

The Tares and the Wheat

Matthew 13:34 *“All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them.”*

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Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 *“Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: 25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. 26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. 27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? 28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? 29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn. 36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. 37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; 38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; 39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. 40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. 41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; 42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.”*

This parable spoken by our Lord provides us with a picture of the reality of truth mingled with evil. I, for one, would prefer to believe this is never the case. However, it is a glaring truth that wherever

good is found, evil is lurking nearby. I wish it were not the case. This is true in the government, in the school, in the church, and in all facets of our society. No matter what rules we make or what laws we enact, seeds of corruption are seeking to germinate. Weeds grow in the most beautiful of lawns. The real and the counterfeit are ever with us.

In the previous parable of the sower and the seed, there was one sower, one seed, and four harvests. In this parable of the Tares and Wheat we have two sowers, two kinds of seeds, and two harvest.

The field

The field is spoken of in verse 24 and in verse 38. The field, of course, contains soil and is where the seed is placed. The field is described as “his” in verse 24. The field does not belong to the preacher. The field does not belong to the teacher or deacon. In verse 38 it is said that the field is the *world*. Thus, the field is *the world that God so loved that He was willing to die for it (John 3:16)*. Psalm 24:1 “*The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.*” God made it all and it all belongs to him, even though the world consists of good and evil. God even made the devil and, while it seems impossible to believe, He made him right when He made him. The devil chose to go bad. God makes no mistakes. So, be it established that there are good seeds and bad seeds in the field of the world.

The Two Sowers

Let us look at the first sower, the one who sowed good seed. The first sower is the “man” of verse 24 who is later called a “householder” in verse 27. So, sower of good seed is a man and he owns the house and the field where the seed is sown. Further, verse 37 describes this first sower as “the Son of man.” We have then the picture of Jesus Christ planting good seed in a field that He owns. God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit created the world and own it.

But, there is a second sower. Who is he? Verse 25 calls him “his enemy.” In other words, this second sower is enemy to the first sower. Do you mean the “Son of man” has enemies? Yes, even from the beginning. The Son of man created the field we call the world.

He then created the first man and planted him in the field. Guess who showed up next? The enemy of the Son of man, none other than the Devil! What a tragedy! No sooner had the Son of man made his field just as He wanted it and planted man and woman in the field, the Devil showed up to sow tares. Indeed, the second sower is the Devil. In this parable he is called “his enemy” verse 25, “an enemy” verse 28, “the wicked one” verse 38, and “the devil” verse 39.

How no-count is the Devil? *He will sow in a field that is not his.* That is downright sorry. In fact, he does not own a field. Any sowing he does is in someone else’s field. He won’t ask permission before he sows, either. Neither will he sow *good* seed. What a mystery that men, women, boys and girls still want to serve him! Let the devil sow in his own field, and let’s see him sow some good seed! He is a sorry, no-count rascal.

Note as well that the Devil did his sowing while men *slept*, verse 25. In other words, the Devil sowed while it was *dark*. The devil’s workers love darkness because their deeds are evil. My advice to you is to walk in the light. Stay real close to the Bible, the House of God, and Christian folk. The closer you get to the light of God, the further you are from Satan.

Too, we see that the Devil is cunning, for he came while men *slept*. I am not going to call him a coward. I will let you do that. Don’t think for a minute he is afraid of you or me. I prefer to say he is cunning like a fox. We know him as a wolf in sheep’s clothing.

The two Seeds

The Wheat. The sower of good seed, which we know as the “Son of man,” planted first. It was His field. From verse 25 we know the good seed to be wheat. Wheat is a good crop. Wheat has value. Wheat is bread and life. Many a person in the course of history has had their life sustained by a piece of bread made from wheat. God is good. God is life. It is no mystery that the Son of man sowed such a good thing as wheat.

Verse 38 further explains that the wheat that was sown was “*the children of the kingdom.*” The only reason there is Christianity is that Jesus Christ planted it. I am glad Jesus Christ planted me. I am

glad I received his Word, the seed of the Gospel, and was born again. It is the Son of man's will that all seed be good, that is, that all men be saved. Let us be mindful that as "seed of *wheat*" Christ wants those that are saved to bring forth fruit to His glory and honor. You were sown where you live, so that in your location, there could be fruit to the honor and glory of the Lamb of God.

The Tares. After the good seed was placed in the ground, along came the Devil disturbing another man's field. He began to sow tares. Tares are like unto weeds. Weeds are undesirable. We don't even feed weeds to cattle. Have you ever had to wrestle weeds out of your garden? Tares have no value. Tares are not sold to provide an income. Tares are not eaten to sustain life. Tares are no count like the Devil that sowed them!

Tares as seed and as young plants are hardly discernable from wheat. They look alike. You see, tares are hypocrites. Oh yes, the Devil is a master counterfeiter! Take a close look at verse 26. It is only when the tare seed and wheat seed germinate, spring forth as plants, and reach fruit-bearing state that they can be differentiated. The Devil makes beer look like water. He makes dope look like bread. He makes sin look attractable. James 1:15 "*Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*" Many are the men and women who look like they fit in God's kingdom. They go to church. They carry a Bible. They pray a prayer. They are tares among the real wheat, the true children of God. If you do not believe there are counterfeit Devils in the church, you do not believe the Bible. You may not even believe there is a nose on your face. Some are easy to spot- some are not.

Why would the devil plant tares in a good field that has been tilled and sowed with wheat? One simple reason- the Devil is against God. The high school I attended had a bitter cross-county rival. Many years ago the school tilled and reseeded the football field. The cross-county rival came by at night and planted corn on the field. Why? They were our rivals. They did not like us. Such is the case between God and the Devil. One is good; one is evil.

The Two Questions

The servants of the Householder (Owner) had two questions for their master. In the first question, found in verse 27, they asked him “*Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field?*” What happened? The tares and wheat reached fruit-bearing age. One group of plants had fruit and the other didn’t. It was not until the plants reached this stage, according to verse 26, they could tell the difference in the two plants. Has anyone ever told you something by putting it in question form such as “Did you know you left your car lights on?” Maybe we ought to just say “hey, you left your lights on.” The servants did *not* need to ask this question of the master. Rest assured, dear friend, God knows who the tares are. He knows who the devils are. He numbers the hairs of the enemy’s head just as He numbers the hairs of the saint’s head. The Householder’s answer to their first question comes in verse 28- “*an enemy hath done this.*”

The second question the servants had is given in verse 28... “*Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?*” “Master, we want to help. Let us go and get rid of those dreadful hypocrites, the tares.” The Householder’s answer was given in two parts. First, he said to the servants “if you go trampling into the field and jerking up tares, you will damage the roots of the good wheat plants.” Many a good church has been ruined by members trying to pluck the hypocrites out. Many a Christian has been starved and damaged by the preacher beating on the hypocrites (goats). The second part of the Householder’s answer was “there is already a plan in place to take care of the hypocrites.” The plan was that at harvest time the reapers, at the command of the Householder, would first gather the tares, then bind and burn them. Reapers are trained and skilled to deal with both wheat and tares. Reapers can tell the difference in wheat and tares. You and I can’t. Neither you nor I are reapers- we are sowers. Furthermore, please notice in verse 39 that the reapers are angels. Are you an angel? You would need to be in order to qualify to deal with tares, hypocrites.

Oh yes, folk with good intentions want to rid the field of the tares. The servants meant well. They wanted the tares out of their master’s field and rightfully so. Nothing is more despicable than a hypocrite. A snake is better company than a hypocrite. But servants, you have to remember: *first*, you will hurt the sheep beating on the goats;

second, there is already a plan in place to rid the tares (hypocrites); *third*, you are not qualified, for you are a sower and not a reaper; and *fourthly*, you are too busy winning your lost loved ones to be occupied dealing with hypocrites.

The Two Harvest

Verse 39 says the harvest is “the end of this world.” Acts 17:31 *“Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness...”* Tares will be burned in the fire. In the end of this age, God’s great and grim reapers will come, bundle up the Devil’s tares, and place them in a furnace. This scripture passage we are studying gives us another reason the Lord must come back to the earth. He has some housecleaning to do.

The wheat shall be placed in that heavenly abode prepared by God for the wheat. John 14:1-3 *“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”* Any moment the signal will be given and the wheat will be snatched out (read I Thessalonians 4:13-18)!

Sinner, there is still time for you to change from a tare to wheat. Counterfeit church member, there is still time for you to get real and quit playing church. Be saved today.