

The Sheep and the Goats – Bible Study

Matthew 25: 31-46

1. Review some of the Social Justice teachings of the Prophets. Choose one or two passages from those listed below and **share what strikes you from the content.**

- Micah 6: 6-8. This is God's statement, through the prophet, Micah, of his case against the nation of Israel somewhere between 750 and 686 BC.
- Amos 2:6-8. God's statement, through the prophet, Amos, of his case against Israel, in roughly the same period as Micah.
- Isaiah 58. – This chapter is God's accusation against his people, through Isaiah because, although they observe rituals of their religion (such as fasting), they do not behave with love and mercy towards the needy. In verse 6 God directs them to what He sees as true fasting.

2. Australian author, Roy Williams, in his book *God Actually...* writes:

The Jesus of the Gospels was an agitator, a pacifist and a champion of the lowly. He was quite disinterested in the accumulation of wealth. He espoused principles that are in many ways unrecognizable in the views of some modern-day adherents of Christianity.

So-called 'religious conservatives' in the US are regularly heard invoking Jesus' name. The same thing happens in Australia. Yet it is hard to escape the conclusion that, if Jesus were alive today, some of those same people would label Him a dangerous radical, an appeaser and a 'bleeding heart'. As Tim Costello [CEO of World Vision Australia] has asked rhetorically: '[H]ow did the message of Jesus ever become aligned with big business, military spending, gun ownership, tax cuts and disdain for the environment? The situation is sad and perplexing. It is as if some Christians just have not read the Gospels. (p. 244).

3. What issues in our nation, are offensive to God at this time? What can we do to bring pressure for change?
4. Share in the group, a time when you were moved by God to sacrificially help someone in need. How did the situation work out?
5. What choices are you currently making to live in line with Jesus' call to love the poor in your decisions and actions?

P.T.O.

Sheep and Goats – Information and Contacts

Pittwater Uniting has a range of overseas missionary connections that offer exposure and ministry opportunities for individuals and small teams to explore. These include:

1. In mid-2017 we will be looking at taking a small party to visit and minister with Our Neighbour's Ministry (ONM) in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. Our church has a significant connection with ONM because the leader of that ministry, Martin Barrow, went out from PUC to begin this work among the poorest of the poor some ten years or so ago. Read of the work by looking up their Internet page under Our Neighbours Ministry, and be prepared to have your heart touched. Contact the church office (9997.2386) to indicate your interest in being on a work party next year.
2. International China Concern is a ministry we have a special connection with as Clive Coombes, from our congregation serves with them and a number of people have gone for short-term ministry trips to work with ICC. Look up their website on the Internet, under International China Concern.
3. Crossroads International is having an Exposure Night on Mon 19 Sept. Contact Mark Moran on 0427.625.976, or talk with Mark or Amanda for more info. They spent two years at Crossroads in Hong Kong in 2014 and 2015.
4. There will be an Exposure Trip to connect with ministries in India, led by Fiona and Mike Blair in January, 2017 – Contact Fiona on 0407.951.665 for more info.
5. Pioneers Australia, a major missionary organisation, is having a Connect Night, including a dinner, speaker, information and reports on God's work through Pioneers missionaries around the world. This will be held at Sydney Missionary Bible College, 43 Badminton Rd, Croydon, Saturday 8 October at 7 p.m. – RSVP 1800.787.889 – (\$15 charge for the dinner).

Of course, none of the above is intended to elevate serving God in overseas ministries above serving Him in the situations of your current life! Both are His work!!

Suggestion

Take the time to read Leo Tolstoy's short story, *Where Love is, God is!* by Googling that title. It is the story of a poor shoemaker, Martin Avdeitch, who discovers that, in serving the poorest of the poor, he has served Jesus! There is also a Youtube video of the story.