

The Tares among the Wheat

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Jesus often used parables in His teaching – using an everyday illustration to describe a spiritual truth. In this parable, Jesus described tares among wheat – a man planted good seed while his enemy sowed tares in the field. As we study this, we are going to attempt to identify the MAIN point. Once we do that, we will see how we can apply this in our lives.

Context

- There are several parables given in this chapter – sower (emphasis on having a good heart); tares among wheat; mustard seed (the kingdom would start small, but grow much larger); leaven (the message/influence of the kingdom would spread); hidden treasure and pearl of great value (the kingdom is more valuable than anything in this world); dragnet (same point as this parable)
- On this occasion, “large crowds” were listening to Jesus (Matthew 13:2) – this parable would apply to each one of them; everyone, whether in the kingdom or not, is represented in this parable

Basic Point

- This parable is a little different from many of Jesus’ other parables – Jesus was describing “the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 13:24), but this does not mean that the kingdom was “the field”; He would clearly explain that “the field is the world” (Matthew 13:38)
- So this parable is about how the Lord’s kingdom exists in the world – until the end, the good and the bad will dwell together; the kingdom will not be destroyed and there will always be wicked people in the world
- The main point of the parable is that the people of God will necessarily live among those in the world

Examination

- The parable – a man sowed good seed in the field, his enemy sowed tares (Matthew 13:24-26); the slaves were told not to gather up the tares so that the wheat would not be uprooted (Matthew 13:27-29); they would grow together and be separated at the harvest (Matthew 13:30)
- Like He did with the parable of the sower, Jesus explained this parable (Matthew 13:36-43), but only to His disciples – one who sowed (Jesus/Son of Man), enemy (devil), good seed (sons of the kingdom), tares (sons of the evil one)

- At the end of the age, the wheat and the tares would be gathered up (Matthew 13:39) – this is describing the final judgment (cf. Matthew 25:31-33, 46); the tares (wicked ones) would be punished (Matthew 13:40-42); the righteous would shine forth in the Father's kingdom (Matthew 13:43)
- “He who has ears, let him hear” (Matthew 13:43) – implied an invitation to become part of the kingdom

Application

- We need to be planted by the Son of Man – born again through Him (John 3:3, 5; 1 Peter 1:3, 23)
- Wickedness will always exist in the world – sin is a universal problem (Romans 3:23); we encourage/promote what is good (1 Corinthians 13:6; Matthew 5:16), but we will never eliminate sin around us
- We need to be righteous in a wicked world (Philippians 2:15) – be an example (1 Peter 2:12); be willing to be different (Romans 12:2)
- Divine judgment will come at the end, not immediately – God is being patient (2 Peter 3:9-10); this is so we (and others) have time to repent (Romans 2:4), hence the implied invitation (Matthew 13:43)
- We need to be careful about applying this to the church – the field is the world, not the church (Matthew 13:38); therefore, this is not instructing us to tolerate sin or refuse to practice church discipline (1 Corinthians 5:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15)

Conclusion

- One day the Lord will judge all men – the righteous will be rewarded and the wicked will be punished
- Until then, we must live righteously in a wicked world – remain faithful and show the example of a Christian