



When Did We See You, Lord?

(based on Mathew 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 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."

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."

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.



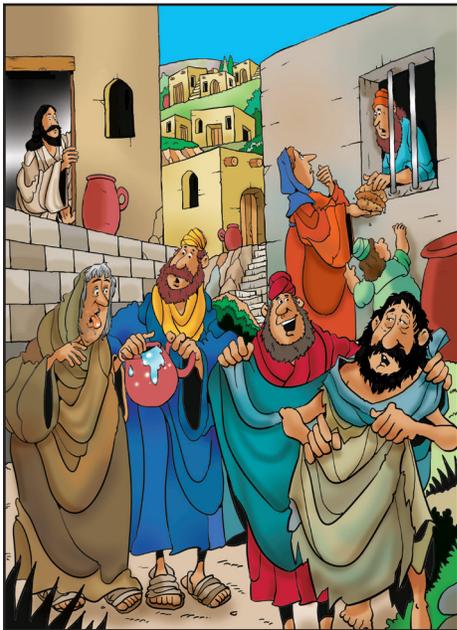
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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your family members—imagine and wonder.
- Imagine how you would feel if you were one of “the least of these” mentioned in the story. Use words or motions to show your feelings.
- Invite your family members to draw “the least of these” on one sheet of paper, having each person in the drawing showing a different need.



Responding to God's Grace

- Natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, and tornadoes are times when we have the opportunity to be more like sheep and less like goats. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance sends help like the ideas in today's story. Go to pda.pcusa.org to see recent examples of how people have helped others.
- There are plenty of needs very close to where you live. Assist your family members in assembling a complete meal to take to an area food pantry.
- Clothing collections are a way of providing help to people who don't have what they need. Go through your closets and find gently used clothing you can give to a shelter. Consider doing the same with books or toys for children who do not have them.

Celebrating in Gratitude

- If there are stories in the news about a recent disaster, guide your family members in learning how the people are being helped.
- If someone new moves into your neighborhood, as a family introduce yourselves to them. Find out what needs they may have as they move in and get used to a new place.
- Pray this prayer each day this week:

*Dear God, help us to be on the lookout for the least of these. We want to take care of them.
Amen.*