

Reveal – “God Helps Those Who Help Themselves”

Week 2 – October 17, 2021

Scripture: Matthew 25:31-46 and Ephesians 2:1-5, 8-9

Grab your Bible and a few people to connect with. Look up the verses below and share your thoughts. It's that easy!

Share: Is there something your family says/said that you thought was in the Bible? Or maybe there is a phrase you question now?

Read the scripture from Matthew 25:31-46 and Ephesians 2:1-5, 8-9 together: Take turns reading if you prefer. Enjoy the different Bible translations we each read.

Discuss the following context:

There are multiple sayings people trust which are attributed to the Bible. Many of these truisms are half truths and many are not in the Bible at all. A survey by the Barna Group, a Christian polling firm, found that better than eight in ten Americans think “God helps those who help themselves” is in the Bible. In fact, more than half of the respondents were strongly convinced that this is one of the major messages of Scripture.

False beliefs or half truths can distort the way we live out the truth of Jesus in our community. If we have wrong belief about God, others, and the world it can cause harm to individuals and communities, ultimately creating division. In a world with so much misinformation, false narratives, and misleading facts it is important to start to reclaim and realign beliefs that could lead to alternative facts.

Share your thoughts about following questions:

1. Compare the phrases “God only helps those who will help themselves” and “you have to pick yourself up by the bootstraps”. In our culture, these phrases can be used to shame those who do not have abilities, resources, or are struggling. They can also be used to avoid helping those around us who truly cannot help themselves. How else can these phrases be harmful?
2. There are people who are in such a deep hole in life they have no ability to help themselves and God calls His community to do this work. Consider this revised phrase: “God helps those who cannot help themselves”. God accomplishes this through His people (Matthew 25:31-46) and through His grace (Ephesians 2:1-5, 8-9).
 - a. Helping those who cannot help themselves is not optional if you are a follower of Christ. What can happen if the people we encounter who need help are viewed as an opportunity God placed in our path?
 - b. How can serving others inspire us to a deeper faith?
3. We all need help at some point in our lives. The truth is that NO ONE, not one person, can truly and wholly “help themselves”. Christ’s entire focus was to enter into this world on a rescue mission to save humanity from itself and truly “help those who cannot help themselves”. How will you respond the next time you encounter the phrase “God helps those who help themselves”?

Pray together: Ask each other to share what is on your heart today. God is the only one who can truly help others and He activates communities through His power to come along others to “help”. Thank God that He provides us with opportunities to love and care for others. Ask Him to see people the way He sees them, and to love people the way He loves them. Praise God for His grace, kindness and forgiving love.