

The Parable of the Net
(Matthew 13:47-50)

Introduction:

1. This morning we showed from the Lord's parable in Matthew 25:14-30 that He authorizes His followers to use their talents.
 - a. Two of the servants were blessed because they used their master's goods faithfully.
 - b. One servant was punished because he was unfaithful -- he was cast into "*outer darkness*" where there is "*weeping and gnashing of teeth*" (vs.30).
2. In our lesson we are studying passages that tell us about the place of punishment where the unfaithful servant was cast.
3. We are basing our lesson on the Lord's parable in Matthew 13:47-50.

Discussion:

- I. IN THIS PARABLE JESUS COMPARED THE KINGDOM TO A NET
 - A. (vs.47-48) Jesus described the method of fishing used at that time.
 1. The net that Jesus mentioned is similar to a "seine."
 - a. This net was placed in the water, and a large circle was made with it.
 - b. Whatever was in this circle was trapped in the net.
 2. When the circle was completed and the net was full, it was pulled to shore.
 3. After the net was pulled to shore, separation began.
 - a. The good fish were gathered into vessels.
 - b. Anything that was bad was discarded.
 - B. (vs.49-50) Jesus explained the main lesson He was teaching.
 1. At the end of the world there will be a separation -- the wicked will be separated from the just.
 2. Jesus did not talk about what will happen to the just.
 - a. Other passages teach us that the just will spend eternity in heaven.
 - b. Heaven is described as a beautiful and wonderful place.
 3. Jesus did talk about what will happen to the wicked.
 - a. The wicked will be cast into "*the furnace of fire.*"
 - b. In this furnace there will be "*wailing and gnashing of teeth.*"
 - C. This place that Jesus described is commonly known as "hell."
 1. Since Jesus emphasized this place in His parable, we will spend the rest of our time studying what the Bible has to say about it.
 2. "Hell" is certainly not a pleasant subject; however, "declaring the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27) demands that we occasionally study it.
 - D. From the Lord's statements in Matthew 13:49-50, we learn that:
 1. "hell" is a place where certain individuals will spend eternity
 2. "hell" is a place of punishment
 3. "hell" is a place of extreme anguish.
- II. HELL
 - A. "Hell" is a place where certain individuals will spend eternity.
 1. In His parable, Jesus said that "*the wicked*" will be there.
 2. (Matthew 25:41) Jesus said that hell is a place of "*everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.*"
 3. We would expect the devil and his angels to be condemned to hell, but the Bible also teaches that:
 - a. those whose names are not written in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:15)
 - b. those who do not know God and who do not obey the Gospel will be punished with everlasting destruction (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9)
 - c. those who obey the Gospel but persist in willful sin have fiery indignation as their punishment (Hebrews 10:26-27).

4. There is a popular belief today that only people like Hitler will be condemned to hell, but this is not true -- "*many*" will be there (Matthew 7:13).
 5. Knowing who will be in hell ought to cause us to take whatever steps are necessary to avoid it.
- B. "Hell" is a place of punishment.
1. In His parable, Jesus called it "*the furnace of fire.*"
 2. (Matthew 3:11-12) Hell is a place where the inhabitants will burn with "*unquenchable fire.*"
 3. (Matthew 18:8) Hell is a place of "*everlasting fire.*"
 4. (Matthew 25:46) Hell is a place of "*everlasting punishment.*"
 5. (Revelation 19:20) Hell is described as "*a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*"
 6. (Revelation 20:10) Those who are condemned to hell will "*be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*"
 7. Knowing that hell is such a horrible place of punishment ought to cause us to take whatever steps are necessary to avoid it.
- C. "Hell" is a place of extreme anguish.
1. In His parable, Jesus said that there will be "*wailing and gnashing of teeth*" in hell (symptoms of great pain and suffering).
 2. (Matthew 8:12) Hell is described as "*outer darkness*" where there will be "*weeping and gnashing of teeth.*"
 3. (Mark 9:44) Hell is a place "*where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*"
 4. Knowing that hell is such a place of extreme anguish ought to cause us to take whatever steps are necessary to avoid it.

Conclusion:

1. Most of the statements we considered were spoken by the Lord Himself.
2. Jesus came "*to seek and to save that which was lost*" (Luke 19:10).
3. He wants everyone to be saved, but He lets us know that there is a place of eternal punishment for those who do not come to Him for salvation.
4. Understanding what the Bible teaches about hell ought to produce some positive results in our lives -- we should be motivated to:
 - a. make our lives right with God (obey the Gospel)
 - b. make whatever sacrifices are necessary to avoid hell (Matthew 5:29-30)
 - c. persuade others to make their lives right with God (2 Corinthians 5:11a).
5. Is a home in heaven in store for you?