

sermon study guide

Speaker: Henry Schorr

Date: October 31/November 1 2020

Sermon Title: The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like... Part 7: A Fishnet - The Kingdom and the Afterlife

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. How many social media platforms are you engaged with and how much time a day do you spend on them? Which one do you like best and why? If you are not on social media, why not?
2. A recent documentary claimed, "The problem we face as a civilization is we no longer know what is true." Do you agree or disagree? Where do people turn to determine what is right and wrong today? Where do you turn?

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read Matthew 13:47-50

3. What does this parable teach us about the kingdom of heaven? God's judgment? Eternity?

Read Matthew 13:30, 40; Romans 1:18; Hebrews 9:27; 2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4; Romans 5:8; John 3:16; 1 John 1:9

4. Pastor Henry explained that hell is necessary for two reasons: God's love and God's justice. How do the above verses represent either the love of God or the justice of God?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

5. What do you find most difficult about the concept of eternal judgment?
6. "Those who do not wish to love God must be allowed not to love Him. Those who do not want to be with God must be allowed to be separated from Him." What is our role as Christians in light of this statement?

This week's writers: Edi Dyqert, David McMillin, Gene Gibbons, Jared Harrison

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

Reflect on the assurance and comfort you have in knowing Christ. What is a Scripture from this study that you can hold on to this week?

THE WORD (NIV)

Matthew 13:47-50

47 "Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. 48 When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. 49 This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous 50 and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

sermon study summary

The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like...Part 7: A Fishnet – The Kingdom and the Afterlife October 31/November 1, 2020 Henry Schorr

It's getting hard to know what is true and whom to trust. Many believe truth is relative. We are addicted to, and strategically influenced by, our smartphones and the power of social media. As a recent documentary reported: "The problem we face as a civilization is we no longer know what is true". This is especially the case when it comes to the topic of what happens after we die.

This weekend's sermon points to the Bible as authoritative about death and the afterlife. In the Parable of the Dragnet (Matthew 13:47-50) Jesus describes two pathways: one leading to eternity with God, the other to eternity without God. Which pathway are you on?

In the parable, Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to a large dragnet. In Jesus' day, a dragnet had floats attached to the top and weights to the bottom, forming a wall of net pulled into a circle between two boats to trap the fish. The full net was dragged onto the shore and sorted; the good fish for sale, the rest thrown away. Jesus explains that, like the fish, no human being will escape the reality of death or the judgement of God. **First**, Jesus taught that hell is separation from God and others, loneliness and isolation; and that Heaven in God's presence is perfect love, peace and rest. **Secondly**, hell is a place of anguish. While the 'blazing furnace' is figurative, literally it is a place of undying regret, pain and heartbreak. We all have an eternal destiny: of indescribable joy with Him in heaven, or unspeakable loss in hell. God hates that people have to go to hell. As Jesus' priceless treasure, he died to make a way for us not to go there. One of the issues people have with Christ and Christianity is, Why is hell necessary?

Hell is necessary for two reasons: **God's justice requires it, and God's love requires it.** God is love and God is just: He cannot ignore evil and injustice. Our sense of justice originates in God because we are made in God's image. While we agree that horrible crimes deserve hell, it is easy to think that no one deserves hell for more 'minor' sins. However, from God's perspective, every sin is costly: our sin hurts us and can destroy others.

"God demonstrates His love for us in this: While we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Out of love for us, God sent His only Son to die on the cross to pay for our sins. This is grace, unmerited favour; the only way God could satisfy His justice and set us free.

Yet when we continue to reject Him, Dr. J.P. Moreland says, "God will have absolutely no choice but to give us what we've asked for all along in our lives, which is separation from Him. And that is hell". He hands over to us the responsibility to choose our destination.

You don't need to fear or wonder where you will be moments after you die. Jesus has made a way.