

# Small Group Study: Matthew 25:31–46

Theme: *Judgment, Love, and the Exposure of What Is True*

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## Opening Question

- When you think about “final judgment,” what images or ideas come to mind?
    - Where do you think those ideas came from (church, media, culture, personal experience)?
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## Read the Passage Together

- Matthew 25:31–46
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## Section 1: Rethinking Judgment (Prophetic Warning, Not Blueprint)

1. Jesus uses vivid imagery in this passage (sheep, goats, fire, throne).
    - What kind of language is this? Literal? Symbolic? Parable-like?
  2. How does understanding this passage as **prophetic warning** rather than a **literal description of the afterlife** change how you hear it?
  3. In the sermon, Pastor Scott described this as “*theological poetry with teeth.*”
    - What do you think that means?
    - What is the “bite” or urgency in this passage?
  4. Why is it important (in a series on the violence of God) to be careful about reading judgment passages too literally or simplistically?
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## Section 2: The Real Issue—Love, Not Fear

5. What actually separates the sheep from the goats in this passage?
  6. What *doesn't* Jesus mention as the basis for judgment?
  7. Both groups ask: “*When did we see you?*”
    - What does their surprise reveal about the nature of their lives?
  8. The sermon emphasized that this passage is not about “getting into heaven” but about **who we are becoming**.
    - How does that shift the focus of Christian life?
  9. Preston Sprinkle suggests that judgment reveals the authenticity of our lives.
    - Do you find that idea comforting or challenging? Why?
  10. Where do you most naturally see “the least of these” in your everyday life?
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## Section 3: Judgment and the Character of God

11. Many people picture judgment as God actively punishing people.
    - How does this sermon challenge that idea?
  12. The sermon noted that *“judgment is not God delighting in punishment, but God honoring human freedom.”*
    - What do you think that means?
  13. The word *kolasis* (punishment) can mean **correction or pruning**.
    - How does that nuance affect your understanding of God’s justice?
  14. The word *aiōnios* (eternal) can mean **“of the age to come.”**
    - How might that open the door to different ways of understanding judgment?
  15. How does this perspective align with passages like:
    - Romans 8:1 (no condemnation)
    - 1 John 4:18 (perfect love casts out fear)
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## Section 4: Personal Reflection and Application

19. Jesus says we encounter Him in “the least of these.”
    - Where might you be missing Christ in your daily life?
  20. What does this passage challenge in you:
    - Your priorities?
    - Your assumptions about faith?
    - Your treatment of others?
  21. If judgment reveals what is already true,
    - What is your life currently revealing?
  22. What is one practical way you can live out compassion this week?
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## Closing Reflection (Read Aloud)

- *“We don’t just meet Christ at the end of our lives.  
We meet Him every day in the people we choose to love—or ignore.”*