse 17 about what is to come. That Yahweh, that God, will separate from the sheep and the goats for you Bible scholars there.

And so, also, it's important for us when we think of us, we should all be sheep, right? Don't raise your hand if you're a goat, right? It's important for us to, and any goats in here, right?

It's important for us to become a sheep and to follow the shepherd, the great shepherd represented in Christ. And so, in being part of, in being saved, we are inheritors that we're going to inherit.

Salvation, the kingdom, it's all part of God's plan to be an heir and to inherit, as it mentions in Romans chapter 8. I know I'm mentioning a bunch of verses here.

[24 : 36] A lot of those are on your notes here, but if not, just come talk to me after. And so, that's what we find in Scripture regarding this. This is just within the observation here. The response to the least of these, it matters, and then the eternal destinies that we have an allotted time here on earth, and certainly, we have an allotted time for us to respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This should hit home for you on the question of whether or not you have responded to the gospel. Let's go to that next slide then. What can we learn from this here?

First one, church, what does it say? Ready the way, be a steward. So, the ten virgins, it's about readiness.

The parable of the talents, it's about stewardship. The sheep and the goats, it's about living and loving like Christ, showing that love in action.

In other words, when we think of all of that Matthew 25 and how it's connected with the sheep and the goats, we have got to prepare for the coming of Christ.

[25 : 52] We have got to respond to the gospel. We have got to say yes to the Lord. God, and in this, in this life that we have, let us continue to grow, becoming more like Christ, be putting on the new self, setting aside the former things and stewarding all that God has given to us and knowing that in the end there will be a final judgment but we don't have to worry about that final judgment.

Amen? We get to, we know where we're going and that's a beautiful thing. The second thing, church, what does it say? from grace comes work.

Now, it's very important for me to touch on this. As I've been mentioning, God gives us time but not forever. The final accountability is certain.

It leads us to from grace comes work. Now, this is where we get into semantics and the order in which things happen but listen, when we think of what scripture tells us, we are saved by grace through faith.

We should all know this and if you haven't, you should know it now. Right? Saved by grace through faith. Believing in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That is the most important decision that you can make for your entire life because not only does it affect the life, your life here on the earth, it affects your eternal life and because of this, because of the grace that you receive from the Lord, you gotta grow and from that growth comes doing good.

[27 : 35] Doing good in the name of Christ in the words that you speak and the actions that you do. That certainly doesn't mean that we're perfect. Amen? Got any perfect people in here? Raise your hand.

I want to see who you are. Right? But seriously, when we think about it, we are a work in progress that God is going to continue to work in our lives every single day until the very end. That is a remarkable thing to think of the imagery of how God is the potter and we are the clay, we are the work of God's hands, continuing to be molded as we're spinning round and round in this life.

Amen? We think about that. And so when we think, look, salvation is by grace through faith and our actions, our words, our deeds, this is evidence of the faith that we have in Christ.

and it is measured even at the final judgment. So in other words, it's like they're going to inspect your fruit, right? If you think about it. And so it's important for us that if you are a new believer, if you just made a decision for Christ, you just responded to the invitation, be on a path to know the word of God, to know what it means to be a Christian and be moved by the grace of God through the working of the Holy Spirit to serve the Lord, serve the community, be that ambassador from grace that flows from grace comes works.

And then finally, third, what does that third one say, church? Christ is there for the least, right? For the least of these. And we think of how many times in Scripture Christ was dining with sinners sinners.

[29 : 21] What? Why? Christ is dining. He's caring for the least of these, showing how if we are to become like Christ, if we are to be on this path and follow in the footsteps of Christ, we too have got to exhibit the same kind of love towards other people.

I've mentioned before how Scripture likes to talk about the misfits of society. That's really strange. You would think the Lord would want to hang out with all the cool kids, right?

You'd think He'd want to, you know, and He does. He hangs out with everybody, but the main thing here, the least of these, the implication is that we all need that which is perfect.

We all need the light of Christ. We all need the abundant grace and the everlasting love that comes from God. Because let me tell you, my ability to love on my own, to love as a human being, is very limited.

But when it comes, when it comes to God, His love is everlasting. He is consistent.

[30 : 37] His love never fails. He doesn't change. And so, let us consider how we are to be like Christ in serving the least of these.

Think about for a moment, who is someone you can serve? This leads us into the application, how should we live, right? Because here at Ontario Community, we observe the text, right?

We read Scripture. Amen? That's important for us. The second thing is we interpret it. We learn the lessons from Scripture. And thirdly, is we apply it to our very lives.

We want to have the head knowledge, but we also want to have the heart to love. And so, the first thing, respond when? Now. We are to respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ to seize the day of salvation.

And it's important for us to know, I don't know if this will give you anxiety or not, but no one knows the day or the hour when Christ will return. For some people, you're like, well, when are you coming back?

[31 : 44] For some of us, we may want to know exactly the date and the time and even the second and the millisecond when Christ will come back. But what's important is that that is up to God.

When Christ will return. And there's been so many books and people who have said, you know, it's the Y2K, if you remember, if you guys remember that one. Right?

Or Jesus will come back in 1988. I think I've mentioned this one before. 88 Reasons Why Christ Will Return in 1988. It is a real book. You'll look it up sometime. I probably was a bestseller in 1987.

I don't know about 1988, though. So, you might find it on discount somewhere, right? But the thing is, no one knows the hour. No one knows the hour when Christ will return.

We don't know how long we'll even have here on the earth. We don't know when the king will return. What matters is seizing the moment, responding to the gospel, stewarding your life and considering, thinking about how are you going to live your life in honor, to honor, and to glorify the Lord.

[32 : 51] Consider what really matters. Your faith walk, your brothers and sisters in Christ, certainly your family, all of these things matter. Respond to him.

Respond to that invitation and be transformed. Begin on that journey and live your life in him. Receive and respond to the invitation. Just think for a moment that imagery of the wedding feast and receiving that letter.

Are you going to say yes? Are you going to put it on the table? What are you going to do for God's call for your life? And salvation is free. It is here.

It is available for you. But let us remember, just like what we've talked about in this parable, not forever though. And so, respond now and seize that day of salvation.

The second thing then is to practice stewardship. I have here your time, talent, and treasure and your testimony. I've actually added a fourth T in here. Consider what God has given to you.

[33 : 57] It's essentially the resources that you have, right? The amount of time that you have, how you're stewarding it, your talents, right? Your gifts and your abilities, your treasure, your money, your resources sort of thing, but also your testimony.

Your own story and how God has worked in your life, how are you going to share that with others? Or, the testimony, what we find in Scripture.

How are you going to share that with other people? And so, consider it. Think about it. Take an audit and inventory of what God has given to you.

How will you use these things? We've talked about minas and talents, but in any sense, whatever God has given to you, steward it and steward it well.

Never neglect God's gift. Steward them for the glory of God. It's much like how it's important for us when we think of this final scene. That's the, basically, the wedding feast.

[34 : 58] That's towards the end, the final judgment. And think about it. The master will return and settle accounts. Just like we have found within Scripture. And then finally, witness through actions, through words, and through deeds.

Let your words and your actions be consistent. And think about those, you guys remember those six mercies I was talking about earlier, right? Feeding those that are hungry, giving drink to those that are thirsty, welcoming the stranger.

All of these things are examples of how you can minister to other people. It could just be showing up. When I've talked about the ministry of presence, just showing up to someone who is in need, whether they're sick or they're imprisoned, whatever it is.

Part of our ministry is to serve others. We serve the Lord, we serve the living God, we serve in the local church, and we serve the community in some capacity.

So, consider, think about one of the six mercies to give you an idea of how to love your neighbor. Think about that. There are many ways that you can serve the local church, the community, your neighbor.

[36 : 12] We are to continue to exhibit that love of Christ to others. And let your actions, let it be consistent with what you say. Scripture talks so much about not being a hypocrite, right?

You want your words and your actions to be consistent, and that's just common sense. I mean, that's just in real life, right? You don't want hypocrites just in the real world, right? Much less what you find in Scripture.

That's very important for us. And so, as we close here, let us really take to heart this parable of the sheep and the goats.

Ask yourself for a moment, are you a sheep or are you a goat? Okay? It's not about what noise you make if you're saying bah or any of that. It has nothing to do with that, okay?

But it has to do with have you received that invitation? Have you said yes to salvation? Are you growing and are you exhibiting that fruit?

[37 : 12] And so, God gives us the time to respond in salvation through faith in Him. Respond now. Respond today if you have not.

God gives us the opportunity to go from darkness to light, from the weeds to wheat, from goats to sheep. It's called transformation. It's called putting on the new self because God is the God of transformation.

Changing us, changing our hearts, changing our minds, changing the very essence of who we are. That is the beautiful thing about our Lord and our God.

God. And today is still, we are still in the age of grace, the day of salvation. And when we think of the day, the time, think of how the sun is shining as it were.

Well, just like in any day there comes a sunset. Don't let the sunset happen until you, you better know the Lord when that sunset comes.

[38 : 17] Amen? It's important for us. Step into the light while there is still light and let that light of Christ shine and radiate through you.

See that the light of Christ, it shines bright like the sun for you. May you respond to that. Be saved by knowing the Lord.

Grow in Him. Go from that milk to solid food of the Word as it mentions and Scripture and live in love like Him even with small acts of kindness for others.

Just like that video I was showing earlier. It's just a water bottle. It's not a big, it's small, but it has such a profound impact on people.

And so, be salt and light for others. I want to turn with you real quick in closing. Let's open our Bibles real quick. Let's go to Revelation. I want you to realize as we're getting closer to the end of this sermon, we're getting closer to the end of this sermon series, and our next sermon series, Lord willing, will be through Revelation, because the parables of Christ help us understand Revelation with a lot of its symbolic language.

[39 : 41] But I want to turn for a moment into Revelation. It's going to be Revelation 21, it's page 1,233 in your ESV Pew Bible.

And I want to read the first three verses. Church, can we read this together? All right, let's give it a moment.

Revelation 21. Let's read together. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man.

He will dwell with them, and they will be his people. And God himself will be with them as their God. Let's keep reading verse 4. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more.

[40 : 52] Neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. When we think of the wedding feast, when we think of the invitation, when we think of the final judgment, we have hope in Christ of what we are waiting for together.

And so, church, let this promise move us to respond to the gospel before the sun sets. Let's pray together. And Father, we thank you for this time and this opportunity to look at this famous part in Scripture, this parable of the sheep and the goats.

May we realize how important it is as we look at the context showing the importance of preparing, stewarding, and knowing that there will be a final judgment.

We may not understand all the complexities of what you have planned, but we know you are in control. May we fully rely in you. May we trust in you. May we respond to your gospel by believing in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

May we be on a path of following in the footsteps of Christ, living, learning what it means to be a Christian. And may we go from that milk of the word to solid food. May we grow in our understanding of who you are.

[42 : 19] And certainly, Father, we pray that we as a church and us as individuals may respond to your gospel. May we not be goats. Rather, may we be sheep, knowing that you are the great shepherd.

And may we follow you. And may we know that after judgment there is the promise of the new heaven and new earth, which we wait for. In all of these things, we say in the name of Jesus Christ, the cornerstone of our faith, and we all say together, Amen.

Amen. Thank you for listening for this week's message from Ontario Community Church. I pray that you are encouraged and strengthened in your walk with Christ.

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Thank you.