

Biblical Rationale for Human Care Ministry

It has been documented by a number of sources, that we now live in a post-Christendom Era (DJHall, BNewton, LBMead, PTickle,etc.). In the Christendom Era (300AD thru ~1960AD), congregations could often use the philosophy of “build it and they will come.” No longer. So, what is the Church to do? Give up? Forsake its mission? Lament its Christendom loss while trying to re-establish its Christendom status once again? Or, recognize the KAIROS with which God has blessed us? In many ways the Church has been taken back to the days of the Acts of the Apostles.

Matthew 25 can provide some guidance and direction for these days in its articulation of what our God and Jesus, our Lord, desires that we do with our time until He comes again.

31 ‘Whe

n the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, 31 ‘When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴Then the king will say to those at his right hand, “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵**for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.**” ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” ⁴⁰And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.” ⁴¹Then he will say to those at his left hand, “You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.” ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?” ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.” ⁴⁶And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’

The clue for where this comes from can be found in John 13 where Jesus washes His disciples

feet. This event builds on something Jesus said earlier as recorded in Matthew 22:34-40 and also in Mark 12:38-41. These passages make it clear that God's followers are here to serve God through serving those around them, just as their Lord, Jesus, the Christ did. Christendom Era or not, that is why God brought His Church into being, to serve.

While our salvation comes as a result of the grace and mercy of our God, having come into a faith relationship with Him, we are to become what we are through baptism, His children. Said a different way, our behavior is to reflect that of an obedient child. To become what we are, God's child, means that our behavior will reflect the God in whom we believe. Our God gave us the model for that behavior by coming and living among us. When we look at the life of Jesus, we see that model. Throughout His earthly ministry, our Lord showed us how to serve and be of service. As God has loved us, so we love others. We serve God, by being of service to one another.