

# Pentwater Bible Church

*Gospel of Mark*

*Message 20*

*August 10, 2014*



The Return of the Prodigal Son by Bartolome Esteban Murillo Cir 1670-74

Daniel E. Woodhead – Pastor Teacher

# Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Mark  
Message Twenty  
Kingdom Parables  
August 10, 2014  
Daniel E. Woodhead



The Devil Sowing rye grass (weeds) among the wheat Artist unknown 17th century Flemish

## JESUS TELLS KINGDOM PARABLES

### THE PARABLE OF THE GROWING SEED

Mark 4:26-29

*<sup>26</sup> And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, <sup>27</sup> and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. <sup>28</sup> For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. <sup>29</sup> But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come (KJV).*

This parable immediately follows the parable of the sower and continues on the imagery of God (the sower) planting His Word in the hearts of mankind on the earth. This is the only parable that is unique to the book of Mark. While it includes the period of God's rule and operation in the world such as working through the elect nation Israel it does include the Church Age. The Church Age is a unique time period in the overall outworking of God's plan for this earth. It comes after the rejection of the King by Israel and lasts until

the Rapture of the Church. After that event the Kingdom will be reoffered to Israel up to and during the Tribulation. Principally the offer will go forth from the 144,000 anointed (Revelation 7:4-8) Jewish evangelists spreading the Word of salvation in the Jewish Messiah around the world.

In the first parable of the reception of the Word the sower is active sowing. In this parable the sower appears to be *inactive*. However, in the sequel to the active parable of the sower this sower goes about his normal activities characterized as *sleep, and rise night and day*. The principal thrust of this parable is that the seed sown (The Word of God) will do its own work in human hearts when given the opportunity. While this is true for all times here in Mark the emphasis is a focus on the Gentiles entering the Church because of Israel's rejection of Her Messiah. Just as the earth will produce crops from the various seeds sown in the ground, so to will the Word of God. It will automatically grow in the four classes of human hearts.

The first type of ground the seed fell upon can be identified as an *unresponsive heart* (Mark 4:15). The second can be called *the impetuous heart* (verses 16, 17). The third is a *preoccupied heart* (verses 18, 19), and the last type of ground can be called *the good, responsive, or well-prepared heart* (verse 20). The character and interest of the hearer determines the effect of the word upon him.

1. The Hard Ground (or hardened heart) is not conducive to receiving God's Word so immediately Satan who controls their life takes away the truth of God's Word that was sown in their hearts. They do not have any need for God and they only care for this present existence and can't see past it. Many of them will not have any guilt over sin or need forgiveness for it.
2. The Stony Ground folks are very common in that when they first are exposed to a clear exposition of God's Word they immediately show some promise of growth and continuance in walking with Jesus and studying to show themselves approved (II Timothy 2:15). They are usually overly enthusiastic about what they are hearing and comment that they have never heard such things before. Initially they have an over excitement. They don't allow God's truth to penetrate too deeply into their hearts and so their enthusiasm wilts and they move on to other interests. The shallow roots are their willingness to take God deeply into their hearts and follow Him. They might have some superficial understanding of God's Word but when any form of persecution for it even criticism they leave feigning offense at the Gospel. All who follow God experience some form of persecution up to and including death. When Jesus said we must take to our cross it means just that. We who are truly born again will follow Him to death. The sun wilts their interest as the parable says. There is a religious experience of sorts but no salvation.
3. The Thorny Ground people take the Gospel in and it seems outwardly to take root, bringing salvation and a dedication to God as well as an exercising of their spiritual gifts. However, their worldly cares in this life crowd out any deep digesting of God's Word and developing a thorough understanding of it. They are robbed of any guidance they could receive from God's Word and His people because of their pursuit of worldly interests. Such hearts are preoccupied. They have no room for calm and earnest meditation on the word or message of the Lord. Should any such serious study and reflection attempt to gain entrance, it would

immediately be choked off. *Jesus cites cares as the* constant anxiety about worldly affairs—namely, about matters pertaining to the age in which they are living—fill such minds and hearts with strong care. One care He cites is wealth. They might say if they were only rich they would be happy. When they are rich they find they need increasingly more riches to bring about satisfaction, which actually never comes. In fact, the attraction that pertains to riches is *deceitful*. The, *desires for other things* is referring to inappropriate desires. Such desires or cravings are wrong either because it is a desire for illegal activities such as drugs, or for intimate relations with another man's wife. It could also be a desire to have a legitimate activity but to do it too excess. Therefore the desire itself may be appropriate but the level of participation in some activity *to the neglect of everything else* makes it inappropriate. Luke's brief summary: "cares and riches and pleasures of life" (8:14) explains that Jesus is thinking of sinful pleasures in this verse. Luke's explanation closely follows with that of Mark. Anything normally desired in the world such as possessions, power and status as well as pleasure, destroys the effect of the good seed of the word. The apostle John states, "*For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the vainglory of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world*" (I John 2:16). In the days of Amos outwardly religious men would ask for the end of the new moon so they could sell (Amos 8:5). In other words, let's get through with this religious observance so we can go back to getting rich. They would also sell by cheating weights and measures of grain. The Pharisees did the same thing. They loved money more than God (Luke 16:14).

4. The Good Soil folks have hearts that are neither preoccupied nor shallow. They receive God's Word and immediately get involved. They study and find a competent Bible teacher that brings them the entire Word of God. They don't wait for circumstances to avail themselves of clear teaching. They are God's sheep and they desire His Word. So they gain true understanding. They put the message into practice and bear spiritual fruit following conversion; love, joy, patience, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness and self-control. They immediately get involved in ministry activities and tell others what has happened to them. They do not let any cares of this world stop them because the message of God's Word has sunk deeply into their hearts and they are driven to serve the Master in some capacity. In doing so they bring others in to the fold as well.

In farming the human activity is limited to sowing (planting), cultivation and reaping. The rest of the growth process embodies a trust in the quality of the seed, and its interaction with the soil as well as complementary weather *For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear*. These qualities are outside human capabilities and their dynamics are unseen. The spiritual realm is the same. The unseen works of God bring about the spiritual harvest. The harvest is the work stipulated by Jesus the ultimate harvester. In this parable the harvest is the last phase, which is the sower's primary interest. When the grain (yet future to us) is ripe He immediately *putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come*.

## PARABLE OF THE TARES AND SEED

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

<sup>24</sup> Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: <sup>25</sup> but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. <sup>26</sup> But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. <sup>27</sup> 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? <sup>28</sup> He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? <sup>29</sup> But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. <sup>30</sup> 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 <sup>36</sup> 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. <sup>37</sup> He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; <sup>38</sup> the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; <sup>39</sup> the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. <sup>40</sup> As therefore the tares are gathered and burnt in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. <sup>41</sup> 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; <sup>42</sup> and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup> Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear (KJV).

Since this parable is second “farming” parable it is complementary to it. It is also known as the “wheat and weeds” parable. The Lord Jesus interpreted it to His disciples when asked. He said that the good seed is not the Word of God as in the first parable of the sower but the results, which the seed has produced in the last group the “good earth (hearts).” So these are all the saved people in the Church Age. This parable is about the environment into which the children of the Kingdom live. It is they who are the results of the successful sowing. Jesus said that they live among the children of the wicked one.

In this parable Jesus adds a new dynamic. It is an enemy who comes into the produce of the seeds, which “Fell on the good earth” and produced many others. The tares are sons of the evil one (Satan and his demons). The weeds (tares) are the unsaved people on this earth who knowingly or unknowingly follow the Devil. This condition of the Kingdom was not revealed in the Old Testament in all the Messianic Kingdom passages. In this world there are many people who belong to Satan. At the end of the age the angels will come and harvest. At this harvest God will separate His people from Satan’s people. The harvesters collect the weeds into bundles to be destroyed. Satan’s works and his people will be thrown into the furnace – an illustration for the final Judgment (Daniel 12:2-3).

Jesus used the imagery of weeping and gnashing of teeth to describe the coming judgment of the unsaved. Weeping demonstrates outwardly sorrow, while gnashing of teeth shows extreme pain and anxiety. The worldly that say they don’t really care what happens to

them after death do not realize what they are saying. God will punish them for not accepting His offer of salvation and to be kept from the fires of the eternal punishment, which the Bible calls the Lake of Fire (Revelation 19:20, 20:10, 14.15).

The harvest, which is mentioned in both farming parables, is characterized in several passages. While the Church has its own harvest of the Rapture and Resurrection (I Thessalonians 4:14-17, I Corinthians 15:51-52) the others both unsaved and saved (Tribulation Saints) are characterized in the following four passages.

#### UNSAVED

Joel 3:13-14

*<sup>13</sup> Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: Come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; For their wickedness is great. <sup>14</sup> Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: For the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision (KJV).*

#### SAVED DURING THE TRIBULATION

Revelation 14:9-12

*<sup>9</sup> And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, <sup>10</sup> the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: <sup>11</sup> and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. <sup>12</sup> Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. <sup>13</sup> And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them (KJV).*

#### UNSAVED

Revelation 14:14-20

*<sup>14</sup> And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. <sup>15</sup> And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. <sup>16</sup> And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. <sup>17</sup> And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. <sup>18</sup> And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for*

*her grapes are fully ripe. <sup>19</sup> And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. <sup>20</sup> And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs (KJV).*

#### TRIBULATION SAVED AND UNSAVED

Joel 3:1-3 (Reference Matthew 25:31-40)

*<sup>1</sup> For behold, in those days, and in that time, When I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> I will also gather all nations, And will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, And will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, Whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land. <sup>3</sup> And they have cast lots for my people; And have given a boy for a harlot, And sold a girl for wine, that they might drink (KJV).*

NEXT WEEK: MARK: KINGDOM PARABLES CONTINUED

**Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments**

E-mail [info@pentwaterbiblechurch.com](mailto:info@pentwaterbiblechurch.com) Toll Free 877-706-2479