

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES

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Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

1. We are in the process of examining various Kingdom Parables, parables that describe the Kingdom of Heaven (God) on the earth during the church age.
NOTE: Many speak of God and claim to worship Him in truth, but in reality they do not.
2. Last week we looked at the Parable of the Sower which pictures the various responses to the Gospel that will characterize the Church Age.
 - a. No response.
 - b. Apparent but inadequate response.
 - c. A genuine response that is validated by the producing of spiritual fruit.
3. In the Parable of the Wheat and Tares we have a description of the religious life of this age.
 - a. True religion being genuine Christianity.
 - b. False religion being everything else.
4. A summary of the parable.
 - a. A man sowed good seed in his field.
 - b. An enemy came at night and sowed tares.
 - (1) Apparently this was not uncommon because Rome had a law against over seeding another person's grain crop with weeds.
 - (2) Tares, or darnel, was a weed that resembled wheat.
 - (3) Until its seed head was mature it was nearly impossible to distinguish from wheat.
 - (4) When the crop matured the existence of the tares became evident. 26
 - c. The servants wanted to enter the standing grain and remove the tares.
 - d. The landowner declared, "We will deal with the problem at harvest time."
5. Later, after leaving the multitudes, Jesus was asked by His disciples, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

I. The field is the world.

- A. In the Parable of the Sower the soil represented human hearts and minds.
- B. Here the field, or the soil, represents the world in which we live, which, by the way, belongs to God. Psalm 24:1
"The earth is the Lord's and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it."
- C. The field is not the church as many suggest.
- D. This is not a picture of true and false Christians together in a church.
 1. The world does infiltrate the church through "false brethren," but Jesus' focus in this parable is wider than just the church.
 2. This parable is not an excuse to ignore false teachers and deceived members in the church.

II. The seed.

- A. The good seed are the true sons of the kingdom; those who have responded to the Gospel by yielding to God's sovereignty and repenting of their sin and by embracing Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
- B. The tares are the sons of the Evil One, the Devil, those who are his captives and servants.

III. The sowers.

A. The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, and the good seed are the sons of the Kingdom.

1. The good seed should grow and bear fruit wherever it is sown by the Sower.
2. The condition of the soil, the depth of the soil, or the presence of weeds are not factors because the good seed does not draw its nourishment from the world, but from the Sower.
“He who abides in Me, and I in Him, he bears much fruit.” John 15:5

B. The one who sows the tares (the sons of the evil one) is the Devil, an enemy of God and man.

1. Tares are not people who deny the existence of God or reject religion, rather they are those who promote and embrace all forms of false religion that claim to represent God.
2. These would include Catholicism as a system (some Catholics may be saved), Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses, along with liberal Christianity.
3. In 2 Timothy 3:13 Paul declared, “But evil men and imposters will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.”

C. All God-centered religions are not of God.

1. Matthew 7:21-23

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. 22 "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

2. 2 Corinthians 11:12-15

But what I am doing I will continue to do, so that I may cut off opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the matter about which they are boasting. 13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 14 No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.

IV. The harvest.

A. God, in His sovereignty and wisdom, allows genuine Christianity and all forms of false religion to grow side by side during this age.

B. However, the harvest is coming when He will separate the wheat from the tares.

1. The harvest is the end of, consummation, of the age (Church Age).
2. The reapers are angels.
3. The Son of Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His Kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness.
 - a. All who cause others to stumble.
 - b. All who do not genuinely represent God and His Christ.
4. The tares will be cast into the furnace of fire, in that place there shall be weeping (lamentation, wailing) and gnashing of teeth (in anguish).
5. The wheat, sons of the Kingdom, will be gathered into God's presence to “shine forth as the sun in the (eternal) Kingdom of their Father.”

APPLICATION

1. There is no middle ground here, people are either sons of the Kingdom or they are sons of the Evil One.
2. Let's be stepping stones rather than stumbling blocks.