

NOON BIBLE STUDY: MATTHEW 13 (PART 4)

Matthew 13:34-35 - Reminder Of Purpose Of Parables

quote from Asaph in Psalm 78:2

Matthew 13:44-46 - treasure & pearl

v. 44 - joy

Both the treasure and the pearl were each more valuable than all that the man had combined.

Q - What is Jesus teaching us with the parable of the treasure in the field and the pearl of great price?

Do we feel this way? One of the functions of these two parables is to help us correctly and consistently value the kingdom of God. For someone who finds treasure or a valuable pearl - there is joy, there is willingness to spare no expense to gain the items of great value. However, for someone who has owned the field or pearl for some time, does the joy and assessment continue? The value of these items do not change, it is the heart of the person who has them that can affect their joy, appreciation and protection of these items.

Let's consider one other possible interpretation that is on the other side of the coin. Part of the kingdom message is that the king of that kingdom, Jesus himself, will end up giving all that he has to purchase something that he deemed valuable - God's people. He looks at you and I and chooses to give up his status and honor and ultimately his life to purchase the people of the world. And not only are people in general his reward, but each believer personally is like a single pearl of great price.

Matthew 13:47-50 - Dragnet

This parable is similar to the wheat and the tares in that it speaks to the righteous and evil "swimming together in the water" until the end of the age.

A **dragnet** is exactly what it sounds like - a net that is drawn along the bottom of a body of water to collect fish. It is not a very precise method but it requires less attention/energy in the first stage of fishing. The real work happens once the fishermen are back on the shore where they must separate the fish from the other things that were collected which are of no value.

Q - What is Jesus teaching us with the parable of the dragnet?

In this parable, the good fish represent the righteous and the bad fish represent the wicked - at the end of the age the angels will “take out the wicked from among the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire”. This is a pretty good explanation of the judgment according to the Bible - the righteous stay, the wicked are removed. And the judgment (by fire) is painful and final but limited in its duration. The wicked are annihilated so as to be removed from God’s creation that is remade and restored.

Similarly to the wheat and tares, Jesus’ hearers should be awakened to their own need for seriousness and moved with compassion towards those around them while there is still time to be brought into God’s family.

v. 50 - “weeping and gnashing of teeth” - a phrase of anguish and judgement

Matthew 13:51-52 - Have You Understood?

At the end of this parable chapter, the master teacher turns to his students and asks them if they understand. This shows his love and care for them. Though we have highlighted the parables being designed to separate those who were just loitering in the crowd and those who really wanted to know truth - this moment speaks to the love and care of Jesus.

He ends his lesson asking if they understand - this gives them the chance to ask a question if they had been hesitant to ask up to now. Though the parables can be mysteries, the teacher desires his students to know!

Matthew 13:53-58 - No Place Like Home

v.55-56 - Brothers and sisters - **ESV Study Bible:** “His brothers and his sisters” (v. 55-56) refers to other children born to Joseph and Mary after the birth of Jesus. Some interpreters, seeking to defend a doctrine of the “perpetual virginity of Mary,” have suggested that these were cousins, or children of Joseph from another marriage, but no evidence in the Greek words *adelphoi* (“brothers”) and *adelphai* (“sisters”), or in any other historical information, gives support to that view. For Mary to have sexual relations with her husband, Joseph, and to bear children, would contribute to her holiness, not detract from it (cf. Gen. 1:28; 1 Cor. 7:3–5; 1 Tim. 5:14).”

James and Judas (aka Jude) become well known followers of their brother Jesus who contribute letters to the New Testament.

v.57 - they took offense at him - why?

Why do “hometown” and “household” settings often lead to this kind of attitude? It may be because of a knowledge of one’s flaws and sins of youth and awkward stages of life development that those closest to you see. When you arrive in a new place “full grown” all that that new place sees is you in your mature state.

Obviously Nazareth didn't have to overcome the sins of Jesus' youth but they seem to have a certain attitude/opinion towards Jesus' family.

Some people waste a lot of time trying to convince a Nazareth-like crowd that they are wrong - but it seems like Jesus didn't get caught up in that second rate assignment. On the other hand, it's probably a good idea to not forever discount someone based on their worst moment and give grace to people we have known for a long time.

v. 58 - "their unbelief"

The town of Nazareth fostered an attitude to skepticism that spread through the community. As a result, he did not do many miracles there.

Are you and I extinguishing the faith in ourselves and/or others by the critical and skeptical attitude that we have? Are we encouraging faith or extinguishing faith? Complaining, grumbling and having a critical spirit are not only ugly and annoying, they resist the work of God that is possible when we have childlike faith. Don't let life's disappointments harden your heart. And don't let your challenges and questions affect the faith of those around you.

We can encourage faith in each other or extinguish faith in each other. Which will we do today?