

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

AUGUST 16, 2020

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE:

ISAIAH 58:6-9 AND MATTHEW 25:31-46

This week we are focusing on the question: How can our actions honor God? And learning from the Bible that when we serve others, we are not only showing love to them but also to the Lord.

In the book of Isaiah, the prophet writes about what kind of fasting the Lord wants from His people. The people Isaiah was addressing were fasting (giving up food and drink) because they knew it was the rules but not because they truly loved the Lord and wanted to turn from their sin. So God gave Isaiah a message. God wanted His people to know that to truly please the Lord, they should love their neighbors - particularly their neighbors most in need. Isaiah tells people to feed the hungry and help those in need. The story Jesus tells in Matthew 25:31-46 echoes the words in Isaiah. *If you have not read the Matthew passage, please do so now.*

Which group honors and loves Jesus - the sheep or the goats? The sheep. Why? Because they loved and cared for people in need. Jesus' love for us is so deep and so strong, that He feels loved when we show love to each other! When we serve those in need, He feels served. And this isn't just something Jesus thinks is nice for us to do. It is something He calls us to do. The Bible tells us in 1 John 4:20: "Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen." Loving God and loving our neighbor go hand in hand. Take time as a family to talk about how you can serve those in need and take time to pray for them. It may seem hard to do during this season of quarantine, but many people are lonely and could use a phone call or note. Food banks are in need of food. There are still lots of ways to serve. See below for more ideas.

Activity Ideas

1. If you have the financial means to do so, have children make a list of foods that last a long time (non-perishables) and designate an adult to pick up 1, 2, 3 or all of the items on the list to donate to a local food bank.
(<https://www.sunlandfoodpantry.org/stock-the-pantry>)
2. Have closet clean out day and donate clothes that are still in good condition to a place like the Rescate Family Rescue Center. The church has done a clothing drive with them before. <https://www.rescatefamilycenter.org/donate>
3. Pull out the crayons, pencils and paper and create a card for a sick child. Read more about this at <http://www.cardsforhospitalizedkids.com/>.

*Truly, I tell you,
whatever you did for one of
the least of these
brothers and sisters of mine,
you did for me.*
~MATTHEW 25:40

