



Sermon Notes

Sermon The Sheep and The Goats

Scripture Matthew 25:31-46 NRSVue

Preaching Pastor John Tittle

Date August 31, 2025

Discussion Questions

1. Who does the separating of the nations? When will this be?
2. There are other parables in Matthew that speak of a divine sorting out— the parable of the weeds among the wheat (Matt. 13: 24-30), the parable of the dragnet (Matt. 13:47-50), the parable of the ten bridesmaids (Matt. 25: 1-13), the parable of the talents (Matt. 25: 14-30), and this parable of the sheep and the goats. Why is this an important theme to Jesus in Matthew?
3. What are the criteria for being a sheep or goat? What does this say about what is important to God? Are the sheep comprised only of Christians?
4. Who do you think the “least of these brothers and sisters of mine” are?
5. Jesus says, “if you’ve done it (or not done it) unto the least of these, you’ve done it (or not done it) unto me.” Is how we treat the hungry, thirsty, naked, strangers, and prisoners the true indicator of how we treat Jesus?
6. Why do you think the sheep and the goats didn’t know that it was Jesus that they were or were not caring for?
7. Is this passage saying that we can earn our salvation? Is it saying that God can provide a relationship with Christ through the least of these? What role does theology of belief play in salvation or is Jesus saying only deeds of mercy matter?
8. Why is it so easy to ignore, dismiss, or despise the least of these?
9. Jesus in Matthew mentions “hell” considerably more often than in the other three Gospels. The Greek word for hell is Gehenna which comes from a Hebrew word for the Valley of Hinnom, a trash dump outside Jerusalem that was always burning. The fires of Gehenna are interpreted by scholars in a variety of ways, as not only speaking of judgment, but also as a refining fire that cleanses the impurities and dross of sin. What are your thoughts on this?
10. What does this passage tell us about the future? What does it tell us about the present?