

MATTHEW 13:44-52 TREASURE, DRAGNETS, OLD AND NEW

We are at the end of this section in which Jesus teaches in parables. Please remember that Jesus chose to teach this way in order to thin the herd; that is, He is sorting those who really want to hear and learn from the hangers-on and wannabe's. That seems harsh to many, but it is done for a reason. Jesus doesn't want anyone to spend eternity in a place in which they didn't choose. Therefore, He makes sure everyone gets in the correct line, so to speak.

Over the past few weeks as we have dealt with these parables, we have seen many truths expounded. All of these truths speak of the kingdom. The kingdom is like a field in which seed is sown, but the soil into which the seed falls can be very different. The condition of the heart of the people can vary greatly from one person to another. And this determines whether or not the seed grows to produce fruit or if it never meets that end.

The kingdom is also likened to a field in which weeds have been sown or planted alongside the wheat. We are to resist pulling up the weeds because they look so much like the wheat. God will render judgment on the Last Day.

Then we saw how the kingdom will grow beyond what anyone believed would be its normal capacity. Though small in number, the impact on this world would be immense. And that is has been.

It is at this point that I would like to read back through the section leading up to where we find ourselves today. After all, it has been a few weeks since we were in this passage.

Mt. 13: 36-43

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

37 He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. 38 The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but

the tares are the sons of the wicked one. 39 The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. 40 Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. 41 The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, 42 and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

Jesus interprets the parable of the wheat and the tares. The parable ends with a great judgment of **“all things that offend.”** It is at that point that the righteous will shine forth. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. Those who want to hear this parable and its meaning will get it. Those that reject it certainly have that right, but they do so at their own detriment. Once again, there is some sorting being done already. But, there is always time for the truth to sink down into the heart of the hearer and bear fruit at some later time.

We now get to the part of this section of Jesus’ teaching.

The Parable of the Hidden Treasure

44 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price

45 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, 46 who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

The Parable of the Dragnet

47 “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.”

There are three parts to this section. That is typical of the parables.

At first glance, verses 44 and 45 seem to be redundant. And while there are

similarities, there is also a major difference.

SIMILARITIES: In both instances, something of value was found and the finder did whatever it took to acquire the treasure.

- Not speaking of buying salvation. This is a parable.
- What about the ethics of the man who hid the treasure after he found it in order to then buy it. Once again, this is a parable. There is only one character. Therefore there is only one main theme.
- Burying treasure was common in those days. This setting makes the parable believable to a first century audience and is important to the context.
- The treasure or the pearl is to be obtained whatever the cost.
- **Is this how we view obtaining the kingdom?**

Difference: One man stumbles across the treasure whereas the other is diligently seeking for it.

- There are those who diligently seek truth and there are those who apathetically stumble across it, but it grabs them nevertheless. We never know who will respond positively to the truth. We just know that everyone needs it and needs to hear it.
- In either case, the priorities of the one finding the treasure changed drastically due to the importance of the find.
- **Has the Gospel of the Kingdom changed the way in which we order our lives or have we just added the kingdom to our list of treasures/ finds?**

I stress this because I believe in the Western world it is easy to do this very thing. We can be so comfortable that we don't necessarily see the need for a coming kingdom or we can allow our wealth and comfort to blind us to the more important issues of the kingdom as it now exists prior to the second coming of Jesus.

I believe this is partly because we don't see the seriousness of the other parts of the parable section. It is one that Jesus repeated in order to bring home a point.

The Parable of the Dragnet

47 "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."

- Dagnet defined.
- "Kind" defined. Genos, tribe, the peoples of this world.
- The Gospel of the kingdom casts a very large net and there are all types that are caught in it. Once again, this is the kingdom, not the church.
- But in the end, there is a judgment where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth.
- Hell is a reality.
- Jesus continues to come back to the subject of Hell in order to get across the hearer the seriousness and reality of Hell. That isn't taught that much any more.
- But without the reality of the judgment, the treasure doesn't have the same value. There is urgency here and we need to be aware of it.

Jesus finally asks His disciple if they understand.

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."

Jesus seems to take the disciples at their word and moves on with another short parable to recap things.

- Householder with things old and new. Digging through the closet.
- Jesus' teaching takes the OT and refocuses it. Therefore He is taking the old and making something new out of it, in a sense.

Have we found so great a treasure as the kingdom? Or should I ask, "Have we seen the kingdom as a treasure worth more than all else?"

Or does the treasure of the kingdom pale in comparison to what the world offers in our eyes?

“A man is not thought a fool who gives up what he can’t keep in order to gain what he can’t lose.”

Having a part to play in the kingdom now as well as the kingdom to come... priceless!