

**20:20 Vision Ministries -- Devotions by Roger Browning**  
**Week 41 (October 6-12, 2013)**

The final parable in the Kingdom of Heaven stories has often been used to justify today's "social justice" churches. Take the time to read the entire parable each day as we look at the true meaning in our studies this week.

**Sunday** -- October 6 (Matthew 25:31-46)

Jesus' favorite title for Himself is "Son of Man" because it identifies Him with the earthlings He has come to seek and to save (v. 31; see also Luke 19:10). When He returns to earth following the seven years of tribulation, all the angels as well as all the saints from all the ages will accompany Him (see Revelation 19:14). This time, He is not coming to offer **grace** to anyone who will believe; rather, He is coming to judge all the people from all the nations who have rejected His offer of salvation (v. 32). The **sheep** are those from every nation who have accepted His marvelous free gift of salvation and have miraculously survived the tribulation. The **goats** are those who have not believed and have taken the mark of the beast (see Revelation 13:16-18). We will see the judgment in tomorrow's devotions.

**Monday** -- October 7 (Matthew 25:31-46)

In His sovereignty, God has always known who will believe in him and be saved and who will reject Him and be lost (v. 34). This is important because it proves that the **good works** that follow will not save anyone; they come only as a **result** of being saved! The scene in today's text takes place immediately following **The Great Tribulation** when believers who do not have the "mark of the beast" will be unable to buy and sell (see Revelation 13:16-18). Therefore, it will be imperative for fellow believers to band together to assist one another (v. 35-36). No believer will be able to give out of his/her abundance, because the taxes of the antichrist will drain the resources of those who were formerly rich. Take note of the needs of these newly converted Christians (hungry, thirsty, alone, naked, sick and imprisoned). Can you see why I plead with you to come to Jesus now while we live in the Day of Grace? I'm grateful that many people (especially Jews) will be saved during this tumultuous time, but it's so much easier to be saved today. Make sure that you are safely awaiting the Rapture!

**Tuesday** -- October 8 (Matthew 25:31-46)

Jesus sees the positive actions of believers toward other needy Christians during the tribulation and receives them as though they are **gifts to Him** (v. 35-36). Remember that the Holy Spirit is inactive on the earth during this terrible time so believers must be like Jesus to other Christians. To those who are hungry, He is the Bread of Life (John 6:35); to those who are thirsty, He gives Living Water (John 4:10); to those who are alone, He "is a friend who sticks closer than a brother" (Proverbs 18:24); to those who need clothes, He provides the "Robe of Righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10); to those who are sick, He is the Great Physician (Mark 6:56); and to those who are in prison, He is the one who sets the prisoners free (Psalm 146:7). In other words, all of these personal works, even today, must be done as sacrificial acts of love following in the footsteps of Jesus. Give glory to the Lord! The One who is your personal Savior is also your healer, provider, best friend, teacher, Counselor, Lord and King. As you pray, add other words to describe His wonderful care for you. You will soon turn your personal time of prayer into a worship service! Best of all, you still have the Holy Spirit to assist you in this venture.

**Wednesday** -- October 9 (Matthew 25:31-46)

I love the fact that these tribulation converts are not even aware they are serving Jesus Christ with their actions in response to their new faith (v. 37-39). Anyone who loves to tell you about all his/her good deeds done for others does not understand the value of serving Him out of love, not obligation (see Matthew 6:1-4). These saints merely meet the needs of other new believers out of a heart filled with love for the One who died in their place. Jesus accepts their actions as though they are done personally for Him (v. 40). Notice He calls the new believers “brothers of mine.” This is a term He did not use for His followers until **after His resurrection** (see John 20:17). Because of His sacrifice, we are “children of God” (1 John 3:1) and brothers of Jesus which makes us “co-heirs” with him (see Romans 8:17). Wow! Hallelujah, what a Savior!

**Thursday** -- October 10 (Matthew 25:31-46)

After having praised the redeemed tribulation believers on the right, Jesus turns His attention to those unbelievers on the left (v. 41). They will eventually be thrown into outer darkness into a place called hell. Notice that hell is prepared for the **devil and his angels**, not humans (v. 41). That is because **all humans** are offered the **Gift of Life** (salvation through Jesus Christ). Unfortunately, **most** will reject the free gift and try to establish a plan of salvation based on their own righteousness (Matthew 7:13-23). Even though God “wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4), most will exercise his/her own free will to reject His offer of grace. That is the meaning of John 3:18, the verse that puts John 3:16-17 into the proper perspective. His offer is still available to anyone who will believe and receive Him. The **Day of Grace** is soon coming to a close. Come to Him while you can still avoid the tribulation!

**Friday** -- October 11 (Matthew 25:31-46)

Jesus tells the “goats” on His left that they neglected to serve Him when they had the opportunity. They allowed His brothers to suffer greatly even though they had plenty with which to assist them. This group will have taken the “mark of the beast” (666) to avoid persecution, so they have been able to enjoy the temporary financial benefits of living under the rule of the antichrist (see Revelation 13:16-18). Because these earthly citizens rejected the unseen Jesus, they also neglected the needs of the struggling brothers they could see (v. 45; see also 1 John 4:20). The Lord concludes His parable by reminding them that the Kingdom of Heaven is eternal, but so is hell (v. 46). The soul within us will live forever! You get to decide where you will spend eternity. Do you choose smoking or non-smoking?

**Saturday** -- October 12 (Matthew 26:1-13)

Following these Kingdom parables in Matthew 25, Jesus reminds His disciples that He is about to die for their sins (v. 1-2). He goes to Bethany where Mary anoints Him with perfume from an alabaster jar (v. 6-7; see also John 12:1-3). The disciples, especially Judas (see John 12:4-6), think this is a waste of money. Many folks in today’s churches think their mission is to feed the poor instead of to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. They **still** object to money spent on worldwide missions for Him (v. 8-9), preferring instead to give only to the needy in their community without necessarily sharing Christ with them. The purpose of this entire week’s devotions is to teach that good deeds are to be done **in His name** out of a heart that loves Him. They are never to be done to bring recognition to our church or to us. Remember our mission is **The Great Commission** (see Mathew 28:18-20). Jesus did not come into the world to take man out of the slums; He gave His life to take the slums out of the man!