



CrossRoads Notes:

Turn your Bibles to Matthew 25:34-40

Title: Ministering to Christ in the Midst of Disaster

Theme: Loving Christ by Ministering to His Disciples and Having Compassion on the Hurting

Introduction: *Our nation has just experienced what many are saying as being the worst natural disaster America has ever seen. According to an e-mail that I received from Pastor Rick Warren, of Saddle Back Church, hundreds of thousands of people have lost literally everything they own. More than 1 million people are without a home to live in right now. Hurricane Katrina has caused more than \$100 billion in damage.*

Proposition: *I would propose to you that through this disaster, the church has a great opportunity to show her love to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is our opportunity to show the world a church that is pleasing to God. James writes, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress..." (James 1:27a) Jesus can be ministered to and God will be pleased with the church that reaches out in compassion to those who are in distress from Hurricane Katrina.*

Interrogative Sentence: *Just how can Christians minister to Christ and be a witness to a people that are in distress?*

Transitional Sentence: *The results of Hurricane Katrina are an opportunity to show love to Christ through practical means in meeting the needs of those affected by this tragedy, this includes the Children of God and the lost.*

Matthew 25:34-40, "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.'"

It is best translated in the New American Standard Bible as "...Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me." "...The least of these or them..." here is like the answer Jesus gave the expert of the law when he asked, "who is my neighbor?"

This ministry involves a whole lot more than just shouting, raising hands, dancing, singing and the preaching of God's Word proclaimed in beautiful buildings. This

involves getting your hands dirty, a little sweat, spending some money, some time and some risk taking.

Illustration: Lord speaking to a man in prayer

It does no good for us to pray for a man to be well fed, clothed, and have shelter, if we have the means to help him and not do anything to provide food, clothing and shelter. If we have the food, clothing and the shelter, then God gave it to us and He expects us to use it for His glory.

Transitional Sentence: *The first thing we are to do as we enter into this battle of meeting the needs of those who are suffering from Hurricane Katrina is to pray.*

(Ephesians 6:18)

(James 5:16)

(James 1:5:17-18)

Those who are on the front lines meeting the needs of the victims of Hurricane Katrina are requesting prayer for:

- 1.) Protection for the relief workers.
- 2.) That the Lord would make the churches effective in helping the communities that are affected by the disaster.
- 3.) He would work on the hearts of business owners around the country who may donate the much-needed supplies to the region.
- 4.) Give pastors wisdom and insight as they attempt to lead their congregations to minister in the Gulf Coast Region.
- 5.) That the Lord would make Christians in the area sensitive to the urgent spiritual questions being asked by victims.
- 6.) That the Lord would provide the churches with the resources to meet the incredible needs they are encountering. The request for prayer came with this notation, "Nothing your church does right now is more valuable than time spent in prayer." (Prayer request put together by Purpose Drive Pastor.com)

Transitional Sentence: *Through prayer we are to get guidance on how to meet the practical needs of those in distress.* The first need to be met is food and drink and it should be given in away that show the life of Christ is living through us.

Illustration: Paul Fritz

It is those who set a place at the table for the hungry, they are the ones who minister to Christ through feeding the hungry. There are many in this nation today who are still in need of food and water in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Transitional Sentence: *Jesus teaches that those who minister to the hungry minister to Him and so do those who provide shelter for the homeless.*

Illustration: Brett Blair / Charles Spurgeon

Transitional Sentence: *Providing shelter for the needy is ministering to Christ and so is providing clothes.* There is a blessing from the Lord given to those who make sure that the needy are provided with clothes so as to withstand all conditions that they face in this life.

Illustration: Sermon Central Staff / Englishwoman, Anita Goulden.

Transitional Sentence: *Clothing the needy for the right reasons is ministry to Christ and so is ministering to the sick.* Compassion must issue deeds.

Illustration: Pastor Gregory Griffin

It cost the Good Samaritan something to be a good neighbor to the man who fell upon the unmerciful hands of robbers and who was in need of medical attention. It will cost everyone something to become involved with the health care of someone who has health problems, especially ongoing health problems. It will cost you time, strength and money to administer the love of Christ to the sick. The church must take this time to administer to Christ by participating in some way to help the physically injured and sick.

In Closing: *This parable spoken by Jesus Christ is crystal clear. Our response to the poor, persecuted, despised, afflicted, sick and those in suffering is a reflection to our relationship with Him.*

(James 2:14-18)

Illustration: Jim Difford

The Holy Spirit's call is to first pray, have ears to listen and then obey what the Lord would have us do as a church so we can minister to Christ by meeting the needs of the hurting, the homeless and the discouraged. We have a great opportunity to join the many churches that are being a part of what God is doing in America right now.

Let us Pray!!!