

When Did We See You, Lord?

(based on Matthew 25:31-46)

Jesus was talking with his disciples. He knew he needed to help them remember how to follow God's way. So he told them a story.

One day at the end of all time, I will appear as a king. I will sit on a throne, and everyone in the world will stand before me. On that day, I will separate the people into two groups.

I wonder, "What kind of king will Jesus look like?"

I will say to the first group, "I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me water to drink. I didn't know anyone, and you offered to be my friend. I didn't have much to wear, and you gave me some clothes. I was sick, and you took care of me, and when I was in prison, you visited me."

The people will shake their heads and say, "What are you talking about? When did we feed you or give you a drink? When did we welcome you or give you clothes to wear? When did we take care of you and visit you in prison?"

Then I will answer, "Every time you helped another person, no matter who it was, you were actually helping me."

I wonder, "How can we help Jesus?"

How happy the people in the first group will feel. I needed their help, and they showed me love and care.

Then I will turn to the second group and say, "I was hungry, and you did not give me any food. I was thirsty, and you did not give me water to drink. I didn't know anyone and was very lonely, and you didn't even notice. I had no clothes, and you did not give me anything to wear. I was sick and in prison, and you never came to help me."

The people will shake their heads and reply, "What are you talking about? When did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or without clothes? When were you sick or in prison and we did nothing to help you?"

Then I will answer, "Every time you turned away from someone and did not help them, no matter who it was, you were actually turning away from me."

I wonder, "When has Jesus seen us turn away from helping others?"

How sad the people in the second group will feel. I needed their help and they turned away and did nothing.

The disciples remembered Jesus' story and passed it on. Eventually, it was written down so it would never be forgotten. Jesus wanted his followers to remember that when they did something kind for someone else, they were showing their love for him.

