

Parable – The Sheep and Goats



Discussion Outline:

- **Refresher – what are Parables and how did Jesus use them?**
- **Base Line – what do you remember about the Parable of the Sheep and Goats (i.e. The Final Judgment)?**
- **Examine what this parable means to us and how can we apply it in our lives today**
- **Couple Takeaways**

Refresher on Paraboles

Simile, Parable and Allegory

- **SIMILE:** A simile directly compares two essentially unlike things, often in a phrase introduced by like or as. As a result of this comparison, surprising new meanings and characteristics are ascribed to the object of the comparison. Examples: *She had a mind like a steel trap. His hair was black as midnight. The Pharisees were like blind guides.*
- **PARABLE:** A parable is a story, often brief, meant to convey a moral or religious point that is not explicitly stated in the story itself. The individual characters and elements in the story do not have special meanings in and of themselves. The parable is intended to be understood as a whole and to convey a single message.
- **ALLEGORY:** In an allegory characters and events are given symbolic meanings. For example, in a story about animals a monkey might represent people who are playful, a snake might stand for people who are evil or cunning, or a turtle may depict people who are slow. No matter what happens in the plot of the story itself, embedded comparisons to the various characters in the story are already present and obvious.



Why Parables?

- Greek word is *παραβολή* (*parabolē*), meaning "comparison, illustration, analogy."
- Comparisons and stories – two of the oldest teaching techniques
- **Jesus uses parables intentionally to turn people's understanding of the Kingdom upside down!**
- **"So when we hear a parable and we think 'isn't that nice and isn't that sweet' we're probably not listening very well because parables are designed to indict..." - Amy Jill-Levine**

**What comes to your
mind when you think
of the Parable of the
Sheep and Goats?**

Matthew 25 31-46

Matthew 25:31-46 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

The Judgment of the Nations

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. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³ and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴ Then 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, ³⁶ I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ ³⁷ Then 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? ³⁸ And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹ And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ ⁴⁰ And 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,^[a] you did it to me.’

⁴¹ Then 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; ⁴² for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I 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.' ⁴⁴ Then 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?' ⁴⁵ Then 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.' ⁴⁶ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Get your Popcorn



Context





Context:

- **Jews in the First Century:**
 - **Believed God would judge them on 2 standards:**
 - (1) Had they kept the Law and**
 - (2) Would get preferential treatment as God's Chosen People (*per William Barclay*).**

Context Cont'd:

- **The Parable of the Sheep and Goats is one of several Biblical passages that discuss the Final Judgment like Matthew 13: 41-42 and Revelations 14: 14-17**
- **Parallels to other Parables**
 - **Matthew (13: 24-30, 36-43, 47-50)**
 - **Matthew 25: 1-13**



Discussion Questions:

- **How did “Frances Elizabeth Marybelle” come across to you as an example of God’s sheep?**
- **How are good works treated in this Parable?**
- **How does God’s Grace factor in to the Final Judgment?**
- **How can we ensure we will be among the sheep chosen on Judgment Day?**
- **Do the sheep include non-Christians?**

Intermission



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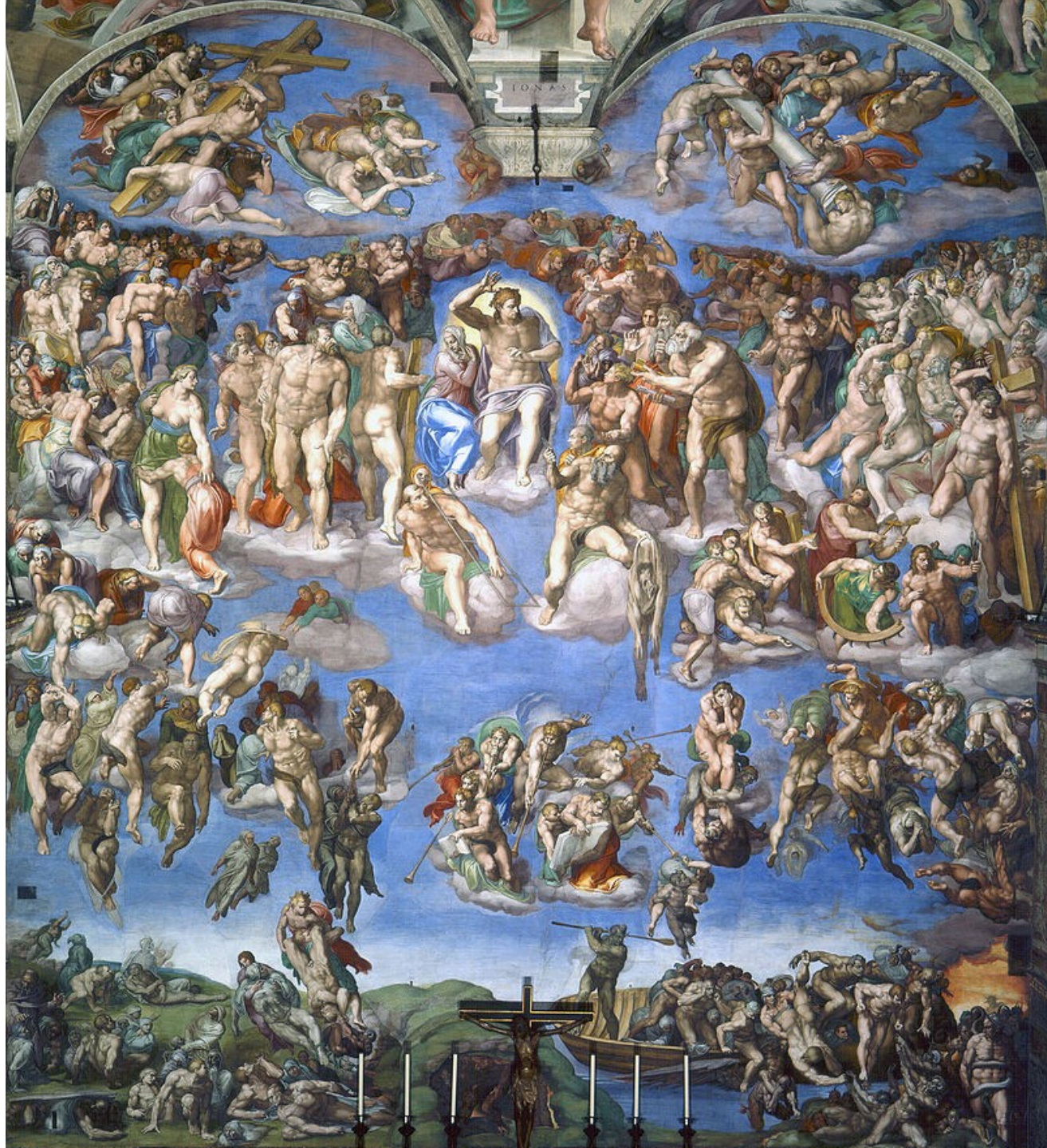
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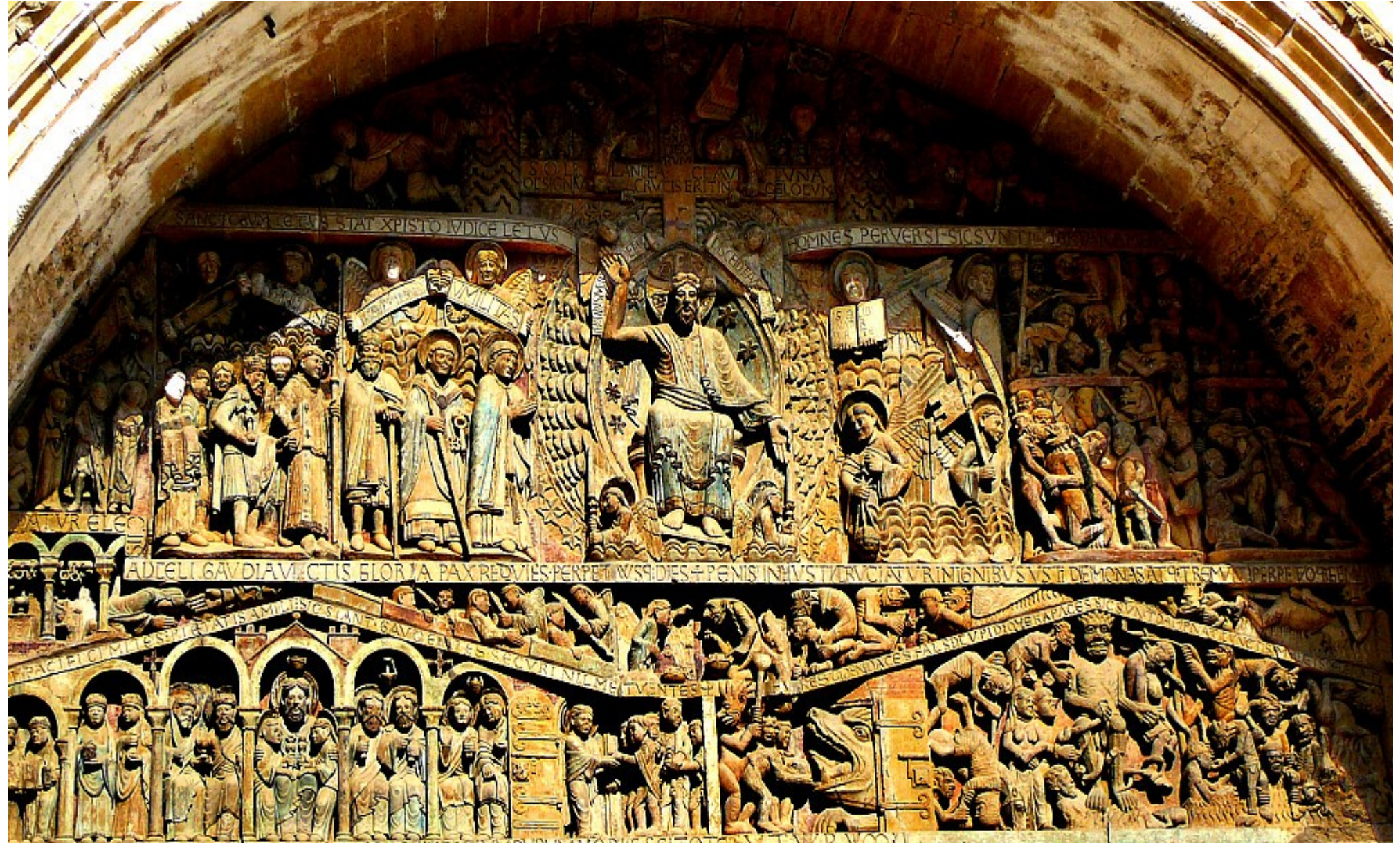












Some Takeaways

- 1. Good works flow from a deep, loving relationship with Christ. They are “not the root but rather the fruit of grace.” – *Simon Kistemaker***
- 2. How Each of us will be ultimately judged we just don’t know, but “He” (Christ) “is the love that will not let us go. If anybody can sort it all out, He can.” “Trust Him, therefore. And trust Him now. There is nothing more to do”. – *Robert Capon***

Thank you!

- **“The Parables of Jesus” – William Barclay**
- **“The Parables of Judgment” – Robert Farrar Capon**
- **“The Parables – Understanding the Stories Jesus Told” – Simon Kistemaker**
- **“The Oxford Bible Commentary”**