

A Look at Matthew 25

February 17, 2019

Thank you so much for choosing to worship with us today! We are thrilled you are here!

"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

Thoughts on Matthew 25:31-46 by John Bedingfield

A story from the former Dean of the Chapel at Duke University, Dr. Will Willimon:

One Sunday after church we stopped at a restaurant. It was crowded and our server looked tired and weary. After the meal and things were thinning out, I asked her: "You look tired – are you okay?" She told me she had been up most of the night with her little boy who was sick but that she was okay. I said: "It must be hard after being up all night, having to stand on your feet and work so hard." She just nodded. "What's the hardest day of the week to work?" She didn't know I was a Reverend. She said "The hardest day of the week is Sunday. I dread all the people who come here after church. They make so

many demands and some of them are so hateful. And they never tip hardly anything."

Jesus is found in the Eucharist. Jesus is found in the Holy Bible. He is found in our hearts – and some believe that crucifixes and even painted Icons carry a sacred image of Jesus. But as Dr. Willimon says, none of these places is Jesus' "primary residence." Where is Jesus? Look at today's reading from Matthew's Gospel. Jesus is living on the streets. Jesus is in soup kitchen lines. Jesus is waiting at the Salvation Army to get a coat. Jesus is in the hospital, or more likely, suffering and sitting, because He cannot afford to go to the hospital. Jesus is in prison.

Don't blame me. I didn't say it. Jesus said it. There's no way we can misread what this Gospel account says. Wherever people are in need, wherever people suffer, wherever people do without their basic needs, Jesus is there. And He's not just there to comfort those who suffer. He is suffering right along with them. That's where Jesus is.

Jesus is sitting out in the world right now, waiting not for a church service to start, but for human contact. For caring. For love ... the kind of love our Lord meant when He told us to love our neighbors.

All Things for Christ,
Michael