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Service With a Smile

Key References: Matthew 24:1-14; Matthew 25:31-46; *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 70, pp. 637-641; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 8, pp. 187-192; Our Beliefs nos. 11, 21, 14



powertext

"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).

Everyone has some friends who say lighthearted things that are easy to understand. But there are other friends who are deep thinkers. When these friends say something, you sometimes end up scratching your head because you are not sure what they mean. Jesus was one of those friends to His disciples. Sometimes He had them scratching their heads.

It was one of those days when Jesus had left His disciples open-mouthed in the Temple. He had told the priests that He knew that they were plotting to kill Him and that they were as slithery as snakes. The disciples were glad to get out of the Temple. As they walked down the massive marble steps they remarked with pride about the beauty of the Temple. Perhaps they were trying to boost their feelings after being afraid or embarrassed of the priests' reaction to Jesus' sharp words. Maybe they thought Jesus needed to be reminded of the special place they were leaving so He would apologize to the priests. We'll never know. But Jesus made them scratch their heads again by saying, "Do you see all these things? Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be



Accepting Jesus' love for us inspires us to serve Him and others.

Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 74.



Sunday

READ Read Matthew 24:1-14 and this week's story, "Service With a Smile."

THINK Why was Jesus not impressed with the beauty of the Temple?

WRITE Write the power text on a piece of paper and place it where you will see it often.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray that Jesus will help you be a "sheep."

Monday

READ Read Matthew 24:15-35.

THINK What did Jesus know about the future?

TALK Ask an adult to talk to you about Jesus' description of "the end of the age." What do the signs indicate?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to give you a spirit of helpfulness.

Tuesday

READ Read Matthew 25:31-46.

MAKE Fold a sheet of paper into four equal sections. In each section draw something (or cut and paste magazine pictures) to represent one of the four things Jesus says His people will do for Him.

EXPLAIN Explain in your own words why the two groups, the sheep and the goats, were treated differently.

DO Make plans and do some acts of service, showing God's unconditional love to those in need.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you always choose to follow Him.

left on another; every one will be thrown down" (Matthew 24:2). The disciples must have thought, *This massive structure? Demolished?*

They walked on in silence until they reached the top of the Mount of Olives, just outside the city. Perhaps they were still puzzled. Finally the disciples asked for an explanation. "When will these things be?" And Jesus began to give them warnings about the end of the world.

This led to a discussion we are still interested in today: who will be saved when Jesus comes?

Jesus said that when the Son of God comes to earth with His angels, He will assume His role as judge and separate people into two simple categories: sheep and goats. This will be just as a shepherd separates sheep from goats at shearing time. The disciples understood this. The wool of





the sheep is different from goat hair, and goats aren't sheared. So it made sense first of all that the shepherd could easily tell the animals apart and second that the animals should be divided. Jesus was trying to illustrate that it's as easy for Him to tell the difference between people's hearts as it is for us to tell the difference between sheep and goats.

Once the two categories of people are separated, Jesus will say to the "sheep," the people who are so much like God, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world" (Matthew 25:34).

These are the people who care about others, not because they have to, and not because someone tells them they should. They are kind and caring because Jesus has been kind and caring to them. They want to be like Him. They see everyone as

Wednesday

READ Read Genesis 18:1–16.

LIST List two ways this story is like Jesus' parable of the sheep and goats.

PLAN Invite someone you don't know very well into your home. Plan to serve them a special treat.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray for opportunities to serve others and God.

Thursday

READ Read Malachi 3:17, 18.

WRITE Write a letter of encouragement to someone who is doing a thankless, but necessary, service for others.

OBSERVE Observe a sporting event and the ways people encourage their favorite team.

THINK Think about how these ways may be helpful as you encourage the people around you.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you to always encourage people and not tear them down.

Friday

READ Read 1 Corinthians 4:1, 2.

COPY Copy this verse on a card and place it somewhere in your room to remind you on a daily basis that the call to be a Christian is the call to be a servant.

SAY Repeat the power text by memory.

PRAY Ask God to help you be a humble servant for Him.

valuable in God's sight. When they see someone thirsty, they give that person water; when someone needs clothes, they find clothes for that person; when someone needs a place to stay, they take that person into their own homes; they visit prisoners and help them. Their only motive? Genuine caring for others. And in return, they become more like Jesus by



treating others as He did. Jesus will say, "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (verse 40). The sheep will be astounded!

The goats, on the other hand, aren't motivated by kindness. They are too busy looking out for themselves. They perform good works because it might make them look good. Or they think good deeds will buy their way into heaven. To the goats, Jesus will say, "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, I needed

clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me" (verses 42, 43).

The goats will have a lame excuse. They will claim that if they had known that it was Jesus who needed water, food, clothes, friendship, they would have done those nice things for Him! But they didn't know!

Jesus will say, "Whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me" (verse 45). They will be turned away, because in heaven, everyone cares about everyone else. Selfish people won't fit in; they won't be happy there.



RICHES IN HEAVEN

Instructions: Use the number of letters in each word as a guide to filling in this Bible verse. Some letters have been done for you.

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_____ O _____

2 letters

3 letters

4 letters

of

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of

did

5 letters

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me

for

these

one

7 letters

the

sisters

you

8 letters

you

brothers

and

Whatever

_____ O _____

_____ O _____

_____ O _____

"