

## A Judgment Day Parable

By Mark Koenig -- November 2002 Pastor's Column

A well respected man dies and finds himself in front of the pearly gates. Finding no one around, he knocks. A presence appears, so obviously God, and says, "May I help you"? The man, a little shaken, still manages, "Well, I guess I've died and would like to come in".

"Well we don't take just anyone here, this is a special place for those who have lived a just life", God replies.

The man, rather certain of himself, blurts out, "Well there is no question in my case, I have loved my parents, brothers, sisters; have provided for my wife, daughter, and son - given them everything, and they are now well off. That is a just life, isn't it?"

God thinks a minute then says, "I'd like you to meet a few more relations of yours - wait here and I'll call them".

As a few dozen men and women start to assemble, the man is mystified for he doesn't recognize a single face, but more baffling, they are a many-hued assortment of every race and culture he has ever seen.

The man jumps in, "There must be some mistake, I don't know any of these people, how could these people be related to me?"

God very calmly gestures to an Asian woman standing beside the man, "Lo Ba, please look at the tag inside his sweater". The woman pulls the collar of the man's cardigan and reads the label. "Is it one?", God asks. "Oh yes it is", the woman replies.

"Well", says God, "it seems that your favorite sweater was made by Lo Ba in Nha Trang, along with 22,156 others she was able to knit until she came to me when her body temperature went over 104, one hot and humid day at work.

"Please also say hello to Jesus Perales, he built your SUV in San Paulo."

"Oh boy", the man lit up, "we did we have fun with that truck. My wife would joke that I'd try to take it with me to..."

God interrupted, "Jesus did some really excellent work assembling that truck, but he didn't fair so well, you see, he licked his fingers ever time he had to tag a finished truck and he slowly poisoned himself with heavy metals."

Before the man could say anything, God calls a small hunchbacked woman from the back of the group and says, "Graciela, Can you still smell the red peppers and cilantro you grew for the food you sold on the street?"

"Si, Si my Lord", she laughs, "If it were not for my back I'd still be making chapotes,

and tamales to sell in the wealthy part of town".

Even though he dimly recalls her face standing outside his gated community, the man's growing unease gets the better of him and he cries out, "But what's all this got to do me, I've had nothing, nothing to do with these people".

"Oh I'm sorry", God replies, "I was just trying to answer your first question about whether you've lead a just life. These friends of mine are related to you by their work and their gifts that you have consumed, even if you hadn't the time to see or hear them.

"You see, I am your judge, just as you were always taught, but I thought I'd introduce you to your jury".