

In The Crowd Series
Matthew 25
Newport News Campus
11/24/18

Opening

-We launched this series the first weekend in October...

-December will be on the Holy Spirit...

Introduction

-Luke 8:40-50...if you'd like to listen to the story that inspired this series...the message was on Saturday October 6th...

-Most weeks we spend time examining a story like this one to see how many of the people Christ healed had to risk that every frightening feeling of being conspicuous...but the text tonight deserves our full attention and I want to make sure we have time for multiple responses...

-Much of Jesus' teachings focused on demonstrating how social norms stopped people from responding to their spiritual hunger...and often those social norms involved religious practices...don't let perceived norms stop you tonight!

Matthew 25

-what is something a family member has done at a holiday gathering that has irritated you...maybe even offended you?

-this is what Matthew 25 is all about...God saying to us...if you expect to be at the family gathering I'm hosting in Heaven for all eternity...don't be this person!!!!

-two are parables but the third is often mischaracterized as a parable but it is not...Jesus is showing us the future...

-this is a great reminder that the cultural divide that exists from our world to 2,000 years ago can make understanding these teaching elusive.

-they each have a central theme that can be observed through their own unique illustration, all of which should challenge us!

-all three remind us there are eternal consequences to our actions and that when our relationship with God is right, everything else tends to fall into place.

The Bridesmaids (read verses 1-13)

-weddings then...

- **lasted for days**
- **procession to bride's house**
- **procession to groom's house**
- **groom would have built an addition**...(living with in-laws!)

-why was the oil such a big deal...because the procession back to the groom's house was always late into the evening...lamps gave light, indicated you weren't a party crasher, or worse a robber...

-remember the differences between the bridesmaids...

-the imagery here is that in the culture of God's family, doing just enough to get by offends Him!!! (preach here about God, the ultimate over-achiever)

-for some, "just enough" keeps them from a vow of devotion to Christ...

-for others, we've made a vow of devotion to Jesus but we know this sentiment is still too present in our lives...

-(response moment)

The Servants (verses 24-30)

-Do you remember your first real job?

- local gas station... (describe)
- Saturday mornings and weekdays after school
- Chewing tobacco and spitting in a penzoil can
- Oil cans then!
- My first boss...Pete...hard working, honest, fair...

-Your opinion of your boss and the company affects how hard you work!

-there is a lot to learn from in this parable but the one aspect that tends to get over-looked is the reason why the master was so angered by the servant...

-look again at the third servant...

-the imagery here is that in the culture of God's family, we are responsible for our own mischaracterizations of God and accepting them offends Him!

- Unfair
- Favorites
- Distant
- Indifferent
- Callous
- Angry
- Out of Touch
- Permissive

-The warning to us is that we all have equal opportunity to get to know the true heart of God...are you doing those things?

-for some, misconceptions keeps them from a vow of devotion to Christ...

-for others, we've made a vow of devotion to Jesus but we know this sentiment is still too present in our lives...

-(response moment)

The Final Judgment (verses 31-36, 46)

-notice the shift here...it starts differently than the other two (no "The Kingdom of Heaven..." statement)

-there is a comparison to a shepherd and the sheep and goats...

- **There is a separation**
- **It is forever**
- **You have a choice**
- **Heaven is exclusive**

-let talk a little about why I think Jesus uses animals to illustrate being a part of God's family...

- Above, we have groom and bridesmaids
- The, a master and the servants
- Here, we have a king and farm animals

-What was the purpose of farm animals in the first century?

-the imagery here is that in the culture of God's family, we must live in service to others and anything else offends Him!

- Goats...unruly, do what they want...
- Matthew 20:28
- Acts 20:35
- Philippians 2:3-4

-God isn't talking about self-neglect...

-Am I that person...is it usually about me and my needs first?

-for some, self-centeredness keeps them from a vow of devotion to Christ...

-for others, we've made a vow of devotion to Jesus but we know this sentiment is still too present in our lives...

Band

-(response moment...make this one different...focus on making a vow of devotion to Jesus)

Close

- Daniel...God is my judge (have a Daniel heart...no fear of man)
- Hannaniah...God has shown grace (H heart, qualified for grace)
- Mishael...Who is what God is (M heart, something only God does)
- Azzariah...God has helped (A story, a story to tell the world)