

Matthew 22-08-28b

We're ready to pick up our study in Matthew chapter 25, the sheep and goats judgment. We are looking at what scripture has to say about judgments in general and about this judgment in particular. To understand it properly is the path to interpreting and applying it.

So we've already seen, I've got five points here. We've already seen the first, which is the purpose, the general understanding by most conservative, wonderful biblical scholars, such as Dr. Pentecost and Dr. Wohlford, is that it is to determine who of the tribulational surviving Gentiles are permitted to enter the millennial kingdom. The second point is the basis of the judgment, which is treatment of these my brethren, not further defined in our Matthew 25 context, but this would be either or, or possibly both and.

Those of Israel, Jesus was a Jew. He is of the tribe of Judah, and there are 12 other tribes, 13 in total in Israel, as you well remember. And so these my brethren could easily be, especially if you're looking at the tribulational period and the treatment of, let's say as prominent examples, the 12,000 from each tribe minus the tribe of Dan, mysteriously missing in the tribulation period.

And the idea is that during the time of persecution, during the time of the mark of the beast and those who cannot buy or sell and the great persecution of those who are Israel believers in that last seven years, last three and a half years of that period in particular, that those who are looking out for these my brethren, i.e. Old Testament saints from that last seven year period, they are granted a pass into the millennial kingdom. That's the standard view. We've contrasted the other judgments.

We've seen that it really cannot be the judgment seat of Christ from 2 Corinthians 5.10. It really cannot be the rod judgment on Israel of Ezekiel chapter 20. And it doesn't appear to be the great white throne judgment of Revelation 20. That's where we are right now.

Looking at the tail end of Revelation chapter 19, we pick up a few clues that there may not be any Gentile survivors from the tribulation depending on how you understand the rest that are killed by the command of the Lord Jesus Christ, the sword that proceeds from his mouth and the birds are filled with their flesh. Then chapter 20, I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan and bound him for a thousand years and cast him into the bottomless pit and shut him up and set a seal on him, so that he should not deceive the nations until the thousand years are finished.

We looked at this in some detail last time, planao, to lead astray, to cause to wander, to

be a planet instead of a star streaking across the heavens in ways that don't comport with the proper order and pattern to planao, to deceive. And it's interesting to me that Satan is not cast into the lake of fire along with the beast, number one and beast number two, the beast and the false prophet. They are cast in there immediately.

Satan isn't because God's purposes for his negative presence are not yet full. Then in verse three, after these things, he must be released for a little while. Verse four, I saw thrones and they sat on them and judgment was committed to them.

I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and the word of God who had not worshiped the beast or his image, had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. They lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. This is the clearest statement of the millennial kingdom that you will find in scripture.

But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. This is the first resurrection.

Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Part is meros. Meros is a somewhat technical Greek word for your distribution from an inheritance.

It is your portion. It is your allotment. Blessed and holy is he who has an inheritance at the first resurrection.

Over such, the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years. These are Old Testament saints who despite the limited amount of revelation, despite the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ has not yet come and accomplished perfect salvation and they are living in the age of shadows, in spite of the fact that the Holy Spirit is only available by request and in limited ways and means and for particular purposes, despite all of those limitations, you have your faithful believers. You have Abraham.

You have the roster of Old Testament faithful saints in Hebrews chapter 11. And these have already earned an inheritance at the first resurrection. After the first death, they are raised.

They are rewarded. They rule and reign and serve as priests with Christ for a thousand years in the millennial kingdom. Why? Because they are of the people in Israel who are being ruled.

They are qualified by their obedience and faith in their day, in their initial run to rule and reign with Christ. This also is a promise to church age believers in Revelation chapter two and three, separate administration, different in form and function, but also ruling with Christ. But these individuals serve as priests specifically.

What did the Levites do in the Old Testament? They represented Israel before God and

they represented God to Israel through ritual function, Ezekiel 40 through 48 details, what these priests will do in the millennial kingdom, very detailed, millennial temple and so on. These are specifically those who are raised and represented by, in the same way that the 24 elders before the throne represent pretty much all of the faithful Old Testament and New Testament believers, 12 and 12, 12 tribes, 12 apostles, 24 elders before the throne. You also have these who most recently and most signally have demonstrated their faithfulness to the point of death, who did not take the mark and so on.

They and others of like faith are going to rule and serve as priests for a thousand years. The rest of the dead do not live again. Blessed and holy is he who has this kind of inheritance, a meros, a portion in the first resurrection.

The second death has no power. You've already secured your place and demonstrated your faith and obedience. You're not gonna mess up in your priestly and ruling functions in the millennial kingdom so that the second death would have some power over you to remove your blessings and your inheritance.

These people have already demonstrated the mettle of their faith. Now, verse seven, when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison. By the way, this distribution of inheritance, again, those who didn't take the mark and they live and reign and serve as priests, this doesn't seem to match the sheep and goats scenario.

It doesn't mention nations. These individuals were sealed in their foreheads by God, 12,000 from each tribe and others who respond to the call of the two witnesses and so on. When the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison, will go out to do what? To plena o whom? The nations.

Many, many passages, and I'm only gonna appeal to this one, but in the Old Testament, describing the millennial kingdom, the fulfillment of God's promises, God tells Israel the nations will bring their tribute. The nations are going to be subordinated you were the tail, but you will be the head. During the millennial kingdom, the fulfillment of God's promises, all the nations of the earth will exist and be subordinate, be ruled with the rod of iron from Jerusalem and so on.

And you have one example of many here. You can do a study of the nations in the millennial kingdom, very fruitfully so, but all we need to do is establish that there are nations in the millennial kingdom. This passage does it.

He will go out to deceive the nations, which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle whose number is as the sand of the sea. I will anticipate my conclusion here by saying, look how many people are in view here as coming from the nations, joining with Satan to antagonize and surround the dwelling place of the saints. Sand of the sea in number.

When's the other time you've seen that figure used for multiple people? Many, many, many, many, many, many people. What was God's promise to Abraham? Look at the stars, so shall your descendants be as the sand on the seashore, so shall your descendants be. Well, the opposition at the end of the millennium will have grown to the point that they are innumerable like the sand of the sea, an innumerable number.

They will come to battle. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp or the dwelling place of the saints and the beloved city. The beloved city obviously is what? Jerusalem, millennial Jerusalem.

Fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. What is the fate of the nations who come and surround the brethren in the city and the dwelling area? They are devoured by fire. This is a judgment.

It's not the rod judgment. It's not judgment seat of Christ. It's not the great white throne judgment.

This is some other judgment. I would suggest that this is certainly a candidate to be a parallel to our sheep and goats judgment. Why would I say this? Well, let's finish.

The devil who deceived them is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Then I saw the great white throne.

Great white throne is after this judgment by fire on the surrounding nations. Saw the dead small and great standing before God. The books are opened and another book is opened which is of life.

The dead are judged according to their works. This is the long dead, dead for thousands of years. This evidently includes the recently dead.

The sea gives up the dead in it. Death and Hades deliver up the dead who are in them and they are judged each one according to his works. Each one according to his works.

The preceding judgment that we just saw in verse nine and 10 is group. Is somebody unwillingly marching along in one of these nation armies and he didn't really wanna be there but he's a conscriptor. This is a group judgment, right? But now it is individual.

Each one according to his works. I would submit to you that the individuals who die in the fiery judgment of Gog Magog are going to come back. That was a group judgment for participating in the attack on Jerusalem at Satan's behest.

Satan is judged. Now the individuals are gonna be judged according to their works. Even though they participated in this, much as those who participated in the crucifixion of Christ, they are still gonna be brought up and judged.

It's not like, well, you crucified Christ so there's no point in even bringing it before the judge. Sorry, no. You're gonna be judged according to all of your individual works.

You can make your case. Yes, I attacked Jerusalem but I was under the sway of the deceiver. It wasn't really my fault.

I didn't really wanna go. Let's judge your works. So the great white throne is a judgment according to works.

Death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire. Anyone not found written in the book of life is cast into the lake of fire. That's the great white throne.

So the two remaining points that I have on this judgment are after the purpose, the basis, and the contrast with the other judgments. I would say whatever the sheep and goats is, it's the one you could most closely perhaps try to shoehorn it into would be the great white throne. There is fire associated with the disposition of those who are slain, but you've also got this judgment at Gog Magog, which Pentecost and Dr. Walvoord do not really address.

To me, that's a judgment. If you wipe everybody out with fire all at one go, fire comes out from God and destroying them, that's pretty much a judgment. They had very widespread, numerous sands of the sea, people getting wiped out all in one go.

Was the flood a judgment? I will never again destroy the earth by a flood. He didn't say anything about fire. And you get the idea that these people could be even more numerous than those that were destroyed in the flood.

But the time of the judgment, number four, according to chapter 25 of Matthew, verse 31, Jesus says, 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. And so this is, your knee-jerk response would be, well, He comes, He sits down on His throne, and this judgment takes place. This seems to obviously be at the beginning of the millennium.

However, let me offer you a thought. What kind of throne is this? The Son of Man is going to come with the angels, and it mentions glory twice. The Son of Man is going to come in His glory.

You get the idea. This is the second advent we've seen in Matthew 24, the description of that coming, where He says the lightning is gonna, the Son of Man will appear in the heavens, verse 30, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

So His coming is with glory, no question. Beginning of the millennial kingdom, this is the second advent, His feet touched down on the Mount of Olives, et cetera. But 31 of 25 goes on to say, then He will sit on the throne of His glory.

This is a future active indicative. He will be sitting on the throne of His glory. This isn't an heiress that doesn't have the idea that He is going to sit down, that this is an event.

It pictures His seatedness on the glorious throne. Now, I understand that the Lord Jesus is glorious at His coming, coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. This is His personal glory.

This second mention of glory, why put it in there again if it's His personal glory? This is the glory of His throne. How glorious is the throne when He first sets it up? Well, how successful is a president in the first few weeks of his administration? It is a glorious presidency after you have served a while and there are results to be measured or lack thereof, right? I would suggest, and this is not any kind of a conclusive argument, but I would suggest that sitting on the throne of His glory spans the 1,000 years and His reign is glorious and has been glorious at the conclusion for 10 centuries, the Lord Jesus and those who rule with Him have ruled beautifully, fairly, justly, gloriously, and His throne is glorious because the rule has been glorious. It's hard to justify a glorious throne when you just set it up yesterday.

You see what I mean? It's a glorious throne. Why is it glorious? Well, the proof is in the exercise of authority from that throne over time. So I wouldn't die for this, but the suggestion to me is the Son of Man is gonna come in His glory, the angels are gonna come, and He's gonna sit down and He's going to rule and adjudicate that kingdom.

And because He is the King and because He has the power to do so, all the nations will be gathered before Him. All what nations? There aren't very many survivors of the tribulation, if any, but we know for a fact that there are nations which will exist and grow and become so populated that their armies are said to be as the sand of the sea. That's just the ones who converge on Jerusalem.

There's support and families and people back home, right? Just the ones who converge and surround the dwelling place of the saints are as numerous as the sand of the sea. I would suggest to you that these nations who are spared the deceptions of Satan for 10 centuries and then Satan is released, and as soon as he comes and makes his pitch, they are deceived. How can they be deceived? What does 2 Thessalonians 2 say? The beast deceives people in the tribulation because they do not like to receive a love of the truth.

They do not like to receive a love of the truth. It's available and they don't receive it. And over and over again, scripture says, those who reject and rebel are blinded.

I've got a brief list of those for you. The Deuteronomy 29, verse four, to this day, the Lord has not given you a mind to understand, eyes to see, or ears to hear. Calvinists will often appeal to this passage and others like it to say, well, if God just doesn't give you the ability, it's hopeless, you're not elect, you're lost.

But if you look at the context, you will find that this is a choice because rebellion and rejection have been expressed, God withholds eyes to see and ears to hear. Isaiah chapter six, verse nine, go and tell this people, be ever hearing but never understanding, be ever seeing but never perceiving. Look at the context.

These are people that have already rejected the word of God. Isaiah 29, verse 10, the Lord has poured out on you a spirit of deep sleep. He has shut your eyes, O prophets.

He has covered your heads, O seers. Does God do this to faithful prophets and faithful communicators? Does he shut their eyes? Why would God shut the eyes of the prophets? Why would God shut the eyes and stop up the ears of his people if they are using them to ask and seek and knock? Do you ever see faithful people suddenly being blinded and deafened? It is always a result of a decision. In the same way that you can receive a love of the truth by choice, you can receive blindness and deafness and hardness of heart by antecedent decision.

God acts and either grants or denies sight and hearing and susceptibility based on what we choose. It is based on choice. Every single one of these passages, if you look in the context, I don't have time to cover it.

Jeremiah 5, verse 21. Let me just review these again if you wanna write them down. Deuteronomy 29, verse 4. Isaiah 6, verse 9. Isaiah 29, verse 10.

Jeremiah 5, 21. Hear this, O foolish and senseless people who have eyes but do not see, who have ears but do not hear. This is choice.

You were given eyes, but you don't use them to look. You have ears, but you don't use them to hear. You have blinded and deafened yourself because you don't like the message.

So you are now going to have your sight taken away. Door of the ark is open. If you don't walk through it to be delivered from the flood, the door's gonna be shut and you no longer have the option of entering in.

If you don't use your eyes to see and your ears to hear and your heart to understand, those God-given capabilities will be removed. This is why the first several chapters of Hebrews argue forcefully, persuasively, today, while it is called today, do not harden your hearts as the people in the wilderness did. Do not harden your hearts as in the day of complaint, the Meribah.

He doesn't say hope and pray that God doesn't harden your heart. He says, do not harden your hearts because if you harden your heart, God will harden your heart, just like he did Pharaoh. Look at, Calvinists say, well, God hardened Pharaoh's heart.

He sure did. And look at why. Because Pharaoh hardened his own heart first.

It is choice. So, Jeremiah 5.21, Ezekiel 12.2, son of man, pay attention to this one. The context is right in the verse.

Ezekiel 12.2, son of man, you are living in a rebellious house. They have eyes to see, but do not see. Why? Because they rebel.

They're recalcitrant. They're disobedient. They have eyes to see, but do not see, and ears to hear, but do not hear, for they are a rebellious house.

Begins and ends with the reason they're blind and deaf, because they're rebellious. It's the attitude that comes first, then the loss of capacity to perceive. Matthew 13.13, Jesus says, this is why I speak in parables.

Did Jesus come to confuse people? Did he come to condemn them? Look at John chapter three, right in the vicinity, you know, 14, 15, John 3.16. What does Jesus say? The son came not into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. And yet that same Jesus says in Matthew 13.13, this is why I speak to them in parables, though seeing they do not see, though hearing they do not hear or understand. So with exposure to the message comes a decision.

Do you receive a love of the truth or do you become rebellious and decide you've got a better way, a better plan, a better standard, better way of thinking, better way of operating? So when the son of man comes in his glory and the angels with him, he will sit on the throne of his glory and he's going to observe and rule for 10 centuries. All the nations will, I would put in parentheses then, at the close of the millennium, all of the nations, what nations? The nations that have been protected from deceit for 10 centuries by the incarceration of the Jews and the incarceration of Satan in the bottomless pit. Do they have an excuse? Can they say, well, I was deceived.

Eve said to God in the garden, I was deceived and I ate. Nobody's going to have that argument in the millennium, why? Millennial salvation is not based on faith. This sounds heretical, but what is faith? Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

For 10 centuries, everything is open and visible related to him with whom we have to do it. You can see the Lord Jesus. You can see justice.

You can see righteousness. You can see the resurrected Old Testament saints. They can tell you stories that God is the God of life.

God is the God of fulfilled promise. God is the God of salvation. God is the God who sent his only begotten son so that whosoever places their faith in him will not perish, but have everlasting life.

There is no faith needed. It's all visible. It's all open and manifest for 10 centuries in an

idealized world under perfect government.

So salvation during those 10 centuries is a matter not of what will you believe in the absence of sight, but what do you choose when you do see, right? Thus at the end of the millennial kingdom, when the nations, these nations, now think about it. These nations are not going to go to war against one another. They're not gonna divide and change and become different nations.

The same nations that start the millennium are gonna conclude it because there's a rod of iron. They will turn their swords into plowshares, spears into pruning hooks. There will be no war.

These nations are gonna be allocated and they will exist for 10 centuries with no changes. Now, because everyone is gonna have extreme longevity, what will their choice be as to where to live? I wanna live in a nation where the citizens are sympathetic, they are obedient, they follow God, they send tribute to Jerusalem willingly and happily. As children grow up and mature and indicate that they are people of faith and they are brethren of the Lord, we will send them as tribute to Jerusalem for 10 centuries, people can choose where in the world they want to live.

Now, they can't just choose to go into the kingdom proper because that is granted by the rod judgment for Israel only. But there are going to be good and bad nations. There are gonna be recalcitrant nations that are just right on the edge.

They're constantly being rebuked. That rod of iron is constantly swinging because they are people that are just chafing and grinding as children grow to maturity in that era. They're gonna go to a nation where, well, we can largely do our own thing.

We just do the bare minimum to not be crushed under the rule of Jerusalem, but we sure don't like it. And birds of a feather are gonna flock together in some of these nations. Other nations are going to be peopled with those who respect God, whose children grow up and may even be sent in.

There's a very fascinating passage we looked at last time about children, your sons will be sent by the nations as an offering to Jerusalem. And I think these are those who grow up and make a decision like unto their forefathers in the Old Testament age, and they qualify. And there's still an angel standing there at the gate and they pass under the rod, or maybe one of us.

And this nation that cares for God's people is sympathetic to God's plans and purposes is going to send them. And they're gonna say, we've learned our lesson and that's where they go. I suggest that these are the nations who are gathered as numerous as the sands of the sea and divided into nations that were sympathetic and responsive to the rule of Christ and the sons of David in Jerusalem for 10 centuries.

And those who were not, who joined Satan in the Gog-Magog rebellion, and those are the goats. And the basis of their judgment isn't anything to do with, did you take the mark? Which is explicitly given several times in Revelation as a basis for judgment, but not here. How did you treat my brethren? How did you treat those who are of either definition? Are they in fact Jews or descendants of Jews, children of Jews? When he comes back with the lambs in his arms and they grow up and become mature and make their decision about Christ as savior.

Once they mature early in the millennial kingdom, how were they treated? How were they received? Were they driven out? Men love darkness rather than light when their deeds are evil. And you can be evil and avoid law enforcement. You can be evil and stay under the radar of government.

Where else are all of these sand of the sea armies gonna come from at the end? Why hasn't Jesus killed them with a rod of iron earlier? They are allowed to bide their time and resist, but not to the point of blood all the way until Satan is released and he draws them like iron filings to a magnet. And that's when they are exposed. That's when they're revealed.

And the king will say to those on his right hand, come you blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Now, the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Is that a description of the millennial kingdom? If you, in the standard view, that's talking about the millennium.

These are nations. Is the millennial kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world for the nations? I don't think so. I think the millennial kingdom is prepared to fulfill God's promises to national Israel, to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

So what kingdom would this be? If it's not the millennial kingdom, what kingdom would it be? That would be the kingdom of the father where it no longer matters which dispensations you live through or when and how you came to faith. Now it is strictly new heavens and new earth, heavenly Jerusalem. Are you inside or are you in the nations that are outside and the healing leaves of the tree are carted out for you, right? There are nations, remember, in the kingdom of the father.

Which kingdoms? Which nations? The sheep nations. These nations will retain their identity and their group past the destruction of this heavens and this earth into the new heavens and the new earth. Those nations are gonna come back in the same way that we remember who Israel is.

You get 12 gates with the 12 tribes and 12 gates with the 12 apostles. And there will be nations. Leaves will go out from the tree of life on each side of the river of life for what? Healing of the nations.

The ethne, very same word we have here. Healing of the nations. So there will be nations.

Which nations? I would submit that it is those nations. There will be a memorial to the nations who during the millennial kingdom responded to the rule of Christ and there is a fresh status in the new heavens and new earth. Come you blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world based on how you treated my brethren.

That's the kingdom of the father that has been prepared for us from the foundation of the world, not from the foundation of the nation of Israel, not from the giving of the kingdom promises to David and to Solomon. This is older. You use your symmetry brackets before the foundation of the world, after the destruction of the world, that kingdom.

God, the father's kingdom where the lamb is the light and so on. And then the disposition to the goats, verse 45, he will answer them saying, assuredly I say to you in as much as you did not do to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me. Jesus is ruling from David's throne in Jerusalem.

They are treating people in Timbuktu and Southern New Zealand and wherever else in the world they may be. It's all the same as if you came and scorned and disrespected the king himself. These, my brethren, that were scattered around the world, your treatment of them was observed and recorded.

For 10 centuries, you had the opportunity to mend your ways, to not be the rich man, ignoring Lazarus at the gate. You had 10 centuries and you all gathered together into a nation where you were living next to and among people of like mind. And none of you had any desire for the poor or the naked or the hungry.

And notice there are people who are sick and in prison that don't get visited by these people. Is sick and in prison the worst thing that can happen during the tribulation? Oh my goodness. How about being hounded and pursued by those who want to enforce the mark of the beast? That's not in view.

But is it possible in the far reaches, thousands of miles away from the millennial kingdom of Jerusalem and Israel to be on other continents and nations getting together and quietly disparaging, quietly ignoring, quietly oppressing, quietly treating with disdain and complete insensitivity those who are in fact brethren. And they are treated that way for that reason because they are brethren. You know, you suffer for the name of Christ even in the millennial kingdom, there will be some suffering.

And what is the disposition? This is really point five, point four of my five points was the time of the judgment. Point five is the disposition. Notice the disposition.

The sheep enter into a kingdom prepared from before the foundation of the world, which doesn't to my mind match the description of the millennial kingdom, which is going to end after 10 centuries, right? And was not really prepared or promised until well into human history for a specific subgroup, the nation of Israel. This is a kingdom prepared for the sheep who are the ethnic, the nations. Millennial kingdom is specifically not for the nations.

It's for Israel. Secondly, look at the negative disposition. Verse 46, these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.

This seems to be much closer to, if not coterminous with the great white throne. Going away into everlasting punishment. Is that going to happen at the beginning of the millennial kingdom? Everlasting punishment is decided after the millennium.

After the earth and heavens flee away from him who sits on the throne and the great white throne is set up. That is the eternal disposition. And it is after the great white throne that you have the kingdom of the father described, chapter 21 and 22, right? So with all proper respect to the great gray heads that have gone before me, I personally think that this sheep and goats judgment is at the end of the millennium.

It is a judgment on the nations who had every opportunity are utterly without excuse. And this explains why faith or being written in the book of life is not mentioned in this judgment. Why can it be a judgment of works? Because faith is not an issue.

You have everything presented to you and it is unique among the dispensations in that way. Not since the garden of Eden has there been everything visible, the presence of God walking in the garden, the simplicity of the word of God. The millennium is the bracket of Eden.

And Adam and Eve are not driven from the garden for a lack of faith. It wasn't a lack of faith. It was a lack of obedience.

It was a lack of paying attention to God's word and God's will and God's purpose, being called according to God's purpose. God gave his purposes, tend the garden, look after the animals and so on. There is a purpose.

And when that is disregarded, the basis of the judgment is works. And in conclusion, let me just say that it fascinates me because in modern Christianity, evangelical Christianity particularly, we really focus on, well, but is she saved? Is he a believer or an unbeliever? Did they make the decision at some point? Did they say, did they invite Jesus into their heart? Did they place their faith in Christ for savior? That's the main thing. All the rest of it can sort itself out.

That distinction and emphasis is almost entirely lacking in scripture, especially the New Testament. You don't have Paul saying, go out and get somebody to make a salvation

decision. Scripture emphasizes fruit, the fruit of the spirit.

Do you have the fruit of the spirit? Do you have love for your neighbor? Are you able to love your enemies and do good to those who hate you and pray for those who spitefully use you? What is the evidence in your life? Scripture doesn't concentrate on some black and white status of saved or unsaved. It focuses on what are you doing with the salvation you have? It almost assumes that you're gonna choose for or against on some other basis. And that's why the judgment seat of Christ is works.

This judgment is works. The evaluation of our lives as believers is how are you living? What are you doing? God doesn't seem so interested in, well, but did you believe in my son at any point? I don't really care what you did after that. You can be a reprobate and recalcitrant, backslidden as the Baptist say.

That's not God's emphasis. It's not the Lord Jesus' emphasis. Look at the Sermon on the Mount.

Look at the epistles of Paul. Look at the upbraiding of the Corinthians in the first epistle. Look at his words in any of his epistles.

Look at what he says to Timothy and Titus. What are you doing? How are you living? The purpose of salvation is not to get people saved. The purpose of salvation is the fruit and the reflection of the glory of God and entering into his purposes and into his thoughts and into his mind and into his future of eternal life to be cleansed, to be transformed, to be renewed, to be trained, to be exercised unto profitable godliness, to invest in the eternal future.

So our measure is how much do we enter into that? Same thing in the millennial judgment at the end. I would argue that the sheep and goats judgment is, if you're sheep, it will be evident in what you did. God is concerned with the fruit.

Sowing the seed of the word isn't just, well, I've got a great place for the seed of the word to reside. It's supposed to sprout and bear a hundredfold, 60-fold, 30-fold. There's a purpose in the sowing of the seed.

And there is a purpose in being a sheep. And it's not just to sit there and wait for the shepherd to thump you on the noggin. These sheep are expected to look for the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, those who are sick and in prison and seek to meet their needs.

Parable of the Good Samaritan, right? So our application, I would suggest, is to look at ourselves and not say, well, I've got my get out of hellfire free ticket, but am I accomplishing the purpose of the call? Does my life reflect the fruit of the spirit? Does my life reflect the horizontal love that is an expression of my love for God, which has to come first? First, a great commandment, all your heart, all your soul, all your strength, all your mind, love the Lord your God. And the second is like unto it, love your neighbor.

This is really a love judgment.

Did these people love their neighbor? Did they put themselves out like the Good Samaritan on behalf of someone in their periphery who was in need? If they did and they aggregated together with others of like mind and became a community that did that, and there is something to be said for community effort, gatherings of believers to look out for the hungry and the thirsty and the sick and those in need. Christian charities are legitimate and necessary and are a means of drawing others to Christ because they see the expression of love. It is a reflection of God's love for us when we were needy in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

This is God's love. And there is a reflection of that in our treatment of others. And that's genuine Christianity.

Not so much tract distribution and hammering people over the head with the gospel of get savior, you're going to hell, but the same criteria that is in the sheep and goats judgment ought to be manifest and evident in us. Well, I ran a little bit long today, but we have finished the judgment of the sheep and goats. I've given you the standard view.

I've given you a possible alternative view of it, but we will pick up in chapter 26 of Matthew next time. Let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the truth of your word.

We pray that the Holy Spirit will impress it on our hearts, minister it to our souls in a way that we will be motivated to embrace the love of the truth, to identify and separate from that which is false and that which misleads, that our lives will be beacons of your glory and others who see our hope will be drawn to ask the reason for it and give us the opportunity to share the truth of Jesus Christ, be worthy representatives of him as his body on this earth until that day when he comes to receive us to himself and present us before your throne. We pray these things in Jesus name, amen.