



## Church is a movement that includes

By Dave Parr

### CHAPTER THREE.

#### **An 'other-centred' movement. Matthew 25**

This episode will help you **engage, reflect and respond** to Church is. We encourage you to explore each episode with friends - if you do, let us know! We'd love to hear about it and your thoughts and ideas.

Each episode has a companion video and each episode title mirrors one of its key themes. Thanks for downloading.

**Companion video:** [churchis.co.uk/daveparr](http://churchis.co.uk/daveparr)

**Chapter:** THREE of FOUR



W W W . C H U R C H . C O . U K



## An 'other-centred' movement

Matthew 24 (NIV)

### The Sheep and the Goats



<sup>31</sup> "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. <sup>32</sup> All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. <sup>33</sup> He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

<sup>34</sup> "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. <sup>35</sup> 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, <sup>36</sup> 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.'

<sup>37</sup> "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?

<sup>38</sup> When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? <sup>39</sup> When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

<sup>40</sup> "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

The Gospels are littered with parables where Jesus explains that the real meaning of life is to live sacrificially and with a servant heart. He continually challenges the people he meets to love, serve and to prioritise the needs of others – particularly those who are excluded and overlooked. In this passage the message is clear. We're supposed to serve others; in doing so we honour God.

**We are made to live for others.**

In a different parable, a rich young ruler comes to ask Jesus how to inherit eternal life. The man explains that he keeps the law diligently but to his amazement Jesus tells him to sell everything he has and give it to the poor. He recognises that the young ruler has kept the law in a legalistic manner but he's still self-centred. The man hasn't yet understood the deep truth that the law seeks to approximate. The truth that we are made to live for others.

**We learn what it really means to be alive as we live openly.**

Throughout the Gospels Jesus is also at pains to point out that we don't change others by being generous, servant hearted or sacrificial. That's not the point. In reality we change; we become more human as we serve others. We learn what it really means to be alive as we live openly.

So church has to be a movement that supports and encourages people to be involved. To serve unconditionally and to live with an open hand not a closed fist. If we really want to follow Jesus, we have to be 'other-centred' not self-centred.

## Questions:

### Following

- How 'other-centred' are you? What one thing could you do to serve someone else?
- Can you think of a time when you have grown and learnt more clearly about what it means to be human through serving others?

### Church

- If Jesus calls us all to live for others, what implications does this have for the role of Church in our communities?
- If we are supposed to reach out to those on the margins, who are those groups of people and what could we do to serve them?

### Action

- What more could you and your church be doing to serve your community?