

The Parable of the Net: Caught Up or Cast Away? ■

| ■ Matthew 13:47-50

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[0:00] Welcome to Ontario Community Church, where we are encouraging, equipping, and engaging lives for Christ. I'm Pastor Patrick Daly, and each week I share sermons that balance the grace and love of Jesus Christ with the truth of the Word of God.

Together, we'll explore Scripture using observation, interpretation, and application. This helps us discover practical ways to live out our faith every single day.

Let's dive in together into God's Word. You know, life is full of moments where we get caught up in situations. Amen?

Sometimes we get phone calls. We'll get a surprise phone call or news from someone of a new job. Someone proposed to someone.

A graduation or a job promotion. We get in this situation where it's not the norm, but it's a time of celebration. And sometimes in life, we have the opposite that happens.

[1:06] Where we get a surprise phone call or a visit from a friend. About a loved one who's in a hospital or a financial crisis or even the loss of a job.

It is in moments like this where we get caught off guard or caught up in a situation. It is a reminder for us that in life, we like to have stability, don't we?

But there are moments in our life where we feel the weight of change. Where things just happen. Where life moves fast.

And in the same way that we get caught in situations that may throw us off. Jesus reminds us that one day we will all be caught up in a net as it were.

Not by accident. But what is to come. Today, we're going to go over the parable of the net. Caught up or cast away.

[2:15] You read that. Some pretty heavy language. Speaking of final judgment. Speaking of what is to come. And you see this image here.

Of a net that's being cast into the sea. And you see all different types of fish. As we've been going through this sermon series. We've been going over the parables of Christ.

These simple lessons that are so simplistic. But yet they're so deep. And before we even go into this. I'd like for us to turn to Matthew chapter 13 real quick.

It's on page 972. It's not verse 47 to 50. I want you to go real quick. Verses 10 through 17 here.

Sometimes when we read these parables. We think for a moment. Why did Jesus speak in parables? Couldn't he have just gotten to the point.

[3:20] And just said it. Tell it how it is. And moved on. Well in scripture we find this verse. That is a great reminder for us. Why Christ spoke in parables.

And this will help pave the way. For our study in parables. But also. Why it was so important. So. Matthew chapter 13. Verses 10 through 17.

Are we all there? So. This was right after the parable of the soil. Right. Where we had the four soils. Representing. Our heart. Then the disciples said.

Came and said to him. Why do you speak to them in parables? And he answered them. To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven. But to them it has not been given.

For to the one who has more will be given. He will have an abundance. But from the one who has not. Even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables.

[4:15] Because seeing they do not see. And hearing they do not hear. Nor do they understand. Indeed. In their case. The prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled. That says.

You will indeed hear. But never understand. And you will indeed see. But never perceive. For this people's heart has grown dull. And with their ears. They can barely hear. And their eyes. They have closed. Lest they should see with their eyes. And hear with their ears. And understand with their heart. And turn. And I would heal them. But blessed are your eyes. For they see. And your ears. For they hear. For truly I say to you. Many prophets and righteous people. Long to see what you see. And did not see it. And hear what you hear. And did not hear it. And it's this understanding that. God hides away. A lot of things. When we have gone over.

[5:10] These different parables. When we read it on the surface. We may not understand it. When we go over. To the parable of the net. We're going to see. If you go over to verse 47.

Same chapter. This imagery. Of a net that's being cast. Into the sea. Well let's just read it together. Again.

The kingdom of heaven. Is like a net. That was thrown into the sea. And gathered fish. Of every kind. When it was full. Men drew it ashore. And sat down. And sorted the good. Into containers. But threw away the bad. When you hear about that. You're like. All right. You got a bunch of fish. Right. It's a. What a fisher. A fisherman's supposed to do. So it will be. At the end of the age. The angels will come out. And separate the evil. From the righteous. And throw them. Into the fiery furnace. In that place.

[6:05] There will be the weeping. And gnashing. Of teeth. And so. Very often. When we read. These parables. It is again.

Simplistic language. And very often. When you read it. On the surface. You might not understand it. That's why. It's so important. For us. To look at the context. And the connections. Within other parables.

And within the grand scheme. Of. The biblical story. In this. Particular case. We see that there. Is some language here.

Let's go to that next slide here. The net. Is representing. The kingdom of heaven. And the sea. Is symbolic.

For. The world. The fish. Is representing. All people. And the sorting. Is representing. The final judgment. Now.

[6:58] There's a distinction. If you. Didn't take note of this. That there are good fish. And bad fish. It's just like when you're fishing. Normally. Right. You want to make sure. You find the good kind. And not that.

Kind that looks like it's dead. Or. Maybe has a funny fishy smell. Right. You want to find the suitable kind. Of fish. So the good fish. Believers. Those who are transformed.

By Christ. And the bad fish. Those who reject Christ. And then of course. At the end. There's. The weeping. And gnashing of teeth. And then. Even mention. Of the fiery furnace.

Which. Heavy language. But it's in the word of God. And we should not ignore it. We should take it. Into account. When we look at these parables.

Again. Sometimes it's easy to understand. And sometimes it isn't. And it's in parables like this. Where we can see.

[7:53] That there is. Something that's going on here. Talking about the end of the age. Talking about the final judgment. Much like. How we have found. In other parables. Do you remember.

The wheat. And the weeds. There was distinction. Between the separation. Of that which is good. And that which is bad. There was. Final judgment. We also know this. From the sheep. And the goats. How many of you know that one? That's probably a more common one. Right? The sheep and the goats. Signifying. Final judgment. And there's a lot of. Connections with this. And what's. Really. Amazing about this. Is how. This parable. Is connected. With what we have been going over. For the hidden treasure.

And the pearl. Of great value. Signifying the importance. For. Believers. For us. That we are to seek. Salvation.

[8:48] That comes from Christ. Like treasure. Like that. Which is of great value. A pearl. That is worth so much. That you don't want to find. Any other pearl.

Or like how I've. Mentioned before. That X marks the what. The spot. And we have to seek. That which. Is so valuable. That you would be willing.

To trade. Anything. Or everything. For it. And this is speaking. Of salvation. And when we're looking. At this parable. Of the net. It's showing. Something that's going.

To be in the future. The final judgment. And hopefully. If you've looked. At these other parables. You'll understand. How important it is. To believe. In Jesus Christ.

To believe. In the death. Burial. And resurrection. Knowing that Jesus. Is the way. The truth. And the life. And that. As we went over. In communion. That God provided.

[9:45] A sacrifice. So that our sins. Will be taken care of. Just like that song. Jesus paid it all. And so.

The parable. Is teaching us. About what is to come. Let's go to that. Next slide then. Now for some of you.

You may know the language. Of being caught up. This is one of the times. Where we see. In scripture. The idea of being caught up. Being caught up. In a net.

As it were. Right. Judgment. That is going to happen. Everyone will be caught up. The good. And the bad. That's the first thing. That we can learn from this. It is the understanding then.

That the gospel. Is. Available. For everyone. It is the question then. If you have responded. To the good news. Of the gospel. We know that in John 3.16.

[10:41] Where it says. That God so loved the world. That he gave his only son. That what? Whoever. Whosoever. Right. Anyone. Depending on your translation. Believes.

Shall not perish. But have what? Everlasting life. So it's not saying some. It's not saying only a select group of people.

But anyone. Everyone who believes. Shall not perish. But have eternal life. And we also know that in scripture. That the Lord is patient. The Lord is kind and merciful.

We know that in 2nd Peter. Chapter 3. Verse 9. It even says that the Lord is patient. Not wanting for anyone to perish. Knowing that he has given.

The Lord has given. A certain amount of time. In our own lives. And then even when we're considering. The final judgment. For us to choose him. In other words. This means.

[11:38] We only have a certain amount of time. A certain amount of days. That we have to choose Christ. And to be transformed. In him. That is why it is so important.

For us to believe in him. The second thing then. Is that the good fish. Represent those. Who know the Lord. Just like when we talked about.

The wheat. And the weeds. If you remember. You want to turn there real quick. In verse 30. In that. Chapter 13.

Let them both grow together. Until the harvest. And at the harvest time. I will tell the reapers. Gather the weeds first. And bind them in bundles. To be burned. But gather my wheat.

Into my barn. Very similar language. The weeds. Are going to be cast out. And burned. Just like the bad fish. In here. So do you see the connection here?

[12:35] Does that make sense everyone? I want to make sure we understand this. Talking about. Right. Those. That know Christ. Are going to be stored. Right. They're going to be saved.

And they're not going to be cast out. They will be caught up. In grace. The grace that comes from. The Lord Jesus Christ. Can I get an amen? Amen. And so the ones who remain.

Right. We're talking about the fish. That have been transformed by Christ. The ones who have believed in Jesus Christ. And been saved. And I want you to keep in mind. That being caught in the net.

Is representing. Final judgment. We're all going to be caught up. In the net. It's the question. Of if we're going to be stored. Right. Or we're going to be cast out.

It reminds us. In Second Corinthians. Chapter five. Verse 17. The very famous verse. That if anyone is in Christ. He is a new creation. And what's different about this parable.

[13:36] Than other verses in scripture. Such as the wheat. And the weeds. Is that there is a distinction. Between the two. When we're talking about fish here. We don't really. We know they're all fish.

But there's not really a distinction. Between the good fish. And the bad fish. And so. It's kind. That's actually very real. To us today. That.

We are all human beings. At least I hope we all are. Right. And that. You don't know. Who's saved. And who isn't. But it's a call for us. To know in Jesus Christ.

And you know what. In knowing Jesus Christ. We actually know. That in scripture. You shall know them. By their fruit. You shall know them. By their actions.

How they conduct. Their lives. The transformation. That comes. From. To them. In Romans 8. Chapter 1. There is no condemnation.

[14:32] For those. In Jesus Christ. Does that mean. That the good fish. Are perfect. No. It's the ones. That. Have been.

Essentially. Transformed. The one. That the Lord. Recognizes. Just like how. Scripture. Says. My sheep. Know my voice. Right. The Lord knows.

Who. His are. Very similar. Language. Do you see. How things start making. Connections here. Which helps us. In our understanding. Of our faith.

It helps us grow. And it allows for. Continued. Transformation. So these good fish. Are not perfect. They are redeemed. And they are transformed. They have nothing to fear.

In being caught up. In the net. For they belong. To Christ. Christ. And the third one. Is the gospel. Is available. Now. But not forever. That's a very. Difficult one.

[15:28] Isn't it? I've mentioned before. In a previous sermon. This was more in. I want to say Philemon. It might have been in Colossians. But. That's neither here.

Nor there. The difference between us. Living here on earth. And being in heaven. Has to do with. Us sharing the gospel.

With others. We do not have that opportunity. In heaven. We have that opportunity. Here on earth. Which goes to show. How important it is.

For us. Number one. To know the Lord. Right. Just as I mentioned. To grow in him. But also. To share in the gospel message. To live out your faith.

So that others. Will know. It's very heavy. When we think about it. But it's true. Knowing that. Being here on the earth. And even the time.

[16:22] That God has allowed. For people to be saved. It's not forever. And that. Makes it a little scary. I admit. But it should encourage us.

This is why. We need to have. Faith in Christ. And this is why. We share the gospel message. With our friends. Our families. Even if we're in a situation.

Where we can't speak the words. We can certainly live it out. By our actions. By how we live our life. There's a famous quote out there. That says.

Character. I'm going to. If I misquote this. Forgive me. Character is doing the right thing. Even when people don't see it. Right. So it's.

Just like when we're thinking about. Being a Christian. Do you do the right thing. Even when people aren't noticing. Do you do the right thing. Even behind closed doors. When you're perfectly alone.

[17:15] And you have the ability to sin. That's something. To factor in for us. We need to consider. And so. In this.

Let us remember. Imagine the imagery. Of the net. Still being in the water. As it were. And it hasn't. One day.

It will be drawn in. Capturing. The fish. For the final. Judgment. It reminds me. Of Romans. Chapter 10. Verse 13.

Which tells us. That. Everyone who calls. On the name of the Lord. Will be saved. And salvation. Is here. Now. It is a call.

For us. To believe in him. And be saved. It is a call. For us. To grow in him. And it's a call. For us. To share. In the gospel. Message. Whether you can. Speak it to your friends. And family.

[18:10] Or whoever. Or just simply. Living it out. Being an ambassador. For Christ. We then go. Into the application.

Always remember. Here at Ontario. Community. It's called. The OIA method. Observation. Interpretation. And application. Scripture. Future. Is the source.

Then we look at. What can we learn. And then finally. What can we do about it. So the first thing. Is to examine your heart.

What kind of fish are you. Now I'm not talking about. If you're. Like Nemo. I'm not talking about. If you're a swordfish. Or a shark. I'm talking about.

If you're a fish. That's been transformed. Or not. All right. I suppose. You can identify. With what kind of fish. You want. But it's. What's more important. Is.

[19:08] If you're a fish. That's saved. Amen. Does that. Does that make sense. Can we agree on that. It's not. About being caught. In the net. But it's focusing.

On the call. Of being transformed. By Christ. Examine yourselves. To see. In 2nd Corinthians. Chapter 13. 5. Isn't it interesting. How. When we.

Spend time. With the bread. And the cup. We are to examine. Our hearts. We know. That in scripture. We are to examine. Ourselves. To see whether. You are in the faith. Or not.

This can be. A call for you. To believe in Christ. If you haven't before. Other times. You examine your heart. And you're like. You know what. I'm good with the Lord. I know where I'm going.

And that's okay. The second thing then. What does this say? Be a fisher of men. What's very interesting.

[20:04] Is the language. Of fish. Fish. And fishermen. Now we know. That it's not necessarily. What the parable is saying. But this is a connection. Where Jesus is calling.

His disciples. To be fishers of men. Continuing the process. Of sharing the gospel. Now in this case. I'm not talking about. The disciples are. Are having judgment.

Upon people. No. I'm not talking about that. But it's this idea. That you are to spread. The gospel message. With others. So it's a little bit different. It is different. But it's still.

Interesting that. We still have this idea. Of being a. A fisherman. And fish. We know. That. To be a fisher of men.

Is to go out. Into the world. Living and loving. Like Christ. We're called. To. Evangelize. Share in the good news. Sharing.

[21:00] In the hope. Of Christ. Just like. How in Matthew. It says. To go. And make disciples. Of all nations. Or how in Romans. Chapter 10.

Verse 14. How can they believe. If they have not heard yet. And we should pray. For those who haven't heard yet. That their ears. May be ready to hear.

Right. Just as we've been talking about. When the very essence. Of parables. They may not understand. Let's pray that they do. That their eyes. Will be opened.

Their ears. Will be ready. And also. That their heart. Will be ready to receive. Do you realize. That parables. Is a way.

For us. To know. Who knows the Lord. And who doesn't. It's part of it. As we grow.

[21:54] And we understand. The depths of parables. This goes to show. That we are growing. In Christ. You might have someone. Who's like. I don't understand. Any of this. At all.

May they come. To know the Lord. And begin to understand. The deeper things. Of God. Amen. That's so important. And then finally.

Live. As transformed. What? Transform fish. Right? A good fish. A good fish. Stands out. Just like how a tree.

Is to bear. Good fruit. A good fish. Stands out. Our lives. Should reflect. The kingdom. Living. And loving. Like Christ. Going out.

Into the world. And making a difference. And how you do that. Is unique. To you. Whether that's just. Going into your job. And being a representative. Of Christ. Being a student.

[22:53] Evangelizing. Whatever that looks like. Living life. Knowing that you're transformed. Being transformed. Does your life show the evidence.

Of being a good fish? If you haven't. It's a good time to examine. And start. But live that life. And so Jesus asks.

His disciples. Let's go back. To scripture. Real quick. Back to Matthew. Chapter 13. Where we were reading. The parable of the net. Can we do that real quick?

And we'll go ahead. And close. So in Matthew. Chapter 13. The parable of the sower.

Why they're doing parables. The parable of the sower. Explained. We had the parable of the weeds. The mustard seed. And the leaven. The prophecy and parables. The parable of the weeds.

[23:49] Being explained. And then finally. Matthew chapter 13. Verse 51.

Very interesting. Are we all there?

Have you understood all these things? They said to him. Yes. And he said to them. Therefore.

Every scribe. Who has been trained. For the kingdom of heaven.

Is like a master of a house. Who brings out his treasure. What is new. And what is old. So it goes to show. How important it is. For us to understand.

The parables of Christ. Christ. So ask yourself. Do you understand these things? If you don't. Let this be a call for you to understand.

If you do. Praise God. The parable of the net. Reminds us. Everyone will be caught up. Are you saved?

[24:49] Do you believe in Christ? The good fish are not perfect. But they certainly are transformed fish. They're not afraid of judgment. Much like how we are not to be ashamed of the gospel.

And the time to respond to Christ is now. Not later. We have to remember. We don't know what tomorrow will hold. And certainly we don't know when Christ will return.

No matter how many books are published on the matter. We simply do not know. And we are called to live. And share the gospel. While there is still time.

In other words. The net is still in the water. Are you ready? For when the net is pulled. Let's pray together.

And Father we thank you. For this very challenging parable. This truth. I pray Father. That every person here. And every person online watching.

[25:49] Whether it's now or later. That they may understand. Not only this parable. But most importantly. That they understand that salvation is free.

To all who believe. And that we are extended an invitation. To believe in you. To respond to your grace. To be caught up in your grace. Father.

I pray that we grow in you. Going from milk of the word. To solid food. May we focus on. The things that bring us together.

And not the things that divide us. May we be a healthy church. A healthy congregation. In that every part of the body. Is functioning. And is in good health.

Father we know that you transform us. And we are so grateful. For healing and transformation. That has been happening in this church. We love you so much.

[26:48] And we pray that we will continue to follow. For your call for us personally. And also as a church.

You are the God of miracles. For your love. And we are ever so grateful. And as we are going to sing that song. Jesus. Lover of my soul.

You never let us go. And we thank you for the love. That you have for us. We thank you that you sent your son for us. We pray.

For continued transformation. In every single person's life. Whether that means. Being on a journey to come to know you. Whether that means growing.

Whether that means healing. Or transformation. Or even if that means. Being moved to do good in your name. We pray. That that will happen here in this place. It is in the name of Jesus Christ.

[27:49] That we pray. And we all say together. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you for listening for this week's message. From Ontario Community Church. I pray that you are encouraged.

And strengthened in your walk with Christ. For more sermons and resources. Visit OntarioCommunityChurch.org May God bless you. As you live out his grace and truth.

Every single day. Thank you.