

# TREASURE, PEARLS AND NETS

Jeremiah 7:6-9 | Romans 8:28-39 | Matthew 13:44-52

The proclamation of the Christian Church is always one about

\_\_\_\_\_

To know \_\_\_\_\_ worth

What about the \_\_\_\_\_?

God sets a \_\_\_\_\_

READ. REFLECT. RESPOND. REMEMBER.

Lutheranism has a particular understanding about the Word of God called *Law and Gospel*. Law would be those sorts of passages that condemn our human sinfulness, and Gospel would be those sorts of passages that speak to the action of God to restore us to Him. To place it into context, Jesus' crucifixion is Law, in the sense that it is for the sinfulness of humanity that He is being crucified, but it is Gospel in that He is choosing to do this on our behalf and suffer the consequences of our sin. I say this, because one of the forms of preaching that I was exposed to early on (and probably still do from time to time) was a sort of corruption of this – Law *then* Gospel. The idea of Law then Gospel is simple – tell people how terribly sinful they are, and then tell them that Jesus loves them anyway. And it works. Somewhat. It is interesting to me that Jesus in this text *doesn't do that*. He's been talking in Matthew 13 about how gratuitous He is with His grace. He tells us in this section about how He gives everything up for us. He will close it by saying that, yes, there will be judgment, Law is still there, but that isn't what He is leading with. And it makes me wonder if sometimes the Church has erred a little on leading too hard with Law – because you could take this text, and preach on God's judgment against the bad fish. You can remind people of how important it is to respond to the love of Jesus. But that isn't where Jesus starts, and it isn't where he finishes. Instead he invites people to believe they are worthy of the love of God, and that something new is growing out of that love.

Reflect:

When it comes to questions of worth, how do you respond? Many people, for various reasons, have decided that they are unworthy of the love of God. How does Jesus say otherwise, that you are absolutely worthy of His love?