

if his or her life lacks genuine fruit, we must pray earnestly for that person who may not truly be saved.

c. We do have a duty to separate from error

- 1) At the same time, Jesus said that we must be fruit inspectors. (Matthew 7:15-16) "*Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravaging wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?*"
Illustration: The "Laws of Nature" paper that a cult placed on your car windshield last Sunday is an example of deceitful literature of a false prophet. Beware!
- 2) We must separate from clear error. (Romans 16:17) "*Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*" (2 Thessalonians 3:6) "*Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.*" It is unwise to maintain friendships with people who lack the fruit of a true Christian. If they will not submit to Bible doctrine, if they will not forgive offenders, if they will not apologize for wrongs they have done, if they live carnal lives, etc., God says we are to separate from them.
- 3) We must reject obvious heretics. (Titus 3:10) "*A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;*"

Conclusion: It is not difficult to see the reality of this parable in religious circles today. Many **professing** Christians lack the fruit of a **genuine** Christian. Their lives contradict their lips. We are not their judge, but they certainly need our earnest prayers. All too often, we accept a person's profession though his life contradicts it. **By doing so, we offer him no help.** That is the worst thing we could do to him. If he or she is a fake, God will eternally condemn him or her to hell. Pray for him or her.

If you are **sure** that you are a **genuine** believer, make it your passion to grow spiritually and to produce an abundant harvest for the Lord.

Song: Rescue the Perishing - 432

Tares in the Wheat

17 January 2021 AM - Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 - Parables21 - Scott Childs

Introduction: Weeds in a wheat field are not good. They steal nutrients and water that the wheat could use. They crowd the wheat making it difficult for it to grow. Often they are still green at harvest time making it more difficult for the combine to process the wheat. The combine must also sift the wheat to remove all of the weed seed. Modern equipment makes all this easier than it was in the first century. However, weeds in the wheat in Jesus' day was a major problem.

Transition: In today's parable, we have a true-to-life story, a single truth to learn and then several applications for our lives.

1. The True-to-Life Story

a. Jesus taught the story of the tares (v.24-30)

- 1) The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field.
 - a) The field belonged to the man who sowed. It was his own property.
 - b) He sowed good wheat seed in his field.
- 2) An enemy came and sowed tares in his field.
 - a) The enemy came in subtly at night. The enemy was trespassing on the land. He had no right to be there.
 - b) He intentionally sowed tares or weeds that looked just like wheat until the fruit appeared near maturity.
- 3) As the crop grew, the servants discovered that tares grew among the wheat. They then told the landowner.
 - a) He said that an enemy had planted the tares.
 - b) The servants wanted to pull out the tares.
 - c) The owner told them not to damage the wheat but to wait until the harvest time to separate them.
 - d) At harvest time, the tares will be gathered and burned and the wheat will be gathered into his barn.
- 4) Once again, this is a story that everyone understood.
 - a) Everyone knew that farmers were careful to plant only good seed.
 - b) They knew that tares looked just like wheat until harvest time.

- c) They all knew that farmers were very careful to separate tares from their good wheat since tares were sometimes poisonous.

b. Jesus explained the story of the tares (v.36-43)

For our benefit, Jesus again explained this parable.

- 1) The Lord is the landowner who sows the good seed (v.37).
- 2) The good seeds are to the children of God's kingdom – true believers (v.38). They are those whose hearts were the good ground that produced fruit back in (Mt 13:23).
- 3) His field is the world – the human family (v.38).
- 4) Jesus said that the tares were children of the wicked one (v.38). They are children of the devil who pose as Christians. They are counterfeits who **profess** what they do not **possess**. ^{KJBC} They may look like Christians in their outward activities, but in their hearts, they lack true righteousness, holiness, submission, obedience and the fruits of the Holy Spirit. **"False converts may produce outstanding works but no real fruits."** ^{KJBC} Identifying false converts is beyond our human capability since we cannot see their hearts. However, Jesus did say that *by their fruits ye shall know them* (Mt 7:20). We must be suspicious of those lacking good fruit.
- 5) The enemy that sows tares is the devil, *diabolos*, the slanderer (v.39). G. Campbell Morgan pointed out that, **"The devil is a squatter. A squatter is a man who settles on land he has no right to, and works it for his own advantage."** When the devil sows tares in men's hearts, he is trespassing on the Lord's field.
- 6) Jesus said that the harvest will be at the end of the world. This is a general statement as to time (v.39).
- 7) The reapers of the harvest will be the angels (v.39). They will do the Lord's bidding on harvest day.
- 8) The tares (false Christians) will be gathered and burned (sent to the lake of fire) (v.40-42). This parallels with what Jesus said in (Matthew 7:21-23) *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord,*

have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

- 9) The wheat (genuine Christians) will shine in the kingdom of their Father (v.43).

2. The Single Truth

a. The parable contains several points of interest

- 1) When good ground receives God's seed, it will produce good fruit.
- 2) Many who call themselves Christians and do religious activities are really tares or children of the devil.
- 3) A weed tare will always be a tare. Unlike weed tares, God can transform the heart of a fake Christian into a genuine Christian if he or she will repent and trust Christ.
- 4) God alone knows men's hearts and He will separate the fake from the genuine on Judgment Day.

b. The parable contains one main truth

- 1) The devil is planting false hopes in religious people who have never repented of their sins and trusted Christ. They try to act like Christians though they are not. On Judgment Day, God will send them to hell.
- 2) What a tragedy!

3. Applications for Life

a. We must do our work and let God do His

- 1) In this parable, true Christians are to be growing into fruitful wheat for the Lord.
- 2) God's part is to allow the tares and wheat to grow until harvest day when He will order the angels to separate the fake from the genuine Christians.

b. It is not our job to hold an inquisition

- 1) We are not to hunt down and kill all who do not agree with God's truth. In this parable, Christians are the wheat. The servants who wanted to pull out the tares may be the angels, but they are not men.
- 2) We have no ability to declare that a professing Christian is not truly saved. **We cannot see a person's heart; however,**