

The apostle Peter warns us *"Be careful! Watch out for attacks from the Devil, your great enemy. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for some victim to devour. Take a firm stand against him, and be strong in your faith"* (1 Peter 5:8). NLT. The apostle Paul reminds us that our warfare is against the evil methods and schemes of the Devil (Eph. 6:11-18).

It is the teaching of Jesus that Satan is operative with a close counterfeit that keeps people from the truth. Paul expands this in 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, saying there are false leaders who are motivated by Satan. He says, *"These people are false apostles. They have fooled you by disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. But I am not surprised! Even Satan can disguise himself as an angel of light. So it is no wonder his servants can also do it by pretending to be godly ministers. In the end they will get every bit of punishment their wicked deeds deserve."* (NLT)

Jesus points out that there is a battle raging between good and evil. We see and feel it every day. **But, God is still the Victor!** Note from our text in Matthew 13:41, that God has appointed a day (Acts 17:31) when Jesus his Son will return in power and great glory. He will send out His Angels and judgment will take place. *"They will weed out of this world everything that causes sin and all who do evil"* (v.41). On that day, all the unbelievers in Christ will be uprooted and cast out into everlasting torment and the believers will be left to enter into and enjoy Christ's Kingdom on the earth (Matthew 25:34).

This parable also answers a question that often plagues the Christian about the evil in the world.

4. "What Are We To Do About the Evil - 30)

What should be our attitude towards the sin and the sinners we rub shoulders with every day? Obviously as Christians, we are to maintain some separation, as James said, *"Be unpolluted by the world"* (James 1:27). **But, is it our responsibility to be calling God's judgment upon it?** That's what the servants in the parable thought (vv. 28 - 30). Jesus answered them **NO!** As verse Matthew 13: 39 - 41 reminds us, there is coming a final judgment day. *"The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil."* It will be like a huge harvest at the end of the

Tribulation age, when the angels come with Jesus to clean up this sinful world.

So now you know why "Everything's Not Coming Up Roses" or "Why The World Isn't Getting Better".

Here are some of the main lessons to learn from this parable.

1. There is a message to be proclaimed v. 24
2. It is for "any person" who believes v. 24
3. We must be awake to Satan's devices v. 25
4. Satan is sowing "his evil weeds" v's. 25-28
5. It is not our place to judge v's. 28-29
6. We must be tender, considerate of others v. 29
7. Do not worry because of the evil-doers v. 30
8. God has a day of judgment reserved v. 30
9. God and good will triumph v. 30

Now I want to ask you a question: "Which are you?"
The Wheat or Weeds? Believer or Unbeliever? Saved or Lost? Blessed or Doomed? Child of God or Child of the Devil? You need to be sure!

Believe and respond to Jesus Christ today and inherit Eternal Life. Jesus said, *"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me"* (Revelation 3:20). His promise lasts forever!

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Why Isn't The World Getting Better?

The Wheat and the Weeds



Jesus Parable of the Wheat and Weeds

Matthew 13:24-30

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WHY ISN'T THE WORLD GETTING BETTER?

Matthew 13:24-30

The parable or illustration of the "Wheat and Weeds", is here given by Jesus - concerning the end times. It is never easy to understand the parables of Jesus. We must keep in mind the Context and the Historical situation, which is to be our guide for a true and correct interpretation.

In Matthew 13:10 -18, Jesus explains to His disciples, the reason why He is using parables. He calls them *"Mysteries or secrets concerning His Kingdom"* (v. 11), which refers to the events of the pre-Kingdom time in the future - called 'the Tribulation'. (cf. Matthew 24:21)

It is a 7 year time period just prior to Christ's Return to earth and the setting up of His Heavenly Kingdom on earth (Matthew 6:10). The message contained in this parable will help us understand what is to take place on earth during the "last days" of prophetic scriptures, known as the "end of the age", or the "end times".

When Jesus spoke these parables to the people of his day, the Jews were expecting Him to set up His kingdom and rule over the world, right there and then. Jesus used these Parables as an instrument to point out their spiritual blindness. The nation of Israel failed to believe in Christ as their Messiah, so the parables were used to explain to the disciples what was going to happen. How that Jesus was going back to Heaven for a while, until the appointed time for Him and His kingdom to come to earth.

Therefore, the major reason Jesus taught these various parables was to reveal to His disciples that **there was to be a delay in the setting up of His kingdom on earth, until after the future Tribulation years or judgments on the earth were completed.**

We learn from the writings of the apostle Paul, that the return of Christ to Jerusalem and the setting up of His Kingdom on earth in the Holy City, will take place "AFTER" the Church age believers have been taken to Heaven and been in Heaven for at least 7 years. (1Thessalonians 4:13-18 & 2Thessalonians 2:7-12).

However, there are a number of spiritual lessons for all of us in the Parables of Matthew 13, particularly in relation to the Mission of the Church and Evangelism.

For example in this parable commonly called the parable of "The Wheat and the Weeds", we can find key answers to many questions that plague us every day. Such as:

Why is the world in such a mess? Who's responsible for it all? Why isn't God doing something to stop it? What can Christians do about it all? What can you or I do about it? Will it ever end? and many more.

One beautiful fact about the teachings contained in the Bible, is that they are relevant and applicable to our times. God's word is timeless. He always has something to say to us, if only we will listen.

1. The Kingdom of God is Available for All Who Respond to Christ (v. 24)

On another occasion Jesus said, "The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost" (Luke 19:10). It was sinners whom Christ came to save, and this includes all of us, even those supposed good people who con themselves into thinking they are not as bad as others, and somehow will be accepted by God. Jesus and His disciples were surrounded by these deluded hypocrites. And they were also surrounded by all kinds of open blatant sinners.

But, it has been well said, the disciples also expected Jesus to set up His Kingdom. To get on with doing something about these bad people in the world. To show action and weed out of the sinners and clean up the world.

There was always intolerance in the mind of the disciples. When a Gentile woman came seeking Jesus' help, they very delicately asked Him to send her away because she was making a nuisance of herself. (Matt. 15:23) When Jesus purposed to become a guest at the house of Zacchaeus they all murmured. (Luke 19:7) When Bartimaeus the blind man heard Jesus was passing by he cried out, "Son of David have mercy on me", the disciples and others told him to shut up. (cf. Mark 10: 48).

It seems the disciples certainly were waiting for Jesus to sort out the mixed crowd who followed Him.

One of the frequent complaints made against Jesus was that He associated with government workers and common sinners (Matthew 9:11). It seems that the disciples never quite fully understood why Jesus came into this world (Luke 9:51-56). For Jesus - 'Evangelism' -

that is reaching the lost, was No.1 in priority. And so it must be for us. I often wonder how we really feel about the lost! How easy it is to show the same attitude as the Disciples?

I believe this parable teaches us about the patience and purpose of our God, who is longsuffering and tolerant of sinners not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, because God would have all persons saved and come to the knowledge of the truth of Jesus Christ as their Lord. (cf. 2 Peter 3:9 & 1Timothy 2:3).

2. The Impossibility of Judgment on -30)

The parable becomes almost an extension of the command of Jesus in Matthew 7:1 *"Do not Judge or you will be judged"*. It tells the disciples and it also tells us, that we are simply not able to discern all the good from the bad. If they were to try or if we were to try, the end result will most probably be, that the good and the bad are destroyed.

What a lesson there is in this! We are often so critical and so judgmental, when we really don't know the facts. We also are unable to determine in the long run who is a believer and who is not. We look on the outward appearance but God looks on the heart.

Paul committed his judgment to God who alone knows them that are His. He said, *"God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription, 'The Lord knows them, who are His'"* (2 Timothy 2:19).

Jesus clearly teaches that judgment must be left to the end day and committed to the hands of God and Christ. His angels will gather the weeds (non - believers) and remove them. Note verses 39-43 in Matthew 13!

3. "Not Everything's Coming Up Roses" (v. 39)

The enemy has brought evil [the weeds] into the world. And who is the enemy? Jesus unhesitatingly tells us it is the Devil. Who's to blame for the mess the world is in? The Devil, that's who! All the apostles warn us that Satan, the Devil, is out to *"get an advantage"* and even if possible try to corrupt the believer (2 Corinthians 11:3). It is the Devil, who *"Keeps the minds of the unbeliever darkened and blinded"* (2 Corinthians 4:4).