

**TEXT** Matthew 25:31-46

**OBJECTIVE** The students will be able to explain that we choose where we will spend eternity by what we choose to do here on earth.

**MEMORY VERSE** Choose you this day whom ye will serve. — Joshua 24:15

# The Sheep and the Goats

## MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

**CHOOSE** — Extend left hand and make “V” with first two fingers with palm side of “V” facing you; with the right thumb and index fingertips (the rest of the fingers curled in a fist) reach toward the left hand and pick an imaginary berry of one of the two fingers describing the “V” (concept is choosing between two objects).

**YOU** — Point to an imaginary person.

**THIS DAY** — Extend both hands, palms up, with a 45 degree angle between forearm and bicep; briskly move arms down to a 90 degree angle.

**WHOM YE** — Point to an imaginary person.

**WILL SERVE** — Palms up, move hands alternately to and from body (concept: offering a tray of food to others).

## MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Cut apart the figure looking at two arrows pointing opposite directions. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Put up the pieces one piece at a time as the students learn the verse.

## BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

**Introduction:** Bring two packed suitcases to class. Open them together with your students. In one have articles related to a summer vacation at the beach: sunglasses, swimsuit, towel, thongs, sun lotion, etc. In the other, have articles appropriate for a vacation in the mountains: mittens, scarves, sweaters, ski boots, etc. Discuss the fact that we can guess where a person is going by the preparation he has made. Explain that we choose where we will spend eternity by what preparation we choose to make here on earth.

1. Describe the coming of Jesus to sit on His throne of Glory.
2. Explain the division of the righteous and unrighteous.
3. The righteous will receive their rewards.
4. The wicked will receive punishment.

**Climax:** The righteous inherit the Kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

**Conclusion:** It is of vital importance to be numbered among the “sheep” on that day.

**Response:** The students will be able to explain what determines whether we will be numbered with the sheep or the goats, and must realize there will be no chance to move from among the goats to the sheep.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This parable clearly illustrates the importance of serving God in this present world in order to inherit the Kingdom of God.

Just as a shepherd must separate the wild goats which roam the hills from his own flock, so Jesus will separate His true followers from those who belong to the world. In Scripture, the “right hand” denotes a place of blessing and honor (Romans 8:34). Thus the sheep are placed at Christ’s right hand.

In the account of the rich man and Lazarus and in this parable, no great sins of those who are condemned are mentioned but they are condemned for not doing what they should.

In Matthew 25:46 the same Greek adjective is used for “everlasting” and “eternal.” Thus to diminish the eternity of Hell is also to diminish the eternity of Heaven.

## IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Bring to class any label, as from a can or box of food. Explain that we can tell what is in the box or can by the label. We do not have to open it to find out what is in it. Ask the children if they know that every Christian also has a “label.” The label is the way one lives. If Jesus is in their heart, they love others and do things that let other people know that they are Christians. All people need to do is read the label, their lives. Certainly if their temper flares up and they get mad at the least little thing, they are not labeling themselves as a Christian.

In discussing the importance of choices and how they affect one’s life or destiny, together with the students make up a list of Bible characters and their choices and the effects of these choices. For example: Adam and Eve — put out of the Garden; Noah obeyed God and

built an ark — was safe (the rest of the population refused to give heed and drowned); Daniel obeyed God — was delivered from the lions' den; David loved and followed God and slew Goliath who defied the God of Israel and lost his life. Bring out that God doesn't send anyone to Hell but one's actions indicate where he/she is headed — everyone makes a choice.

Bring to class pictures of items you might want on a vacation in Hawaii and items needed for a skiing vacation. These can be clipped from old magazines or catalogs. Let students take turns choosing an item and write the name of each choice on a blackboard under the proper heading — HAWAII — SKIING. When the items have all been chosen, ask the students if they can think of more to add to the list. What things might they do in preparation to enjoy the vacation more? (Learn to swim — or ski. Exercise and be in good shape physically so they can engage in the activity with less stress. Save money for lessons, etc.) Bring out that long before they actually leave on vacation, family and friends will know by their preparations where they are planning to go and what type of a vacation they expect to enjoy. Not only what they do but what they talk about will indicate their plans.

Use two hearts, either with pockets or a double heart stitched together, having a zipper or Velcro opening. In one heart put pictures or words which represent good behavior. In the other heart, put pictures or words which represent bad behavior. Use these to illustrate that what we choose to do here on earth will determine where we will spend eternity.

On one side of a chalkboard or a piece of posterboard, write the words SHEEP and GOATS. Compose a list of words which indicate Christian or non-Christian behavior. Have your class discuss the meaning of each word and place it in the proper category.

## QUESTIONS

What does a sheep represent in today's lesson?

What does a goat represent?

What should we do if we know someone is hungry?

Explain how doing things for others is the same as doing things for Jesus.

What reward does Jesus have for those who take care of others?

What punishment does God have for those who are selfish and only take care of themselves?

How can we best let Jesus know that we love Him?

## PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Give each child a sheep finger-puppet and a goat finger-puppet (see Patterns). Explain that God compared the people who did good to sheep and the people who did bad to goats. Have them hold up the proper animal when you describe various types of behavior.

Give children objects or pictures representing choices — let them select which they like best. Some examples: red or green, dog or cat, ocean or mountains, rose or daffodil. Then talk about the most important choice: whether they want to have a sin-spotted heart or clean heart. Discuss how we get a clean heart. Tie this to the memory verse.

Copy the illustration of the open Bible (see Patterns). On one side of the Bible glue the picture of flames. On the other side glue the sketch of heavenly mansions. Allow your little ones to stick happy- and sad-face stickers on the appropriate pages. Sad-face stickers can be easily made by drawing faces on precut round stickers.

Give each child a picture of a flock of sheep and goats (see Patterns). Tell them that the shepherd wants only the sheep to be in his flock. Have them put an X through the goats.

## REVIEW IDEAS

Show a number of choices of which only one can be chosen. For instance: Would you like to listen to this record or that one? Will you go through this door or that door? Shall I pour water or milk into your glass? Explain that we cannot serve two masters. We must make a choice between God or the devil.

Make a series of two-sided pictures or stick puppets illustrating choices of behavior: stealing/telling the truth; disobeying/obeying; being selfish/sharing; being kind/being mean (see Patterns). Talk about how the choices we make will decide where we spend eternity. Final stick puppet should be flames in Hell on one side/mansions in Heaven on the reverse.

Retell Willie Struhar's testimony, focusing on the part where she dreams she is at the Judgment. (See Tract No. 32, "A Little Child Shall Lead Them.")

## COORDINATING SONGS

"I Have Decided"

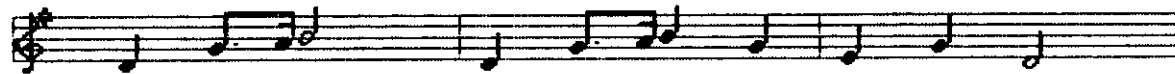
"Behold, Behold"

"One Door and Only One"

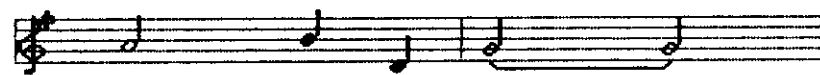
# MEMORY VERSE SONG



Choose you this day whom ye will serve; Choose you this day,



Choose you this day. Choose you this day whom whom ye serve;



Choose you this day.

# MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

