

## **You did it for me!**

### **[Read Matthew 25:31-46 NRSV]**

<sup>31</sup>“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. <sup>32</sup>All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, <sup>33</sup>and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. <sup>34</sup>Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; <sup>35</sup>for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup>I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’

<sup>37</sup>Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? <sup>38</sup>And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? <sup>39</sup>And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ <sup>40</sup>And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’

<sup>41</sup>Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; <sup>42</sup>for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, <sup>43</sup>I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ <sup>44</sup>Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ <sup>45</sup>Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ <sup>46</sup>And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

### **Opening Image**

Would you like to meet Jesus? I see several nods of the head.

If we want to see Jesus then we will need to know where he is and what he looks like. Have you ever walked through the downtown of a

large city and seen Jesus? Large cities are full of different people from all walks of life.

I remember many years ago walking on the streets of New York City. I went to some of the financial centers of power on Wall Street. There were men and women of all ages and nationalities walking on the sidewalks. There were many people dressed in fine dresses, suits, and coats. Everyone was in a hurry to get somewhere. Very few people made eye contact or said hello. Most of the people that I saw were busy being successful in the world.

### **Two Worlds - Rich**

The successful on Wall Street have learned the hard lessons of the world. If you want to be successful, then you have to be competitive and show no mercy. Their focus is on making more money and gaining more things. The power brokers on Wall Street will do anything to get ahead. They are not interested in mercy or justice for the poor.

### **Two Worlds - Poor**

There were other people on the sidewalks that were not successful in the world. They were dressed a little differently. Some had shirts and pants but no shoes or socks. Some were lying on subway grates to keep warm. Some had signs asking for money or work. Some wore dark glasses and held out tin cans hoping for coins

from passersby. Some people showed compassion by stopping to talk or giving a few coins to the less fortunate while the majority went on about their business.

### **Excuses**

We have many excuses to ignore the least and the lost in this world. We are afraid of someone who looks different and pass them by out of fear. We are judgmental and think the poor and homeless are lazy and should get a job. We are too busy and do not have time to stop and get involved. Compassion and mercy take time.

### **Time**

Do we take time to see Jesus in the world? We have been in a sermon series discussing our Outreach efforts here at Main Street UMC. For the past two weeks we talked about supporting ministries on a Global and National level. Today we will focus on supporting ministries on a local level.

### **Call**

God has called all of us to love, serve, and care for the least, last, and lost in our community and we do a good job here at Main Street UMC but we cannot do it alone. Today we will here from some of our local non-profit partners in ministry.

### **Non Profits**

Debbie Butner – Shepherd’s Center (3-4) minutes

Susan Mueller – UMAR (3-4) minutes

John Stone – Children’s Home (3-4) minutes

Mike Young – Bethesda Center (3-4) minutes

### **Hungry**

When you see someone who is hungry remember that God has blessed you with food enough to spare. Offer the hungry something to eat by volunteering with ***Bethany Café, Crisis Control, or Second Harvest Food Bank*** and you will meet Jesus. Jesus told the righteous, ***“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat.”***

### **Thirsty**

When you see someone who is thirsty remember that God has blessed you with water enough to spare. Offer the thirsty something to drink by volunteering at ***Kids Café, Open Arms Ministry, or New Story Ministry*** and you will meet Jesus. Jesus told the righteous, ***“I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink.”***

### **Stranger**

When you see someone who is a stranger remember that God has blessed you with a home with room to spare. Offer the stranger a place to stay by volunteering with the ***Bethesda Center, The UMC Children’s Home, or UMAR*** and you will meet Jesus. Jesus told the righteous, ***“I was a stranger and you invited me in.”***

## **Naked**

When you see someone who needs clothing remember that God has blessed you with clothes enough to spare. Respond to God's love for you by showing love and compassion for others. Offer those without adequate clothing something to wear by volunteering at the ***Preschool Consignment Sale or Cranes Nest Ministries*** and you will meet Jesus. Jesus told the righteous, ***"I needed clothes and you clothed me."***

## **Sick**

When you see someone who is sick take time to care for them. Remember that God has blessed you with good health for many years. Respond to God's love for you by showing love and compassion for others. Care for the sick and elderly by volunteering with the ***Shepherds Center, Stephen Ministry, Prayer Shawl Ministry, After Hospital Care Ministry, Angel Flights, or the Red Cross Blood Drive*** and you will meet Jesus. Jesus told the righteous, ***"I was sick and you looked after me."***

## **Prison**

When you see someone who is in prison take the time to visit with them. Remember that God has blessed you with freedom. Respond to God's love for you by showing love and compassion for others. Visit someone in prison by volunteering with ***Kairos Prison***

***Ministry or the Forsyth Jail and Prison Ministry*** and you will meet Jesus. Jesus told the righteous, "I was in prison and you came to visit me."

**In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Amen.**

### **Selected Bibliography**

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- Hauerwas, Stanley. *Matthew*. Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006