

## ***THE ETERNAL KINGDOM***

### ***MATTHEW 13:47-50***

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I was in my first month of Residency as a Staff Chaplain at Parkview covering one of my first on call shifts.....my pager went off and I was summoned to ER. In this case I was greeted by a Social Worker and Sheriff who were trying to get a hold of the family of a patient who had just come in from a one car accident in Monroeville. The young man by all accounts was driving home from work when he swerved to miss something....just what it was - we will never know. He was found sometime later wrapped around a tree by a motorist driving by....I don't exactly recall who arrived first if it was his mother and sister or if it was his Fiance. I soon discovered that they he was to be married 8 days later.....weeks and weeks later and many many visits with him....he had finally moved out of acute intensive care....and was able to sit up.....his speech remained very slurred...and his ability to concentrate was impaired.....but I was called this time by his nurse....who asked if I would simply come and sit with him. So I sat for the next 2 hours while he stammered to tell me that his fiance who at one point the family had barred from seeing him came and broke up with him.....most of the time he just sat quietly and wept.

About a year later I was sitting in that same room with a man who was about 70 years old - his wife had just retired - they had just sold their home and moved into Canterbury Green apartments to begin their dream retirement - now they were going to travel and enjoy life together. 2 hours later I drove him home in my care - Alone. His wife who to that point appeared to be very healthy suffered a massive heart attack and died.

All he could say to me over and over was....this wasn't supposed to happen this way.....

In both of these cases and in countless others I have watched as men women boys and girls were forced to deal with an appointment that was not on their calendar! Those moments when the seemingly immortal plans of man crumble in a moment.....and the brevity of life is confronted by Eternity....

And all those that are left....find themselves face to face with the brevity of life and their complete helplessness to change it.....for most it is an impetus to assess what their life is really about....

CS Lewis put it so plainly.....when he said this beloved.....

**PAIN is the Megaphone of God...it tells us the truth about Mortality and the Empty Promise of Satisfaction in this life.**

We have been looking at the **Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven** as Jesus describes them in Matt. 13

#### **Its totally unlike the Kingdoms of the Earth**

- It begins internally
- But it grows like Wheat in the midst of another system -
- Its like Mustard and spreads
- Its like Leaven it changes everything it touches
- Its like a Treasure because you are a Treasure

**Its Nature is Eternal** - even though you living in a temporal experience....the Kingdom is not. So by its very nature the Kingdom of Heaven is always moving us towards Eternity.

- **We are Eternal beings living a temporary experience.....we tend to behave the other way around.....**

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*Yes, Christ in you bringing with Him the hope of all the glorious things to come.*  
*Col 1:27b JB Phillips*

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Matthew 13:47-50 (NASB)

*47 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea, and gathering fish of every kind; 48 and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down and gathered the good fish into containers, but the bad they threw away. 49 So it will be at the [a]end of the age; the angels will come forth and [b]take out the wicked from among the righteous, 50 and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Now in this Parable Jesus takes a picture that is **deeply personal and familiar to His disciples**. Peter, Andrew and Philip from Bethsaida - the '**House of Fish**' in Galilee who made their living on the northern shores of the Sea of Galilee. In this particular part of the Sea of Galilee the Jordan River spills into the this Sea and it is teeming with life - some 25 species of fish are present in the region of the Sea of Galilee.

Again for these fisherman they would have immediately recognized Jesus word picture.....as they were used to using 2 kinds of nets; The small **Casting net** that a man would cast from his boat that Luke records Jesus challenging Peter to cast on the other side of the boat....

The other net was a **Drag Net**. Typically about 6-7 feet tall and generally over 300 feet in length - Bouys on the top and anchors on the bottom. This was not a net just cast by one man. It was taken out between 2 boats or between a boat and the shore....

- Covered a large swath and normally required about 6 men or more to beat the water to drive the fish - row the boat and of course pull the net towards the shore.
- Typically they would pull in a large variety of fish
  - the inedible would be tossed back in the Water
  - and the Edible into containers – to sell and eat.

Now there are some different takes on this parable.....

- Some who say the Net is the Gospel....
- Some who say the Net is the End of the Age....specifically the Tribulation....

**I want to stick to the obvious!**

- Matthew 12:32 and Mark 10:29-30
- Jesus talks about this age and one to come.....and here in this parable.....the center stage is Jesus describing humanity **at the culmination.....**
- a time of separation and definition.....specifically about where our temporal life ends and begins Eternal perspective!
- I see a confrontation in this parable about the true Nature of the Kingdom - that it is Eternal!

**So it will be at the End of the Age....or the Consumation.....**

So without getting into discussion about theology on Eschatology.....again I want to point to the obvious.....**Jesus is pointing to the reality that while mankind experiences a pretty similar experience on earth it will not be the Same for Eternity!**

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**The other Obvious point is that this temporal life is moving towards the Eternal....**

So as we look at this NET - I see this obvious declaration to mankind.....

- Nothing S - 2nd law of Thermodynamics
- Escapes Entropy - Complex to less complex
- Time Disorder can only remain the same.....or increase!

NET - Declaration Mankind is living universally outside Eternity

S- Entropy - disorder is increasing.....just look at the bod..man

Simplest of terms - Nothing Escapes Time....

Jesus clarifys - word connected to the Shore is the End of the Age....

These are Pauls words.....

Romans 8:18-25

*18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, [a]in hope 21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. 23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. 24 For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.*

Present sufferings are daily visual reminders this is NOT Eternity.....

- God is speaking with His Mega Phone to the human soul.....
- **Your Net is moving toward the Shore beloved.....**

2 Cor 5 Paul describes the longing to reach the Shore....vs 2....*to be clothed with our dwelling from Heaven....*

Let me underline the first universal Law I see in this parable.....

**Nothing and No One Escapes Time....**

- The Spirit of the Age - look like – Immortality and Lawlessness.
- The Choice to live without a King - Man becomes God - live in delusions of immortality individually and corporately.

Here is the Truth beloved....

- There is a NET pulling you and I towards the Shore.....we are all going to hit that shore..!
- **Nothing and No One is going to Escape it!**

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So I have friends spend lots of time and energy trying to figure out the shore...you know the End of the Age - Eschatology.....

- Can I say this to you - to the that 20 year old young man...I met in ER.....Eschatology is is just a big word.....
- The Kingdom is Eternal and so are you.....

The 55 year old that had life Nailed! - Figured out was just about to take early retirement.....and got the devastating news.....stage 4 liver Cancer.....they have a different expression about the end of the age.....its called the end of their age.....because the NET is moving toward the shore beloved! Does not matter who you are.....its moving.....The Kingdom is Eternal and so are you.

- Jesus says at the Shore there will be Delineation!
  - The Good from the Bad
  - The Evil from the Righteous.....

**Man at first blush this carries a heavy word.....**

- Just like those boys from Bethsaida knew.....the Drag Net had one purpose to pull in the fish and sort it out!
- Lev 11:10-12, Dt. 14:9-10 - Anything that does not have fins....you toss back!
- Point is that is clear what you kept and what you did not.

**There are 2 -3 things worth nothing in this text -**

**1 - Who does the Sorting...in the Eternal Kindom...?? Angels....**

- Beloved this is a Big weight off the beleiver....'who is in and who is out'
- But what about the theif.....what about Matthew 7 and 25.....

Here is another truth about the Sorting.....

**2 - Basis of Sorting.....in the Eternal Kindom**

- **Good - Bad, Evil from Righteous....**
  - Hope I have enough on the good side....said a mechanic to me....
  - Had a guy at the house this week while I was working on this message who said....my wife.....**donated her kidney she's got an inside track.....**

**I said NO - you have the inside track if you know Jesus – judged by one thing – what did you do with Jesus?**

- **Beloved the basis of the sorting of our life will NOT be the basis of your good deeds or your misdeeds !**
- **Basis of the Sorting will be One thing and One thing only - what did you do with Gospel!**

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- 2 Cor 5:20-21
- Romans 1:16-17 *For in the Gospel a Righteousness is revealed by Faith beloved!*

**The Basis of the Sorting will be have you submitted to the King and His Kingdom!**

**3 - Sorting both here in Vs 47 - ff and the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares....implies another unnerving reality.....**

- In this thing called the Church - there are many for whatever reason who have Attached themselves to the Church....and look and sound.....all the right stuff....**but who are NOT living in the Eternal Kingdom.....who are uncovered.....**

**What does this mean?**

- First of all lets be clear the Church is always going to have a bit of a mixed bag....
- Jesus had Judas

**So don't freak at Duplicity.....**

- Be at Peace - The Truth - Jesus will always in the end expose Lies.....**Light overcomes darkness....**
- But the reality that Jesus seems to make clear in both of these parables is that there will be those who look and act the part.....

The earnest Appeal of this text is simple!

- The NET is moving.....nothing and NO One will escape....
- Eternal Destiny.....
- **Heaven or Hell both begin Now!**

Jesus word for Hell was the Valley of Ghenna just outside Jerusalem....the dump....

- **IT was and is a real place.....for the unconverted.....**

What does an unconverted heart look like.....

- Looks like being able to keep appearances.....to do and say the right things....
- But a heart unmoved by the Love of the Father....
- **No Affection for God - His People and no passion to Please God!**
- We can mimic words and behavior.....the appeal of this parable is this....

Why reject the offer of His Righteousness, Peace and Joy...filling your heart now and forever....

- Will you say Yes to this King?
- You see the Cross is not just about escaping judgement but restoring us to our rightful Place as sons and daughters of a King.

**This message every man woman boy and girl – The Kingdom is Eternal and so are you!  
Entrance into that Kingdom is through the Man Christ Jesus!**

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**The Kingdom is Eternal and so are you.....**

**That means you are an Eternal being whose was created to live in Relationship with an Eternal God Head and Represent Him on the Earth!**

**Here is what happens when we fail to live and walk from this Revelation of our Eternal Nature.**

**This is the stuff of True Spiritual Warfare....beloved....goal is remove you from God's original intent...**

### **1 – Live for Temporal things.....**

- Temporal things are enough.....to satisfy.....and we live looking for what the world is selling and can never deliver....
- Live wasting Time – Talent and Treasure on Temporal thing.....Luke 12 Jesus said of the man who decided 'I need bigger barns' you fool.....
- You are living for things that Moth and rust destroy....

### **2 – Living in the Victimized Realm.....**

- Living from an over inflated idea of the Enemy and hugely under estimated understanding of who we are.....leads to a toothless lion causing Princes and Princess's of the King of all Kings to tremble.....Isaiah 14:16-17  
*“Those who see you will gaze at you, They will ponder over you, saying, ‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms, Who made the world like a wilderness And overthrew its cities, Who did not allow his prisoners to go home?’*
- This is a bit tricky – because there is truth here – but watch this – the enemy has 2 weapons against us – Accusation and Deception = Purpose:
  - Distract you.....from the truth of the Gospel
  - In the Gospel we discover who He is and Who we are!

### **3 – Live and Never take Any Faith Risk.....**

- Beloved we are Eternal Beings.....living in an Eternal Kingdom.....the very nature of the this Kingdom is to Walk with Jesus by Faith.....not by Sight...
- Followed the counsel of others and my gut – we would have never adopted 2 kids.
- Noever lived on Faith support
  - Point is that the ver nature of an Eternal Kingdom is to live with our heart Anchored in Eternity.

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