

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ
Kingdom Parables
Parables of the Seed and the Tares

Last time...Jesus explained in plain terms the Parable of the Sower

This direct teaching will help His followers to understand the other Kingdom Parables

This time...2 more Kingdom Parables

1. Parable of the Seed
2. Parable of the Tares

We will be in Mark 4 and Matt 13, starting in Mark 4

Mark 4

v26 In Mark's account

- v1-9 the Parable of the Sower to the multitude on the shore of the Sea of Galilee (Jesus in a boat)
- v10 those that were about Him and the 12 asked Him about the Parable
- v11-12 the reason Jesus is now teaching in parables
- v13 this parable will be the key to understanding the subsequent parables
- v14-20 Jesus' plain teaching as to the meaning of the Parable
- v21-25 those who now understand are to go share their understanding with those who do not understand

Now, another parable

- only in Mark's account
- is not explained by Jesus

The audience would be the same...v10

as if...seed into the ground:

We should recognize elements from the Parable of the Sower

- a man: a sower
- seed: the Word of God
- ground: heart

We are getting more information from Jesus about Soil #4 in the Parable of the Sower (good soil)...an "addendum", if you will

v27-28 seed should spring up...knows not how...for the earth:

The man/sower sows the seed and then “carries on” with his other daily duties/chores

Once he has sown the seed, he can do no more, he must wait

Now needed: the blessings of rain and sunshine and heat

He does not worry about the seed he can no longer see...

he knows it will produce a harvest if it is blessed by God

The man goes about his other duties day after day, not knowing what is happening with the seed hidden in the soil...

But that does not mean nothing is happening

- buried in the earth, the seed is “at rest”
- the LORD sends the rain to water it, the sun to warm it
- life springs forth from it (germination)

While he is busy elsewhere, not tending the seed like a shepherd tends his flock, the seed germinates

He does not know how it does...it certainly is not because of anything he did

The seed grows unattended, at first unseen and then reaching for the sun

The seed germinated and yielded fruit because of the earth...good ground... a marvelous creation of the Creator God

“of herself” = *automatos*

- “self-moved”
- “self-acting”
- from which we get the English word “automate”

The seed germinates in the earth and brings forth new life

- just a sprout at first
- continues to grow
- bears fruit

Bearing in mind the Parable of the Sower (ground = heart), man cannot see into the hearts of man anymore than he can see a seed buried in the ground

But the Creator can!

Jer 17:9-10

Man cannot cause the buried seed to bring forth fruit, but the Creator can!

Is 55:10-11

Later in His ministry, Jesus will teach John 12:24

The Seed is the Word, He is the Word; to bear fruit the Seed must die

And so it is with a seed buried in the ground – it must die to bear fruit

Hence, by the working of the Word in our hearts, we learn Matt 16:24

v29 immediately he puts in the sickle:

The man sowed the seed, he went on to other things, leaving the seed in God's hands

When the seed bears fruit, the man again gets busy – harvesting

The man's role:

1. sow
2. reap

In between, no role... "germination"/regeneration is God's work

The mystery of spiritual growth (as in our reading this morning)

1. Word of God planted in the heart
2. Word of God watered
3. death...to self and sin
4. life...abundant life while faith made perfect
5. fruit...Love (Rom 13:10, Gal 5:22)
6. harvest...at the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ

Faith (Rom 10:17) grows in our hearts

- unseen
- gradually, steadily
- fruitful

Acts 6:7a And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly

Law of Sowing and Reaping:

- A man reaps what he sows (Gal 6:7-9)
- A man reaps later than he sows
- A man reaps more than he sowed
- 1 Cor 3:6-9a

Now we go to Matt 13 for a 3rd Kingdom Parable

Matt 13

v24 a man which sowed good seed in his field:
them = those of Mark 4:10 (heard plain teaching and 2nd parable)

When we read our Bibles carefully, we discern some differences between this parable and the Parable of the Sower:

- good seed vs seed
- his field vs ground

v25 men slept, his enemy came:

While men slept:

- men vs a man (v24)
- this sleep is not negligence by the men, it's what our bodies need every day to be refreshed
 - Ps 4:8 will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety
 - Ps 127:2 *It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: for so he giveth his beloved sleep*

So, while the man's hard-working helpers are being refreshed in body and soul, the enemy of the man sowed tares among the wheat

- tares:
 - darnel, poisonous rye-grass that grows like weeds in grain fields in Europe and Asia
 - almost indistinguishable from wheat while "in the blade"
- among the wheat: right in the midst, not on the sides
- wheat is "good seed" so tares are "bad seed"

Under the cover of darkness, the opportunistic enemy comes, corrupts, and vanishes (no doubt gleefully)

v26 blade...fruit...tares also:

Using terms He used in the 2nd, "addendum" parable in Mark 4:28 – blade, fruit

When the good seed germinated, the tares did too

When the good seed brought forth fruit, the tares didn't

The tares were not distinguishable until the good seed produced fruit...
tares (counterfeit) do not produce fruit

v27 servants of the householder...from where has it tares:

Some clarity of the players

- a man (v24) = the householder
- men (v25) = the servants of the householder

The servants of the householder were unaware that v25 had happened,
when they were being refreshed with sleep

So when the good seed brought forth fruit and the tares were revealed,
they were taken aback...shocked and grieved

Now they can plainly see the difference between wheat and tares

wheat: as it bears fruit, "hangs its head"...the more fruit it bears,
the lower it bows

tares: fruitless, it stands tall, holding its head high

An evident contrast

- pride vs humility
- defiance vs worship

The grieved servants ask the householder what had happened

"Master, you sowed good seed...where did the tares come from?!"

v28a An enemy has done this:

Unlike his servants, the householder was aware of v25

Q: Is "a man" (v24) included in "men" (v25)?

The man knew an enemy...one hostile to him and his, one who opposes him,
one who seeks to destroy his harvest...was responsible for the corruption
of his field

v28b go and gather them up:

The servants of the householder

- love what he loves and hate what he hates
- desire good vs evil for their master
- care about his harvest...are zealously willing to get to work and purify
his field by rooting out all the tares

v29-30 Nay, lest...Let both grow together:

In his great wisdom and his love for the field, the householder tells his servants to
“stand down”

He knows

- the roots of the wheat and the roots of the tares are intertwined
- ripping out the tares will also rip out the good, fruit-bearing wheat
i.e. harm the wheat

Although he despises the tares and their corruption of his field, he is not willing
to lose so much as one stalk of wheat and its fruit

He will patiently bide his time...until the harvest

In the meantime, rain will come upon the just and the unjust and
the sun will rise on the good and the evil (Matt 5:45)

At harvest time, the entire field will gathered/reaped/removed...and sorted
That which is bad...tares...will be gathered, bundled, and burned since they are
worthless, of absolutely no value

That which is good...wheat...will be gathered and stored in the householder’s
storehouse, for he values it

The householder’s field will be cleansed of corruption...in the end

Then, in Matthew’s account, Jesus teaches two other Kingdom Parables:

4th: Parable of the Mustard Seed (v31-32)

5th: Parable of the Leaven (v33)

Which we will consider next week

But now we will proceed to v36

v36 sent the multitude away:

It seems Jesus now dismisses “they that were about Him” (Mark 4:10),
leaving only the 12

He is no longer in the boat, He is back on land

He and His disciples went into the house...Peter’s?

There, His disciples asked Jesus to teach them plainly the Parable of the Tares...
not

- the “addendum” parable of Mark 4 (how a seed yields fruit)
- the Parable of the Mustard Seed
- the Parable of the Leaven

Why this one but not the others?

Perhaps moved by the Holy Spirit to ask because it was vitally important
for them to understand it...the subtle differences need to be
understood to properly interpret other Kingdom Parables

v37-39 He answered:

Jesus always plainly teaches those who want to know and understand;
The Word always interprets the Word, man does not

- the man that sows good seed: The Son of Man, Himself
(v28a with Ps 121:4)
- the field: the world (John 3:16)
- the good seed: the children of the Kingdom of God (John 1:12)
- the enemy: the devil, Satan
- the tares: the children of the wicked/Satan
 - bad/wicked/evil men in the world...unbelievers
 - follow the corrupt mind/heart of Satan (Luke 19:14)
 - grow up in the midst of the world with God's children...
the world is a mixed multitude of God's children and
the devil's children
- the harvest: the end of the world when it is time for judgment
(John 3:17)
- the reapers: the angels

Note: Some interpret the field as the Church, a mixed multitude of
believers and unbelievers

That is NOT what Jesus clearly, plainly says.

There is another parable for that scenario...

v40-42 gathered and burned:

The children of the devil (tares)

- are fruitless, of no value whatsoever, totally worthless
- offend Jesus Christ, the Son of Man – with their unbelief and defiance
- do iniquity – servants of sin unto death, “free” from righteousness
(Rom 6:16, 20)
- gathered by the angels...out of His kingdom
 - the redeemed world vs Heaven (there are no “tares” in Heaven)
- burned in a furnace of fire
 - temporarily: hell
 - eternally: LoF
 - both are a place of torment for the inhabitants
 - wailing
 - gnashing of teeth

v43a the righteous shall shine:

Conversely, the children of the Kingdom of God

- wheat
- righteous
- in the world but not of the world

will reach for and shine like the Sun (of righteousness, Mal 4:2)

Their light does shine in the world/the field (Matt 5:14-16)...and forever

v43b ear to hear:

For a 3rd time in His teaching of the Kingdom Parables, Jesus issues a heart-stopping, breath-taking warning

We have ears...the warning is for us as well so let's consider the two parables Jesus has taught plainly and for which He issued the warning

The 1st Parable

- is called the Parable of the Sower because the Sower is the main character or primary concern
- Jesus sowed the Seed, the Word of God
- 3 fruitless soils/hearts, 1 fruitful soil/heart

This 3rd Parable

- is called the Parable of the Tares because the tares are the problem, the corruption, or primary concern
- Jesus sowed good seed...people, His followers begotten thru the Word
- is a parable of judgment for those who do not believe in Jesus Christ, who are NOT citizens of the Kingdom of God

Why was it so vitally important for the disciples (us) to understand this parable?

1. “Right” knowledge/perspective of Good vs Evil

Good and evil take root in the hearts of people...producing wheat or tares

Good vs evil is a matter of the heart

The Lord sees all hearts and is aware of everything, even as He sees the seed in the ground that is unseen by men (Mark 4:26-29)

Evil in the world is NOT God’s doing, it is the enemy’s, the destroyer of men’s souls who is waging war with God for the kingdom

The servants of God are not responsible for the evil in the world, the devil and his children are

Evil grieves the Lord God and His servants...but judgment is not immediate, it is reserved for the end of the world, because

- the righteous need to fully mature and the Son of Man cares more about the maturity of the wheat than He does the presence of the tares and their intertwining roots
- the Father’s business is to seek and save the lost (tares) since He desires that none perish

2. “Be not deceived, be not ignorant”

The followers of Jesus must understand the wiles of the devil

Tares resemble the wheat...until fruit is produced by the wheat

Satan is an angel of light...a false light (2 Cor 11:14)

3. Whose is what?

His disciples need to know our place:

The field/world is the Lord’s...

not His servants’ or the devil’s and his children

The kingdom is the Lord’s, both heaven (v38, v43) and earth (v41)...

not His servants’ or the devil’s (usurper) and his children

The fruit is the Lord’s...

not His servants’

The wisdom is His...

not His servants’

The task of separation of wheat from tares is His...

not His servants’/children

The judgment of the tares is His...

not His servants’

His will be done...

not His servants’ or the devil’s and his children

4. Jesus tells His followers in advance; they will learn this by bitter experience
 - a. The multitude is a mixed multitude – good and evil
 - b. In their very midst was a traitor!
 - c. Acts 1:8 (the field) will be sown (good seed) and over sown (tares)
 - d. The Church will not evangelize the world to issue in the Kingdom of God

The King of kings is on His Throne at all times, firmly in control
Jesus' followers must patiently endure until the end

Jesus will do as prophesied by John the Baptist (Matt 3:11-12)

Look into this coming week...look into the face of a tare you know

Be resolved to tell that person that Jesus loves them!

Perhaps there will be a supernatural transformation from tare to wheat...
as there once was in your life!

If the Holy Spirit is telling you that you are a tare headed for wailing and gnashing of teeth,
it is not too late!

Pray to receive Jesus Christ into your heart, be supernaturally transformed, pleasing to the Father

Small group prayer

Closing song