

# Monday, March 29

Today's Reading: Matthew Chapter 25

Today's Devotional Message is by Pastor Jeff Thackston

*"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'" Matthew 25:34-40*

Have you ever been to a Ballgame downtown and seen one of the beggars or street people and had that feeling come over you? You know that feeling, the one that wants to shake somebody and give that person a "good talking to." How you would tell them about the many opportunities they could have and how they should be ashamed of themselves for not working and how they probably have addictions issues and if they got those together, they would be a lot better. Et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

Sometimes it is just frustrating to see people mired down by their own actions. And then they want us to bail them out. We might even recite Bible passages to re-enforce our stance. "A man who does not work, shall not eat" ... I know it says that in the Bible. And then there is "a workman is worthy of His hire". "Be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the Holy Spirit", that one we use because everyone knows that all beggars are drunks.

So what would Jesus say about all this. I am sure that he would be right there with me, giving those people what for, because of their addictions and their laziness. Well, unfortunately for me, he says that it is my job to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and shelter the homeless. Yeah, Jesus, that's the ticket! You tell 'em ... "Huh, say what?" "You want me to do that?"

You heard the man ... Jesus wants us to care for those people, no matter what got them into the situation. While it may be easier for us to help a wounded veteran or a guy who lost his job because of layoffs, but Jesus does not seem to distinguish between the "good needy" and the "bad needy". He just simply says, "If you help someone in need, anyone, for whatever reason he might be in that situation, you are caring for me".

During the Lenten season, ask God to help you find some of these "least of these" people. Figure out a way to help. Jesus says that if you do, you won't be sorry. And who am I to argue with Him.