**Learn in Community**

 Small Group Study

**Volume Overview**

**What does the Bible say about the future?**

“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.” ([1 Corinthians 2:9](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.1Co2.9))

*Many people want to know what the Bible says regarding the future. What is judgment all about? What does the Bible say about rewards for those who serve God? What do we know about the return of Jesus? What does this mean for our life while we wait for His return? These are just a few of the topics we’ll explore through this volume.*

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| ***You Will Need*** *• Adult willing to walk into the room dressed like a homeless person* *• Small bags of popcorn or granola bars, one per student****Getting Ready*** *• Make appropriate church leaders and volunteers aware of this activity as needed.* *• First time leading* Learn *for Youth? Look here for the* [Facilitator Guide](https://0b769b0ed3569ef9d18b-f88d8272f61086866d50d048b43ef630.ssl.cf2.rackcdn.com/sites/biblengagementproject/Listen_Facilitator_Guide.pdf)*.* |

To access session content and videos from a computer, visit: [BibleEngagementProject.com/downloads](https://bibleengagementproject.com/downloads)

**Engage**

**Welcome**

*Take this time to welcome everyone, introduce new students, learn names, and thank everyone for coming. Your friendliness here can create comfort levels that encourage student participation later.*

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| **QUESTION**What was your favorite toy as a kid, and do you still have it? Why did you love it so much? |

**Opening Prayer**

*Prayer thoughts: Thank God for bringing the group together today. Ask for help to receive and engage what He wants the group to hear. Ask for the group to recognize God’s presence and be assured that He is with them every day.*

**Introduction**

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| ***You Will Need*** *• Adult willing to walk into the room dressed like a homeless person* *• Small bags of popcorn or granola bars, one per student****Getting Ready*** *• Make appropriate church leaders and volunteers aware of this activity as needed.* |

Awards and rewards are a part of our lives. A few examples are grades in school, sporting achievements, and a kind word. You could even say receiving an allowance or a paycheck is a reward for your work.

• *Hand out snacks to everyone.*

Today we will look forward and see what the Bible has to say about the future and the rewards we will receive for following Jesus. Each follower of Jesus will be rewarded based on how he or she lived.

**Group Activity**

**Homeless and Hungry**

• *Your volunteer, a homeless-looking adult, should now enter the room and ask the students for help. Act surprised, as if this is someone who entered the church from the street.*

• *Wait a moment to see if anyone responds to the homeless-looking actor. After a moment, let everyone in on the activity.*

Let me introduce you to *(name of individual)*. He agreed to come in costume for today’s activity. I’m sure each of you had emotions and thoughts after he walked in. Some of you may never forget this moment.

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| **QUESTION**What went through your mind as our guest entered the room asking for help? |

* *Thank anyone who gave up their food or who went to talk with the actor.*

In your last devotions, you read in [Revelation 20](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Re20) that in the end, Jesus and His followers win! Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire to spend all eternity. But our life as followers is about more than just our ending. It’s also about what we do while on earth now. How we treat others and how we finish strong by helping those less fortunate than us matters.

• *Have everyone thank the homeless-looking actor for helping out.*

How we treat others is important and has an impact on our eternity. We’ll look at what God’s Word says about that today. First, let’s watch our video.

**Watch**

**Consider What the Bible Says**

*Ensure each student has access to a Bible, preferably the same version.*

**Jesus Will Judge Our Faithfulness to Him**

For most of [Matthew 24](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt24) and all of chapter [25](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt25), Jesus was speaking. He was close to giving His life for the sins of the world, and He used this time to share some final thoughts. The passage we’re looking at today is a parable centered on judgment. Jesus’ love for people gave Him great cause to encourage us to be in a right relationship with God. Jesus wants us to be ready for His judgment of whether or not we’ve been faithful to Him.

Read [Matthew 25:31–33](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt25.31-33).

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| **QUESTION**Who does the Bible say will be the final Judge? |

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| **QUESTION**Who will be judged? |

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| **QUESTION**What’s your first thought when you hear that we will all be judged? |

The idea of being judged may feel uncomfortable. But this judgment doesn’t have to be. A shepherd clearly knows the difference between a sheep and a goat. And Jesus will clearly be able to tell who His followers are and who refused His offer of salvation. Following Jesus is all it takes to be on the right side of this judgment.

**Did You Know?**

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| Jesus’ description of separating sheep and goats may be related to the Old Testament’s use of both animals as sacrifices, with goats far more commonly used as sin sacrifices. The most well-known example of goats used this way comes from Leviticus 16. The sin offering on the Day of Atonement required two goats, one as a sacrifice and one that carried the sins of the nation away from the people; this goat was sent into the wilderness. The second goat is a likely source for the word *scapegoat*. |

**Jesus Will Reward Those Who Follow Him Faithfully**

Read [Matthew 25:34–40](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt25.34-40).

In this story, Jesus gave several examples of how we can show our faithfulness to Him. Although there are other ways to follow Him faithfully, He outlined for us some very practical ways here. We shouldn’t see this as a checklist of things we must do to get to heaven, but rather examples showing what being faithful is all about. Finishing strong challenges us to walk through life by doing the things Jesus did and would do for others.

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| **QUESTION**What’s the outcome for the sheep King Jesus places on His right? |

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| **QUESTION**What did the righteous ones (the sheep) do that pleased Jesus? |

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| **QUESTION**How is serving someone who is hungry, sick, or in prison like serving Jesus? |

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| **QUESTION**What is Jesus’ response to those who helped people in need? |

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| **QUESTION**Who do you think Jesus is referring to when He said, “the least of these”? |

**Jesus Will Punish Those Who Refuse Him**

Read [Matthew 25:41–46](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt25.41-46).

We now come to those who didn’t follow Jesus faithfully. Jesus referred to these people as goats. They ignored Jesus by ignoring others who had needs. Jesus desired that the practical needs of the hurting, homeless, hungry, and lonely be met. The types of people who choose to ignore people in need are the type likely to face punishment rather than reward.

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| **QUESTION**Why does Jesus care so much that we go out of our way to help others? |

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| **QUESTION**What’s similar for those who are punished and the righteous? |

Everyone will live for eternity. The difference between the two is where.

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| **QUESTION**Who did Jesus design punishment for? |

See verse [41](https://ref.ly/logosref/Bible.Mt25.41). Jesus had designed the punishment for the devil and his demons. But those who refuse Jesus’ offer of salvation and the life-change that comes with it will find themselves there as well.

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| **QUESTION**Besides the things Jesus mentions, what are other ways we should help those in need? |

**Reflect**

**Jesus Will Reward His People**

We’ve talked about judgment today. God the Father gave Jesus all authority to judge others. One day, we will stand before Him and give an account of our life and determine whether our name is found written inside the Lamb’s Book of Life. All those whose name is written in the Book of Life will inherit blessings from the Father and will spend eternity with Him. And our presence in that book is dependent on our continued choice to follow Jesus daily.

**Listen to God**

Let’s pause and listen to what God might want to say to us about what we have read and shared. Answering the following questions is completely voluntary. These questions are meant to serve as a conversation between you and God. However, you may want to share your response with the group, but no one should feel obligated.

• *Optional: Pause for a few moments of silent reflection before asking students if they want to share.*

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| **QUESTION**Honestly evaluating your life today, are you more like a sheep or a goat? Why do you think this? |

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| **QUESTION**What may keep you from living with the kind of generosity Jesus wants from His people? |

**Activate**

Consider helping a family in need as a group. Take an offering from group members to be used as a gift or to purchase a gift card. Connect with a pastor or church leader to transfer the gift to a family in the church who needs extra help right now.

**Conclusion**

As we anxiously wait for our eternity with God, let’s find ourself leading a life that is holy, godly, and focused on helping others.

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| **Salvation Opportunity***Include this if you think there may be some in the group who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus.*Perhaps this is the first time you’ve read or discussed this part of Scripture. Maybe you’ve never thought of the fact that Jesus knows what we’ve done to those less fortunate. Now is a great time to take that knowledge and change your life based on it. To start down that path, you need to make sure your life is right with God. Do you have a relationship with Jesus, a relationship that compels you to look after those who need help?**Is there anyone here that we can pray for who doesn’t have a relationship with Jesus or wants to renew their relationship with Him?***Take a moment to acknowledge those who respond, and thank them for their desire to make things right between themselves and God. Pray with them as you close in prayer or after the group time is over. Following group time, talk more about where they are in their walk with God and how you might be able to help.* |

**Prayer**

Father God, thank You for Your promises to those who believe in You and let that belief change the way they live. As we anticipate reward in heaven, help us to live worthy of those rewards while on earth. Guide us to help others. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

Take time to go through the personal devotions provided for you on the app. These will show you more about what will be in heaven waiting for you.