

Parables of Jesus

The Parable of the Dragnet

Mat 13:47-52 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, (48) which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. (49) So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, (50) and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” (51) Jesus said to them, “Have you understood all these things?” They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.” (52) Then He said to them, “Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old.”

What happens at end age?

The movies tell us that we’ll be taken over by machines, or the earth will be destroyed, there’ll be extraterrestrial visitations, or the sun will burn out.

Eschatology – the study of end times – has all sorts of theories about 666, the mark of the beast, Armageddon.

The secular told us that the world would end 21-12-12.

But all speculation aside, this parable tells us the things that we really need to know about what’s going to happen at the end.

But instead of starting at the beginning of this passage of Scripture, I’m going to look at the last bit first.

1. Instructed Scribes

Jesus finished off this parable by adding something that’s easy to ignore because its meaning isn’t immediately apparent.

He had just told the parable to His disciples and asked them if they understood.

When they said that they did, He linked His next comment to the parable by using the word “therefore.”

You probably know what they say: If you see a “therefore,” look and see what it’s there for.

What was it that Jesus’ disciples claimed to understand?

They understood the parables that contained the secrets of the Kingdom of God.

And since they understood the things of the Kingdom of God, they were now like scribes instructed concerning the Kingdom.

A scribe was a teacher of the Law, a teacher of the Scriptures.

And interestingly, the word translated “instructed” literally means disciplined.

It’s the same word that’s used in Matthew 28:19 when Jesus tells His disciples to make “disciples” of all nations.

It’s the same word that’s used in Acts 11:26 when it says that the “disciples” were first called Christians at Antioch.

So when Jesus refers to scribes “instructed” concerning the kingdom of heaven, it could just as easily be translated “disciplined” into the kingdom of heaven.

This scribe or teacher of the Scriptures is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old.

Treasure is the same word used in the Parable of the Treasure.

Jesus said that the treasure comes out of the heart.

“Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. (35) A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.” (Mat 12:34-35)

So let's try and put all this information together.

Jesus is saying that if you understand all these things, the secrets of KOG, and become teacher of Scripture disciplined to the Kingdom of God, you're like householder bringing forth new and old from the treasure of your heart.

Notice it's both new and old.

The disciples only had the Old Testament Scripture, but they lived under the New Covenant.

Notice that Jesus mentions the new first?

The New Testament takes precedence over the Old Testament, which means that you always have to interpret the Old Testament in the light of the New Testament, and not the other way round.

The New Covenant principles are often hidden in the Old covenant Scriptures.

Someone said it like this: The new is in the old contained; the old is in the new explained. The new is in the old concealed; the old is in the new revealed. The new is in the old enfolded; the old is in the new unfolded.

2. The Dragnet Parable

Let's take a look now at the parable itself.

This parable is about the end of the age.

And Jesus relates it to fishing, something His disciples would have readily understood.

The dragnet was a net that was set up between two boats, or between one boat and the shore. It was weighted down and dragged along, forming a cone.

So when they dragged it through the water, the fish would get trapped in it and brought to land.

3. The Sea

The other parables in this chapter are all land-based parables.

There's the parable of the sower, the parable of the wheat and the tares, the parable of the mustard seed, the parable of the hidden treasure, and the parable of the pearl.

But this parable is based in the ocean.

So what is the significance of the ocean?

I always think that it's best to let Scripture interpret Scripture.

Isaiah 57:20 But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

Revelation 17:15 Then he said to me, “The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.”

We see from these Scriptures that the sea represents people.

So it's no surprise when Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 4:19 that He would make them fishers of men.

So the sea represents all of humanity, but the fish represent the individual souls of men.

And in this haul there are good fish and bad fish.

This goes back to Deuteronomy 14:9-10 where the Law laid down the difference between clean and unclean creatures that live in the water.

In the same way, there are good and there are bad people.

4. The End of the Age

Jesus then explains the meaning of the parable.

It is a parable about the end of the age.

First of all, we can see from this that there will be an end.

Life is not just going to go on forever on this planet.

There will come a point when God will bring all things to a close and a new age will begin.

Peter talks about “the end of all things.” (1 Peter 4:7)

Paul says, “Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.” (1 Corinthians 15:24)

This parable has a similar theme to the Parable of the Wheat and Tares.

Both of them are talking about the final judgment.

In this one, the net is dragged through the sea of humanity and the souls of men are brought to shore.

At this time, the angels go forth and begin the work of separation

This will be a time of great excitement for those who are followers of Christ.

But it will be a time of great terror for those who have rejected Him.

Here is how the Scriptures describe it:

Luke 21:26 men’s hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of heaven will be shaken.

Rev 6:15-16 And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, (16) and said to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!”

The good fish are put into vessels of water to be preserved alive, but the bad fish are thrown away.

This is the great separation that takes place at the end of the age.

The wheat are separated from the tares; the sheep from the goats; the righteous from the unrighteous; the just from the wicked; those who have chosen the narrow road that leads to life from those who have chosen the broad road that leads to destruction; those who have chosen heaven from those who have chosen hell; those who have received grace from those who will receive judgment; the sons from the rebels.

This is the great separation at the end of the age.

At that point, the time for decisions is over.

The choice to follow Christ and receive the gift of eternal life has to be made in this life.

It’s too late in the next.

5. What Happens

Jesus says that the wicked will be cast into the furnace of fire.

Rev 20:14-15 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. (15) And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Some people seem to think that Jesus just talked about nice stuff all the time.

I haven’t checked it out myself, but it’s been said that Jesus talked more about hell than about heaven.

This parable is a good example.

Those who refuse to follow Jesus are cast into the lake of fire.

This is pretty serious stuff.

Six times in Matthew, Jesus describes the place where the wicked go by saying there will be “wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

This is a description of a place where there is overwhelming despair, regret, grief, and sorrow.

But the good fish are first separated from the bad.

These are the ones that are fit for the Master's use.

Here's what happens to them:

Romans 8:19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.

Romans 8:30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

The sons of God will be revealed and glorified.

You might look like an ordinary person right now, but if you're a follower of Christ, you'll be anything but ordinary in the next life.

Revelation 21:3-5 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. (4) And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." (5) Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."

Yes, like the ad says, "But wait, there's more."

In this passage in Revelation, we find out that there will be no more tears, or death, or sorrow, or crying, or pain, and that all the old things will have passed away.

Other Scriptures tell us that we will receive a new resurrection body; we will be strong and powerful; and we will rule and reign with Christ.

If you can't get excited about that, then absolutely nothing will inspire you!

So I want to finish this message by asking you a question: Whose team you on today? Where does your destiny lie?