



BEIJING INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

INTRODUCTION

This study guide will be most helpful if you work through it slowly with an open Bible, looking up all the references. Grab some friends and do it together!



KINGDOM STORIES

PARABLES THAT
INFURIATE OR INSPIRE

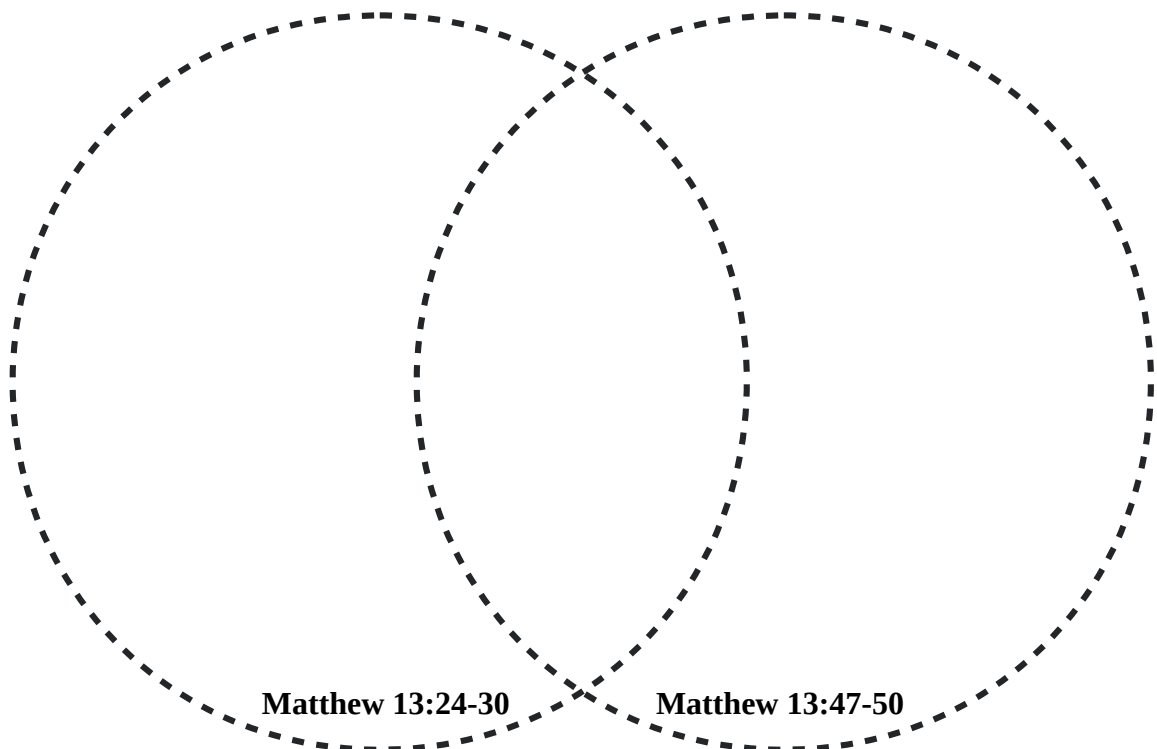


Jesus often told twin parables. These parables should be considered as “fraternal twins,” not “identical twins.” They teach on the same topic, but emphasize something different within that topic.



What is the twin parable of Matthew 13:47-50?

Using the Venn Diagram below, note the similarities and differences between these two twin parables.



ONE

The End

Looking at the differences of these twin parables, how would you summarize the meaning of this parable?

READ MATTHEW 13:47-48

This parable focuses on the end of this age and the beginning of the fully anticipated Kingdom. Notice how the parable compares the Kingdom to a net. Only when the net was full did the end come. What do you think a full net means?

2 Peter 3:8-10
Matthew 24:24



According to these verses why has the end not yet come?



How should we feel about Jesus' return?

2 Timothy 4:8

*There is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to **all who have loved his appearing.***



What are some things you can do to increase you longing for Jesus' return?



Ἄγγελος

A messenger from God, ministering spirit, one who is sent.

Read the following Verses:

Numbers 22:22-23

II Chronicles 32:20-21

Psalms 103:20

Matthew 28:3

II Peter 2:11

Revelation 8:3-13

Often times our ideas of angels are misguided.

In what ways do modern ideas of angels differ from a Biblical description of angels?



What are the angels seen doing in these twin parables? Why is this information included in the parable?

On judgment day no human can overcome the power of an angel, nor will any person be able to hide from an angel come to bring judgment on the earth.



The power of angels is meant to be a fearful thing for unbelievers, but how should believers feel about an angel's power? (see 2 Kings 6:17-20, Heb. 1:14, Rev. 7:1-3)

Leviticus 11:9-12

“These you may eat, of all that are in the waters. Everything in the waters that has fins and scales, whether in the seas or in the rivers, you may eat. But anything in the seas or the rivers that does not have fins and scales, of the swarming creatures in the waters and of the living creatures that are in the waters, is detestable to you. You shall regard them as detestable; you shall not eat any of their flesh, and you shall detest their carcasses. Everything in the waters that does not have fins and scales is **detestable to you**.



In the parable (Matthew 13:48) why would fishermen separate the fish that had been caught in the net?



Are there any foods you consider detestable?

This parable is teaching us that God views sin in a similar way that we view “unclean” food. Just as we won’t allow it to enter into our body, God will not allow sin to enter into His Kingdom.

Revelation 21:27

*But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does **what is detestable** or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.*



Unclean

The previous parable focuses on what happens to the weeds and the wheat. This parable only tells us what happens to the bad fish. It is a parable of warning.

Describe the good fish



Describe the bad fish



The world describes good and bad based on our actions: Do our good actions outweigh our bad actions? Are our actions hurting anyone else? Do our actions have good intentions? Are our actions based on “love?” This is vastly different from how Jesus describes good in Mark 10:18 and how David describes sin in Psalm 51:4



Does your description of the good and bad fish align more with how the world views good and bad or how God views good and bad?

“Sinning is any feeling or thought or speech or action that comes from a heart that does not treasure God over all other things.”

John Piper



If all have sinned, if all fail to treasure God over all other things, if no one is good, then how can we ever be counted as the good fish in the parable? (See Revelation 22:14)

Revelation 22:12-13

“Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”



Does this verse scare you or excite you? Why? What is promised for the bad fish? Are you prepared for the return of Christ? Are you concerned that others might not be prepared?



**EXTRA
DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS**

1

Read Mark 16:15, Matthew 24:14, and Revelation 5:9. What do these verses reveal about what God's heart is in advancing His kingdom?

2

Now read Mark 16:15, Matthew 28:18-20, and Mark 1:16-18. How does God choose to ensure there is a supply of good fish at the end of the age? In what way could God be calling you to advance His Kingdom here in Beijing?

3

Read Isaiah 1:18, I John 1:9 and Hebrews 4:14-16 and discuss how we are able to stand before God without spot or blemish.

4

What are your personal feelings about this sorting out process talked about in the story of the net and fishes?

5

What does this parable tell us about God's character?

6

What is one thing you can do in response to this parable?

**SERMON
NOTES:**

INTRODUCTION

This is an old truth for many of us, but perhaps we have forgotten how important this truth is. It affects how we live; how we worship; how we witness.

1 **There are two kinds of fish**

QUESTION

Which fish are you? How do you know?

2 **The net is coming**

QUESTION

Are you ready for the return of Jesus? Is it something you are longing for? Why or Why not?

3 **It's either the basket or the beach**