

A Different Kind of Christmas: Living and Giving Like Jesus

Session 2 - "Jesus' Wish List"

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' - Matthew 25:40 (NIV)

Looking for a Miracle

In the space below, record the miracle passages from the Gospel your group is given.

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- When we obediently release what is in our hands, Jesus blesses it, multiplies it, and then gives it back to us for the purpose of distribution. Moses' staff, David's five smooth stones, the widow's oil, six water jars at a wedding reception, another widow's two small coins, and a lunch of five pieces of bread and two small fish - these are resources that God used to make miracles.

 - During Jesus' earthly ministry, he told his followers they were responsible for feeding the hungry in their midst. Everyone who recognizes Jesus as Messiah is a servant of that same mission.
 - **READ - Matthew 25:31-40.**
 - Jesus says that King will separate the nations into sheep and goats. Who do the "sheep" represent? The "goats"?
 - What is the criteria that is used to determine sheep from goats?
 - How would you describe the various conditions listed in v. 34-36? What is the righteous response to these conditions?
 - How does seeing "the least of these" as Christ change the way we see those in need?
 - **READ - James 2:14-17.**
 - Read verse 14. How would you respond to the questions posed in this verse?
 - How does this passage connect with the Parable of the Sheep and Goats from Matthew?
 - How do these two passage define for us how the expectation for how we live out our faith?

- **CONSIDER** - “We need to be committed to live more simply so that others may simply live.”
 - In your opinion, what does this statement mean?
 - In what ways can we live out this statement?

Key Insights

1. We do not exist ourselves; we exist to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the world. We are the only hands, feet, and wallets that Jesus has.
2. We serve God when we give our time, talents, and resources to meet others’ needs in his name.
3. The more of ourselves that we give away, the more abundant our faith and contentment will be.
4. God creates miracles through the resources that we hold in our hands.
5. God sends us into the world to combat evil in Jesus’ name.
6. At Christmas, we celebrate the sacrificial Messiah who was born to die for our sins. We too are called to give ourselves sacrificially for the world that God loves.

Over the next week...

- Think about ways you can change the focus of your Christmas from self-indulgence to celebrating the birth of Jesus. What can you give Jesus this year?
- How might you begin to give an equal amount of what you spend on yourself to a specific mission in your area or around the world? What mission will you consider?
- What traditions can you start this year to make every Christmas a more authentic celebration of Jesus’ birth?

Prayer for this week: Lord God, we thank you for sending your only son to sacrifice his life for us. What a wonderful gift you have given us. We thank you for your grace and mercy. Through Jesus you have given us eternal life with you. Lord, be with us and guide us to share your unending love with others this coming week. Amen.