

## Thinking about our text

Today's Gospel lesson is the separation of all peoples into two groups—sheep and goats. Contained in this Gospel is the key point for us to believe, teach, and confess. Do you know what it is? Many people jump right to the *works* done by both groups. Those whom Jesus calls “sheep” are commended for showing love, grace, and mercy to people in their time for need, saying, “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,<sup>36</sup> I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me” (Matthew 25:35-36). The “goats,” those who will not receive eternal life, did not show that same love, grace, and mercy to the same type of people in their time of need.

So we're saved by works, right? Wrong. Look closely at where the separation is done. *Before any statement of works is made* the people are separated. How? Those with a relationship with Jesus are the “sheep,” and receive life with Him. Those without a relationship with Jesus are the “goats.” No relationship and no life eternal. How sad.



You see, faith leads us to live in the way Jesus commended those who received eternal life. James wrote (2:17), “*In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*” Paul showed how it all fits together in Ephesians 2:8-10— “*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*” We're saved by grace through faith for works of service. That's what Jesus is talking about. Is that how you're living?



## Pilgrim Lutheran Church

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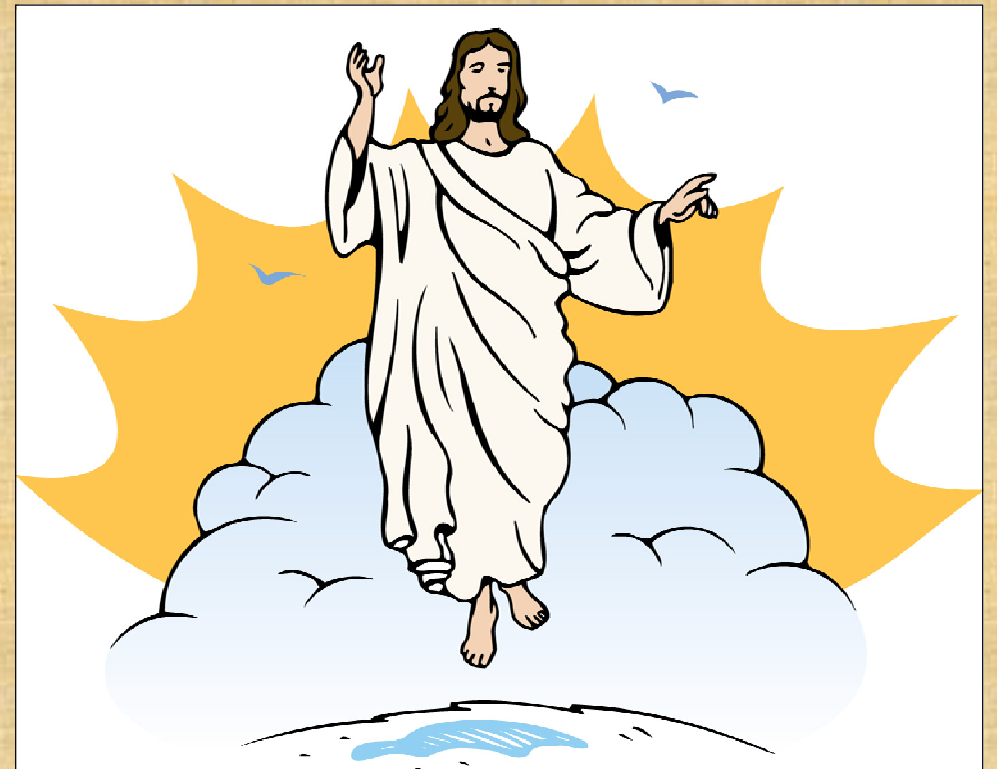
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Ministers: each member in daily life

# Pilgrim Lutheran Church

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Before <Jesus> will be gathered all the nations, and He will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

Matthew 25:32