

## The Gospel of Matthew

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*"The Final Division"*  
Matthew 25:31-46


### Matthew 25:31-46

"But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.  
And all the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left.  
Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed on My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and you invited me in;  
~~naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.'~~  
Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry, and feed you, or thirsty, and give you drink?  
And when did we see you a stranger, and invite you in, or naked, and clothe you?  
And when did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to you?'

And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least, you did to Me.'  
~~Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;  
for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.'~~

Then they themselves also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?  
~~Then He will answer them, saying, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'~~  
And these will go away into eternal judgment, but the righteous into eternal life."  
  
(Matthew 25:31-46; NASB)



## Final Separation

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### 1. Jesus as the Universal Judge

- the Son of Man will exercise ultimate sovereignty and final judgment over all nations
- every person will stand before the judgment throne of the exalted Christ



## Final Separation

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### 2. The Criterion of His Judgment

➤ *Two Common Errors*

- salvation by good deeds and philanthropy
- Jesus' mandate for general social justice



## Final Separation

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### 2. The Criterion of His Judgment

➤ *Judgment according to works*

- acts of mercy and compassion toward disciples of Jesus, especially "the least of them", are essential for inheriting eternal life
- these acts of mercy indirectly reflect where a person stands in relation to Jesus

If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warm and be filled", and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? Even so faith without works, is dead, being by itself.

(James 2:15-17; NASB)

But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us love not with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

(1 John 3:17-18; NASB)

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

Remember the prisoners, as though in prison with them, and those who are ill-treated, since you yourselves also are in the body.

(Hebrews 13:2-3; NASB)



## Final Separation

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### 2. The Criterion of His Judgment

➤ *What do these acts reveal?*

- a selfless, sacrificial love for the brethren
- a lack of hypocrisy
- a certain hope in an eternal inheritance



## Final Separation

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### 3. The Final Division

- the righteous will inherit life in the consummated, eternal kingdom
- the unrighteous will go away into a conscious, eternal punishment