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Text: Matthew 13:24-30
Title: Wheat and Weeds!

Intro: Jesus again is teaching in a parable. The word parable is *parabole* which means “to place beside.” A parable places something unfamiliar beside something familiar for the purpose of teaching. Jesus’ purpose for teaching parabolically is threefold: 1) He taught in parables to open the eyes of His disciples to deeper insights into His person and His kingdom (Matthew 13:10-11). 2) To fulfill prophecy (Matthew 13:34-35). 3) To conceal the truth (Matthew 13:13-14).

Like in the first parable, Jesus first tells a short story and then later explains it. The purpose of the second parable is to teach the disciples about the kingdom of heaven and what it looks like before and after Jesus’ second coming.

Jesus begins by saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like.” The kingdom of heaven was misunderstood by the Jewish leaders and people. They thought that the Messiah would come and defeat the Romans. By defeating the Roman Empire, the Messiah would set the Jews free and set up God’s kingdom on earth. Though, the kingdom of heaven is not a geographical place. The kingdom of heaven refers to the spiritual realm over which God reigns as king. It is the activity of the king exercising His sovereign power. It is better conveyed as kingship, rule, or sovereignty.

Jesus said, “*The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed seed in his field*” (verse 24).

- I. **Two Different Sowers:** In the first parable there is one sower. In this the second parable there are two sowers. Two sowers—a good sower and a bad sower. According to the parable, both sowers sow seed in the same field.

The first sower is the Lord. Jesus explains in verse 37: ***He that sows the good seed is the Son of man.*** Jesus refers to Himself as the Son of man. By referring to Himself as the Son of man, Jesus proclaimed that He is the Messiah. Jesus was also revealing that He was fully God (John 1:1), but, He was also a human being (John 1:14).

The first sower sowed seed in the day. Activity in the day (light) denotes good and godly intentions.

The second sower is the devil (13:39). The devil is an enemy of the kingdom of heaven. The fact that the devil is the second sower shows the reality of opposition and evil in the world. Every act of good will be opposed by evil. Every didactic act will be opposed diabolically. Every spiritual act of God will be opposed satanically. The devil is at odds with the kingdom of heaven, the teaching of Jesus, and the working of the Holy Spirit.

The devil sows his seed during the night. Sowing at night shows the evil intention of the devil. Jesus said in John 3:19-21, “***This is the condemnation, that light is come***

into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifest, that they are wrought in God.”

The different seed sown in the same field by the devil is an act of sabotage. In other words, the devil intends to disrupt and damage the field. The devil wants to disrupt and damage everything God is doing in the world. Here is a personal note here, the devil wants to disrupt and disturb everything God is doing in your life, in your family, in your finances, in your faith, in your church, in your city, etc...

Jesus explains that the field is the world. Because of the sowing of the devil the world is imperfect. Even with all the proper nurturing, good preaching, and great teaching, the world is imperfect.

- II. Two Different Kinds of Seed:** the good seed represents the sons or believers, children of the kingdom (13:38). The good seed represents Christians who are planted right where the Lord wants. However, in the same field the devil has planted tares. The bad seed represents the sons or followers of the devil (13:38). The word tares, or “weeds,” translates a word that means darnel. Darnel has a close resemblance to wheat in the early stages of growth. Darnel is difficult to distinguish from wheat until it is fully grown.

When the workers recognized the weeds, they went to the landowner to tell him the field that was planted with good seed had weeds. This is a practical problem even today, bad is mixed with good. Even in church, we find bad mixed with good. The good news is the weed (bad) did not overcome the wheat (good). The weed does not overcome or make absent the kingdom of God.

The workers asked where the weeds came from, and the landowner tells them an enemy sowed the weeds. Then, his workers ask if they should go and pull up the weeds. He tells them No because they will also uproot the wheat (13:27-29). Often when we see evil among good, we think there is something we must do to separate good from evil. Separation between good and evil is not clear cut and black and white. We are not the ones to make the judgment of separation. We are not the ones to uproot those who are evil.

Then the landowner tells them to let them both grow together until the harvest. At that time, he will tell the reapers gather weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned but gather the wheat into my barn. The landowner is interested in the growth of the wheat. Being that the wheat and weeds are intertwined at the roots, both grow together. Jesus said “let them” grow together. The words that are translated as “let them” in Jesus’ statement, “let them grow...” can also be translated as forgive them. They are the same words Jesus spoke from the cross, in Luke’s gospel, when He said, “Father, forgive them” (Luke 23:34). Even then, on the cross, Jesus was unwilling to pull up weeds.

Believers and unbelievers will continue to live in the same world until the age of judgment. Jesus explains the harvest represents the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels (13:39).

III. Two Different Destinations: verse 30 Let them 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 the bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

Jesus says He will then tell His angels to throw the weeds into a furnace of fire, where there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth (13:42). The furnace of fire is the place Jesus also calls Gehenna or hell seven times in the gospel of Matthew.

Matthew 5:22

Matthew 5:29

Matthew 5:30

Matthew 10:28

Matthew 18:9

Matthew 23:15

Matthew 23:33

The teaching of Jesus on hell reveals that hell is a real place with real pain. Satan does not want you to believe hell is real. Many object to the doctrine of hell. But the Bible supports the teaching of hell. Example: Jesus in Matthew 25:31-43 offers a representative example of Christ speaking about eternal hell. Matthew 25:31-43 says, ³¹ *“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers,^[1] you did it to me.’ ⁴¹ “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ ⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it*

to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’⁴⁶ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Jesus concludes this parable as He did the previous one: Who has ears to hear, let him hear (13:43). In other words, this parable has personal application for everyone.