

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43: He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field,²⁵ but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away.²⁶ So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also.²⁷ And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?'²⁸ He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' So the servants said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?'²⁹ But he said, 'No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them.³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, 'Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'" . . .³⁶ Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field."³⁷ He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.³⁸ The field is the world, and the good seed is the children of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one,³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels.⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age.⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers,⁴² and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

Intro: Last Lord's Day, we began our study of Jesus' parable of the wheat and weeds (tares) which Jesus uses to teach us truth about what the Kingdom of God is like. Last week I simply stated 8/9 truths this parable teaches us:

- 1) Jesus did not come the first time to immediately bring about the fullness of the kingdom of heaven.
- 2) As the kingdom of heaven comes, the righteous & the wicked will dwell together in the world until the final judgment
- 3) Some of the wicked will be hypocrites and false professors in the church.
- 4) Sin and the wicked will remain in the world until the final judgment.
- 5) There will be a great separation of the righteous & the wicked at the final judgment.
- 6) We must exercise a measure of patience until the day of final judgment comes because God is patient.
- 7) At the final judgment, all sin will cease in the kingdom & all the wicked will justly be cast into a fiery hell forever.
- 8) All the righteous will shine like the sun, they'll be glorified, and be with Christ forever where there's fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore!
- 9) Though there will be great opposition, God will accomplish all His purposes for His kingdom and no obstacle, no devil in hell, will ever stop Him!

1. The Players In The Parable And The Meaning Of The Parable

Matthew 13:36-39: Then he left the crowds & went into the house. & his disciples came to him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field."³⁷ He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.³⁸ The field is the world, & the good seed is the children of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one,³⁹ & the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the close of the age, & the reapers are angels."

a. Jesus' disciples want to know what Jesus' teaching means: V. 36: Then he left the crowds & went into the house. & his disciples came to him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field."

- Do you hunger & thirst for the meaning from Jesus & His teachings? Ask for it! Seek Him! Sit at His feet!

b. V. 37: The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man: "Son of Man" conceals (He's a man) and reveals (He's the divine figure Who has everlasting rule & dominion in Daniel 7).

God is the Sower: Ezekiel 36:7, 9: Therefore thus says the Lord GOD . . . For behold, I am for you, and I will turn to you, and you shall be tilled and sown. **(Jesus is the Sower in this parable. Jesus is God!)**

Brian Schwertley: He [Jesus] is teaching that all the good seed that exists in this world comes from His hand. All the spiritual truths taught, every bit of grace applied to the soul, every new born heart, every true confession, and everyone who is sanctified unto God is a direct result of His Person and work. That is what He's saying here . . . He's in charge of the Gospel. He's in charge of people who believe in the Gospel, and He causes it to happen.

c. V. 38: The field is the world: 1) Many in church history have interpreted this parable as a parable about the church (they are wrong): D. A. Carson: Augustine, struggling against the Donatists [a strict Pharisaical faction that taught withdrawal & separation from the world] who were overzealous in their excommunication practices, went so far as to say that a mixture of good & evil in the church is a necessary “sign” of the church. Most Reformers followed the same line. Calvin went so far as to say that the “world” here represents the church by synecdoche [a figure of speech in which a part is made to represent the whole or vice versa].

- **Louis Berkof:** It is closely related to the church, though not altogether identical with it. The citizenship of the kingdom is co-extensive with the membership in the invisible church. Its field of operation, however, is wider than that of the church, since it aims at the control of life in all its manifestations.

- **R. T. France:** The parable is usually understood as depicting the mixed character of the church, in which true and false believers coexist until the final judgment. But in Jesus’ own ministry this was not yet an issue, and in v. 38 the field is identified as “the world” rather than the church. So the canvas is broader than the specific issue of church discipline. Jesus announced God’s kingdom, and this would lead many of his hearers to expect a cataclysmic disruption of society, an immediate and absolute division between the “sons of light” and the “sons of darkness”, as the men of Qumran put it. Yet things went on apparently as before. It was to this impatience that the parable was primarily directed. God’s kingdom does bring division, and that division is final, but while it is already present in principle, its full outworking is for God to bring about in the final judgment, not for man to anticipate by human segregation. Of course, this has its practical application to the search for a “pure church” here on earth, but the perspective is wider. It is, as in the two following parables, that of the contrast between the present hiddenness of God’s kingdom and its future consummation, when the “righteous”, who are now barely distinguishable from the “sons of the evil one”, will “shine like the sun”.

- **Brian Schwertley:** 1) It is extremely unlikely that Jesus’ disciples would interpret the “world” as visible church
2) Jesus just said the good seed were the sons of the kingdom (the church); so the field can’t be the church
3) At the final judgment (v. 41), Jesus will remove all sin and law-breakers from whole world, not just the church
4) The main focus of the parable is on the delay of God’s judgment. (That’s our #1: Jesus did not come the first time to immediately bring about the fullness of the kingdom of heaven.)

Jesus Christ is the one directing and ultimately doing the harvesting in His own good timing, not us: Many Jews expected the Messiah to conquer all of God’s and their enemies now! Jesus didn’t come to do that in His first coming. Remember John the Baptist had questions. Jame & John suggested calling down fire from heaven; **Acts 1:6:** So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"
- My #6 from the introduction: We must exercise a measure of patience until the day of final judgment comes because God is patient.

2 Peter 3:9: The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you,¹ not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

As Jesus, the Son of Man, spreads His Word in the world (while He preached then, and through His people after He ascended into heaven), He creates children of the Kingdom (good seed). At the same time, the devil (the enemy) shrewdly works to deceive and blind people in the world so that they look and act like children of the Kingdom (the weeds) in certain ways, but are not born again – they are not true, genuine Christians. These weeds (hypocrites and false professors) will naturally often be found in Christian churches because they will outwardly look a lot like the children of the Kingdom, but they are not!

2) (A side application) Sowing the seed in all the world: Jesus came to save people from every tribe, tongue, language, and nation! **David Sitton:** 90% of all Christian workers in the world labor in the 7% of the world that is already most reached with the Gospel. Pray for more workers to go to unengaged, unreached peoples.

Reckless Abandon: To give oneself unrestrainedly to the cause of Jesus and the promotion of His kingdom without concern for danger and the consequences of that action

-Ed McCully had written an impassioned letter to Jim Elliot describing how the Lord was compelling him to be a missionary; Ed wrote: "Jim, I have [only] one desire now - to live a life of reckless abandon for the Lord, putting all of my energy into it. Maybe he'll send me some place where the name of Jesus Christ is unknown . . . [later he wrote in his journal] 'I'm willing to give my life for a handful of Indians!'"

-Joe Cannon once told David: "Come with me, brother. I can teach you. I can mentor you. There are not many who will go with me into the jungles, swamps & high mountains. Come with me. Let's go get some of them for Jesus!"

-Joe began my orientation at his kitchen table in Lae, Papua New Guinea, by sliding a burial form across the table to me. "What's this?" I asked uneasily. With a husky laugh, Joe said, "Brother, I told you back in Texas. We'll be walking four or five days into the jungles & mountains. You may die in the bush or they may kill us when we get there. & if you die somewhere along the trail, I'm not going to haul your carcass back to the coast" Jesus is worth it

c. V. 38: The good seed is the children of the kingdom: This the church! The good seed is the church! And notice what a glorious name we have! We are children of the kingdom! We are son and daughters of the living God! We are adopted by Him; loved by Him; protected by Him; provided for by Him; saved by Him; sanctified by Him!

d. V. 38: The weeds are the sons of the evil one: These are counterfeit followers of Christ (like the Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees), those who may look and act a lot like Christians, but they are not believers. Jesus warned of them: **Matthew 7:21-23:** Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' ²³ And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

2 Corinthians 11:12-15: And what I do I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do. ¹³ For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. ¹⁵ So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.

e. V. 39: The enemy who sows the sons of the evil one is the devil: There is a devil. He is real. He is our enemy. And he is actively working God & against us and our faith and our lives, even using those he plants against us.

- **1 Peter 5:8:** Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

- **James 4:7:** Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

- **Ephesians 6:16:** In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one

f. V. 39: The harvest is the close of the age: There will be a final judgment!

g. V. 39: The reapers are the angels: Jesus will send His angels to carry out a separation on the day of judgment.

h. There are some details in the parable that Jesus does not focus on in His interpretation of His own parable: Since Jesus doesn't focus on them we should not focus on them or give them more importance than Jesus does. And we should be careful how we interpret them and their interpretation cannot contradict anything Jesus has said in His interpretation of the parable and it can't contradict anything in the rest of Scripture.

Matthew 13:27-30: And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?' ²⁸ He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' So the servants said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' ²⁹ But he said, 'No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, 'Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

Jesus doesn't tell us who the servants are or what the situation is in which these servants would go and gather the good seed up immediately. The Master's instruction (Jesus' instruction) to these servants is not to gather the good seed yet but to let them grow together until the harvest is God's merciful delay of the day of judgment so that all His elect will be saved. **Craig Keener:** God tolerates the wicked in the present for the sake of his elect . . . God endures the wicked in the present to provide all those who will receive him time to become his followers.

The focus of Jesus' interpretation of His parable is on the final judgment, not on how we should deal with those who are living in unrepentant sin in the church. Some could wrongly use this parable to contradict Jesus' later teaching in Matthew 18 about punitive church discipline.

- 2) As the kingdom of heaven comes, the righteous & the wicked will dwell together in the world until the final judgment
- 3) Some of the wicked will be hypocrites and false professors in the church.

2. The Judgment Of The Wicked

Matthew 13:40-42: Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, ⁴² and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

- 4) Sin and the wicked will remain in the world until the final judgment.
- 5) There will be a great separation of the righteous & the wicked at the final judgment.

a. There will be hell-fire judgment: V. 40: the weeds are burned with fire: **Mark 9:47-48:** And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, ⁴⁸ 'where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.' **GOSPEL!**

b. V. 41: All that causes sin and all law-breakers will be cast into hell and the kingdom will be fully purified: The evil one and all of his temptations and demonic activity: done, stopped, canceled forever! All sin, stopped forever! All sinners, law-breakers, evil doers, and those who tempt to sin – all of them cast into hell forever.

R. T. France: Out of his kingdom does not necessarily imply that the "sons of the evil one" were once in it, but that they will have no place in it when it is fully consummated: **Matthew 8:11-12:** I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, ¹² while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

c. Notice how this parable reveals the identity of Jesus: 1) The Son of Man's kingdom is the kingdom of heaven & the kingdom of God & the kingdom of the Father! **Jesus is God!** - **D. A. Carson:** What is clear is that Jesus ascribes to himself the role of eschatological [end times] Judge that Yahweh assigns himself in the OT.

2) God sends angels for judgment: **Revelation 16:1:** Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels, "Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God."

Kevin DeYoung: These judgments come at God's command . . . He tells the angels when to go and when to come. Jesus sends angels for judgment in this parable! Jesus is God!

3) God is the director of the harvest: **Isaiah 27:12:** In that day from the river Euphrates to the Brook of Egypt the LORD will thresh out the grain, and you will be gleaned one by one, O people of Israel.

Jesus is the director of the harvest in this parable! Jesus is God!

Philip B. Payne: Out of Jesus' fifty-two recorded narrative parables, twenty depict him in imagery which in the OT typically refers to God. The frequency with which this occurs indicates that Jesus regularly depicted himself in images which were particularly appropriate for depicting God . . . Not only do these parables depict Jesus as performing the work of God, they implicitly apply various titles of God to Jesus: the Sower, the Rock, the

Shepherd, the Bridegroom, the Father, the Lord, and the King. Our conclusion is that through these parables Jesus implicitly claims to be God.

7) At the final judgment, all sin will cease in the kingdom & all the wicked will justly be cast into a fiery hell forever.

3. The Shining Of The Righteous

Matt 13:43: Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear

- **Daniel 12:3:** And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

- **Judges 5:31:** Thus let all Your enemies perish, O LORD! But *let* those who love Him *be* like the sun When it comes out in full strength.

We, the people of God, are being conformed into the image of the risen Son, Jesus Christ: Romans 8:29: For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son

- **Phil 3:20-21:** our citizenship is in heaven, & from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

- **Revelation 19:7-8:** Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; ⁸ it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure" - for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

8) All the righteous will shine like the sun, they'll be glorified, and be with Christ forever where there's fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore!

9) Though there will be great opposition, God will accomplish all His purposes for His kingdom and no obstacle, no devil in hell, will ever stop Him!

And we will shine like the sun because the sun went dark over the Son of God when He died on that cross:

Matthew 27:45-46: Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (**And He rose up!**)

Christ Jesus Rids Of Every Weed
He's Son Of Man Who Sows Good Seed
God's Children Of The Kingdom Freed
From Sin And Hell By Greatest Deed
He Bore God's Wrath, He'd Cry And Bleed
He Died And Rose, Life's Guaranteed
By Faith Alone We're Just Indeed
Every Sin And Evil Breed
That Jesus Holiness Impede
Will Be Cast Out In Fire Concede
There's Weeping, Gnashing Teeth Decreed
But Righteous Ones Who Christ Do Heed
Shine Like The Sun, Their Father's Seed
So Trust In Christ With Earnest Speed
For He Alone Meets Every Need
All Other Joys He Will Exceed!