

sheep and goats

THE BEGINNING OF THE END :THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, PART 10 · MATTHEW 25:31-46 · MAY 22, 2022 · PASTOR RUTH CARVER

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me.'"
(Matthew 25:40)

The Meaning of Maranatha

- Watchword of Early Christians
- Jesus' 2nd Coming and Last Judgment

Jesus' Parable of the Sheep and Goats

- Who are the sheep and the goats?
- On what basis are people sent to heaven or hell?
- The "Big 6" human needs
- Who are the "least of these"?

Be Ready for the 2nd Coming and Last Judgment

- A litmus test for true, saving faith
- Maranatha as our watchword

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Jesus told His disciples the parable of the sheep and goats right before His death and resurrection. How might this parable have helped the disciples think about their mission?
2. How we treat "the least of these" is a litmus test for true believers in Jesus Christ. Can you think of other litmus tests for true believers?
3. Have you experienced any of the "Big 6" human needs – hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick, in prison? If so, has your experience helped you have compassion on others?
4. What other human needs does God call His people to meet?
5. Theologian Joel Green has said, "Righteous behavior is not the product of a moral calculus designed to attract divine attention, but rather an outgrowth of one's allegiance to the ways of the king." How does this explain why the sheep were so surprised?
6. Hebrews 9:27 says, *...People are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment...* Is the thought of Judgment Day frightening or comforting to you – or both?
7. Early Christians greeted each other with "Maranatha", meaning "Come, our Lord!", replacing the Jewish greeting of "Shalom", meaning "peace". What is the difference between the two greetings?
8. Here is an anonymous saying that is popular in current devotionals: "There are two days in my calendar: This day and *that* Day." How can a perspective like this help us to keep our priorities straight?

DIG DEEPER:

- Watch Keith Green's song Sheep and Goats. [youtube.com/watch?v=lx8ddosjg-k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lx8ddosjg-k)
- Listen to Michael Card's song Maranatha. [youtube.com/watch?v=mvEEk_HELw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mvEEk_HELw)
- Read a good book on the parables of Jesus, such as *The Parables of Jesus* by David Wenham or *An Introduction to the Parables of Jesus* by Robert H. Stein.