

Lesson 53 – THE LORD WILL SAVE HIS PEOPLE Matthew 13:47-58

(Matt. 13:47-50) – PARABLE OF THE DRAGNET – The lesson of this parable is wherever the Gospel truth of God’s free and sovereign grace in Christ is proclaimed by God’s preachers, whom He made to be “fishers of men” (Matt. 4:19), it is like a dragnet cast into the sea of mankind. As the Gospel is preached, there is drawn into the visible church here on earth both genuine believers and false believers who make a profession of believing in Christ but do not love and trust Christ for all salvation and righteousness. In the end of the world, the angels of the Lord will come, and there will be an everlasting separation between the “GOOD” and the “BAD.” Christ explains who the “good” and the “bad” are.” The “good” are “*THE JUST*” or “the justified.” The “bad” are “*THE WICKED*” or “the unjustified. Therefore, we know that “the good” are sinners who are NOT made good or become good by their works, for among fallen men and women, there are none good (Rom. 3:10-20). They are sinners saved by grace and made good by the grace of God through the blood of Christ and His righteousness alone. They live by faith in Him (Rom. 1:1 16-17). The “bad,” or the “wicked” are all people by nature, fallen in Adam and born spiritually dead in sin who live their lives in unbelief and die in their sins with no savior and no redeemer.

The Lord shows here how that salvation is not by the works or the wills of men. It is all of God’s free and sovereign grace and mercy (Rom. 9:15-16). When God is pleased to bring His chosen people into the kingdom, He throws out the net of the Gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit and brings them to Himself. Does He drag them into His kingdom against their wills? Christ said, “*No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day*” (John 6:44). God draws His people to Himself against their natural sinful and depraved wills (1 Cor. 2:14), but He does so by giving them new wills and new desires for the salvation that He freely and fully provides for them in and by His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ (Ezek. 36:25-27). He makes them willing in the day of His power (Psa. 110:3). Here is a strong warning to those who do not know, believe in and love Christ. There is coming a day when the wicked will be separated from those who are justified by God’s grace through the blood of Christ – “*Seek ye the LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near*” (Isa. 55:6).

(Matt. 13:51) – Christ spoke in parables to conceal truth from the Pharisees who adamantly refused to believe, but His people to whom He revealed truth would understand as He gave them knowledge (Matt. 13:10-13). It is for certain that the natural man cannot receive spiritual truth because this truth must be spiritually understood (1 Cor. 2:14-16). That which is necessary, whenever we hear the Word of God, is for the Savior to open our minds and hearts to understand spiritually and receive the things of the Lord (John 6:44-45; 2 Cor. 4:4-6; 1 John 5:20). We should all pray, “Lord, please give us this understanding.”

(Matt. 13:52) – PARABLE OF THE HOUSEHOLDER – This parable teaches the responsibility of Gospel preachers to proclaim the Gospel to others. Those to whom God has revealed His way of saving sinners by His grace through the sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to whom God has given the gifts and positions of ministry, have a great responsibility to go forth and declare the truth to all who will listen. We are to tell people of the realities of God’s holiness and justice, of our own sin and depravity, of our need of a righteousness we cannot produce, not even by our best works, and of the sovereign grace of God to save sinners by the glorious Person and finished work of Christ Who is God manifest in the flesh and Who accomplished the complete redemption of His people to save them and bring them to glory. We are to tell people of things which God has given us freely and which we treasure, *“THINGS NEW AND OLD.”* Out of the Old Testament we preach the types, pictures, and prophecies concerning Christ and His great work. Out of the New Testament we declare that He has come and finished the work to secure the salvation and final glory of all whom the Father had given and for whom He died and arose again from the dead.

(Matt. 13:53-56) – When Christ finished preaching these parables of the kingdom, He returned to Nazareth to teach *“IN THEIR SYNAGOGUE,”* and, as was the case wherever He taught, *“THEY WERE ASTONISHED”* by His wisdom and His *“MIGHTY WORKS.”* The Gospel is so foreign to our natural thinking that we will not receive it (1 Cor. 2:14), and when it is supported by displays of God’s power and by the written word of God, it goes against all that we highly esteem as recommending us to God (Luke 16:15; John 3:19-20). These people knew His family and where He had grown up. To them, He was a nobody, an uneducated, unauthorized teacher who was unworthy of their attention.

(Matt. 13:57) – The people were displeased and repelled by Him. They stumbled at His truth (1 Pet. 2:7-8), which called on them to trust Him as the one true Messiah for all salvation and righteousness and to repent of their religious thoughts and efforts. The proverb about a prophet being *“NOT WITHOUT HONOR SAVE IN HIS OWN COUNTRY, AND IN HIS OWN HOUSE,”* shows that a preacher is more apt to be received by those who do not know him rather than those who watched him in his youth.

(Matt. 13:58) – How sad that because of their unbelief and their hostility against Him, Christ chose not to teach truth or do any more miracles in this place. As had been appointed by God before the world began, Christ left the “vessels of wrath” to their own destruction, but He always saved the “vessels of mercy” prepared before by God for salvation (Rom. 9:22-23).