

Sunday October 30th, 2005

Matthew 13 Part 11
The Parable of the Dragnet – Part 1

- 1). As we begin today let's remember some things the Lord said to His disciples
 - a). Mt 13:11 *He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,*
 - b). And in making known these 'mysteries' He makes clear Mt 13:35b... *"I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world."*

- 2). And here we come to the 7th of the 7 parables in Matthew 13 – bringing to completion and to conclusion that which is dealt with throughout the parables - Mt 13:19 *"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, - the proclamation and offer of the kingdom of the heavens rejected by Israel to the 'one new man in Christ' – the Church.*

- 3). And we have seen throughout these parables that Christ gives a complete history of the church throughout this dispensation to the conclusion of this age with regards to the 'word of the kingdom' and in so doing does exactly that recorded in Isaiah - Isa 46:9 *Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'*

- 4). In these parables God has declared 'the end from the beginning' and has 'from ancient times' shown us that which is 'not yet done' and we would do well to note that His 'counsel shall stand' and He will do all His pleasure.
 - a). Theologians and church historians may come to whatever conclusion they wish, but events for Christians in relation to the offer of the Kingdom of the Heavens will be exactly as God has stated in His word from the beginning. A wife will be taken from the body of the man and together they will have dominion.
 - b). And if we will understand what He has said from the beginning we will not find ourselves in a place of ignorance, confusion or error.

5). These final three parables that Jesus gives back inside the house have as their focus events that take place at the end of this dispensation at the close of the age. The purchase of the Field in the Parable of the Treasure and the purchase of the Pearl in the Parable of the Pearl present events dealing with God's completing His work within His church, the redemption of the inheritance for His bride, but this is inseparable from His renewed dealings with Israel during Daniel's 70th week, the time of Jacob's trouble, that which we call the Tribulation. Hence His return to the house. (Visual of time line showing in and out of the house)

a). The third of these three parables, that of the Dragnet, begins with past events, but has as its focus events that take place subsequent to the purchase of the field – the redemption of the inheritance. And the purchase of the Pearl.

6). Let's look at it - Mt 13:47 *"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."*

a). This then presents to us the conclusion of God's dealings with Christians in relation to the Kingdom of the Heavens.

b). Let us understand the symbolism.

c). The parable begins with events that take place throughout this dispensation – 'a dragnet that was cast into the sea'

d). The sea we will remember is a picture of the Gentile nations, the group from whom the majority of the church would be drawn - Ac 15:14 *"Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name - The group that would make up the Pearl of great price.*

e). The dragnet is a picture of the salvation of the spirit, by grace through faith – passing from eternal death into eternal life. This is the gospel of grace delivered to those dead in trespasses and sins.

1Co 2:2 *For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*

Ac 16:31 *So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."*

f). The some of every kind who are gathered are all those who have responded to the gospel of grace – all those who are born again – all those

who are Christians. It would be the same thought as every tribe, nation and tongue.

g). It would perhaps be worth noting that Jesus said to His disciples Mt 4:19 *Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."*

h). And that very early in the history of the church the fish became a symbol for Christ and the faith and those who followed Him – the Greek word for fish *ichthus* is composed of the first letter of each word in the Greek phrase, ‘Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour’

i). When the net is full and drawn to shore would show us the separation that takes place when those ‘in Christ’ are no longer Jew or Gentile. Instead being part of the one new man.

Ga 3:28 *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

And would reference the end of the dispensation when the entire church, all believers from the last 2000 years will be raptured to the JSOC –

2Co 5:10a *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,*

j). That Christians who are gathered are classified ‘good’ and ‘bad’, ‘just and wicked’ should be of no surprise to us. A distinction such as this was also given in the parable of the wedding feast, another parable dealing with the proclamation and offer of the kingdom of the heavens –

Mt 22:10 *"So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.*

k). ‘Gathered together all whom they found’ would be the same thing as the dragnet cast into the sea – in both instances we see the gathering of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ and all are Christians.

7). Although the parable begins with the introduction of the gospel of grace, the net cast in the sea, which it must as this is the beginning point -

1Co 3:11 ¶ *For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* - we must keep in mind that the focus of the parable is dealing with issues beyond salvation by grace. We are dealing with issues surrounding our heavenly calling. Issues surrounding the inheritance.

Issues surrounding being a coheir with Christ. Being adopted as a first born son. The salvation of the soul.

Ro 8:16 *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 ¶ and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*

(Teach this)

8). Scripture is abundantly clear that not all Christians will have an inheritance in the coming Kingdom – something that relates to the Kingdom age alone – not to eternity. (Visual of this)

a). 1Co 6:9 ¶ *Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.*

b). Ga 5:19 *Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

c). 1Co 3:11 ¶ *For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

d). What we see then in our parable is this very separation between those who receive a reward and those who suffer loss. Those who inherit the Kingdom and those who don't.

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.

9). What we see is a final and conclusive separation that takes place amongst the saved in respect of the Millennial Kingdom of Christ.

a). This separation is not an arbitrary one, but the last in what for the faithful Christian, will have been a process of separations. And it will be our personal response to this process of separation that will determine which of these two groups – the 'good' or the 'bad' we will be a part of.

10). Our entire Christian experience begins in separation in the antitype of the light separating the darkness in Genesis 1:4 and the land being separated from the water in Genesis 1:9

- a). Eph 2:5 *even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),*
- b). This is the experience of all Christians and happens because of the finished work of another – it is a separation from eternal death into eternal life that can never be reversed. It is done by God for us. And is given to us as a free gift
- c). Ro 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

11). From this point onwards however, our participation in the separation process, that which we might call sanctification becomes a matter of individual choice. The choice we make has no effect upon the free gift but does impact what happens to us at the ‘end of the age’. The ‘good’ are gathered into vessels. The ‘bad’ are thrown away.

12). There are numerous parables that the Lord gives in relation to the saved and the kingdom that show this separation.

- a). There are the ten virgins of Matthew 25 who are divided into two groups of five based on the separation of those who are constantly filled with the Spirit from those who are not.

Mt 25:10 "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'

- b). The wedding guest of Matthew 22 who is separated from the other wedding guests through not having a wedding garment - Mt 22:11 *"But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. 12 "So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. 13 "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14 "For many are called, but few are chosen."*

- c). And he who was separated from his fellow servants by doing nothing with the talent given him – Mt 25:30 *'And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

13). We can see that these separations all occur at the same terminal point in exactly the same time frame as the Parable of the Dragnet. And all have as their focus entrance into or exclusion from the kingdom of the heavens. And

show the dual outcome of reward and loss. The separation of Christians at the JSOC is by no means an isolated idea. It is more than well documented

14). That this separation takes place is absolutely inevitable and as we said earlier the outcome for us will be determined by our response to the separation process during our time here on earth

a). Within the context of the Matthew 13 parables witness the parable of the Sower. (Object lesson – 16 volunteers – take one out for each separation)

i/ the wayside – separation

ii/ Stony Places – separation

iii/ thorns and briars – separation

iv/ Wheat and tares – separation

v/ Mustard seed – separation

vi/ leaven – separation

b). In a more general sense for ‘anyone who hears the word of the kingdom – will you draw deeply from the well of water - separation

i/ will you go with this man? – Leave behind the land of your birth, the world and all it has to offer to go to the land of your calling, a heavenly land – just as Abraham, Rebekah, Ruth - Separation

Ii/ will you turn back having started – Orpah, Lot’s wife - separation

Iii/ will you work from morning to night in His field - separation

Iv/ will you wash / anoint/ put on the garment - separation

V/ suffer with Christ - die to self – pick up your cross daily – walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh. - separation

Vi/ will you humble yourself - separation

Vii/ seek His kingdom and His righteousness first - separation

Vii/ store up treasures in heaven – rich young ruler -separation

Viii/ enter by the narrow gate – separation

c). Mt 7:13 *"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.*

14 "Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

d). I picture this like flour that is being graded. At each stage some is separated until what is left is that which has been ground the finest – that which has entered by the narrow gate

15). The day is coming and soon is when we shall all stand at the judgment seat of Christ and we will be separated into one of two groups. The 'good' will be gathered into vessels. The 'bad' will be thrown away.

a). Mt 22:14 "For many are called, but few are chosen."

(conclusion of the visual – have all 16 come together again and take out the one left)

16). And I would ask us all to keep in mind the example of the first generation of Israel - 1Co 10:11 *Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.*

Heb 3:19 *So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*

a). They were separated from Joshua and Caleb because of unbelief. They did not have faith resulting in obedience in their lives in respect of what God had said about entering the land

b). Nu 32:12 *'except Caleb the son of Jephunneh, the Kenizzite, and Joshua the son of Nun, for they have wholly followed the LORD.'*

c). Remember the nation as a whole had all the religious observance that went with the tabernacle – they were in church regularly, but that didn't cut it.

d). I wonder if we still have thought patterns, ideas and attitudes that have come from the religious mustard tree completely immersed in unbelief regarding our inheritance in the land of our calling. I wonder if we cling too tightly to those who remain an immovable part of that system. Let's close with what scripture says about unbelievers – not the lost – those who do not have the faith.

e). 2Co 6:17 *Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you."*

f). And an admonition - Heb 4:11 ¶ *Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.*

g). And an encouragement - Heb 10:39 *But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.*