

Matthew 13:24-30 (NIV) ²⁴Jesus told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared. ²⁷The owner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’ ²⁸‘An enemy did this,’ he replied. The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’ ²⁹‘No,’ he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.’”

- The audience would have been familiar with the context of this passage. They would have understood how weeds and wheat can look alike.
 - Most scholars believe the weed is darnel. Prior to wheat getting ripe, darnel looks a lot like wheat.
- People have formed different interpretations of what this parable is talking about. The most common misinterpretation is this is about the state of the church.
 - They believe we are supposed to be culling the crop of "wannabe" Christians.
 - That’s not what this parable is talking about.

JESUS ACTUALLY TELLS US THE MEANING OF THIS PARABLE:

Matthew 13:36-43 (NIV) ³⁶Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.” ³⁷He answered, “The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. ⁴⁰As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The 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. ⁴²They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

- Jesus is the sower, the field is the world, Satan is the enemy, the wheat is the people of the Kingdom, and the weeds are the people of the evil one.
- Notice that people are separated into two groups: Kingdom people and not.

NO OTHER DIVISIONS MATTER, YET WE OFTEN WANT TO MAKE A BIG DEAL OF THEM.

Galatians 3:26-28 (NLT) ²⁶For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. ²⁸There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.

- Notice the distinction isn’t about gender, income, intelligence or politics. It’s Child of God or not.
- While morality plays into our belief systems, if we are honest, morality is oftentimes not usually at the heart of our bias. Often it is just a bias against differences.
 - There are 3 values that can be the cause of personal biases: biblical principles, personal preferences, or cultural norms.
- The question is, “Do I care more about being right in a debate about my opinions than I do representing Jesus in a way that might give someone a chance at crossing the line of faith?”

1 Corinthians 3:19-23 (NLT) ¹⁹Even though I am a free man with no master, I have become a slave to all people to bring many to Christ. ²⁰When I was with the Jews, I lived like a Jew to bring the Jews to Christ. When I was with those who follow the Jewish law, I too lived under that law. Even though I am not subject to the law, I did this so I could bring to Christ those who are under the law. ²¹When I am with the Gentiles who do not follow the Jewish law, I too live apart from that law so I can bring them to Christ. But I do not ignore the law of God; I obey the law of Christ. ²²When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some. ²³I do everything to spread the Good News and share in its blessings.

- In order to know what Kingdom Citizens look like, we need to understand the Word. We also need to be careful to understand the Word correctly.
 - We not only need to know what the Bible says but also the heart behind the words.
 - It’s easy to be confused if we don’t know God’s Word.

1 Peter 5:8-9 (NLT) ⁸Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. ⁹Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your family of believers all over the world is going through the same kind of suffering you are.

- o Satan is actively trying to destroy God's plan to save humanity.
 - His main tactic is to get us to follow anything other than God. He is a deceiver.
 - We stand against him by knowing the Truth and putting our faith in Jesus.
- Because the servants weren't aware of the enemy, they accuse the master of sowing bad seed.
 - o Oftentimes, God gets blames for things that Satan causes.
- This brings up one of the primary points of this passage: **There is evil in the world.**
 - o There is also the effects of sin that have negative consequences for all living on the planet.
 - o This parable doesn't tell why that is. It does, however, let us know that there will be a time for judgment.

FOR SO MANY OF US, THE QUESTION IS, "WHY DOES GOD WAIT? WHY DOESN'T GOD BRING JUDGMENT NOW?"

2 Peter 3:9 (NLT) The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.

- o God desires none should perish. He wants everyone to be in relationship with Him!
- o When we see people acting sinfully, especially when it hurts others, we want to take it out on them. That's because we forget what the Bible tells us about who our enemy is! (See **Ephesians 6:12**)
- This parable makes it clear: **We are not qualified to judge who is or is not a follower of Christ**—or at least not who will become one.
 - o We don't get to write people off as lost causes. (See **Matthew 5:44-45**)

DOES YOUR HEART BREAK FOR THOSE WHO ARE NOT PEOPLE OF THE KINGDOM? LISTEN TO WHAT PAUL SAID:

Philippians 3:17-19 (NLT) ¹⁷Dear brothers and sisters, pattern your lives after mine, and learn from those who follow our example. ¹⁸For I have told you often before, and I say it again with tears in my eyes, that there are many whose conduct shows they are really enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹They are headed for destruction. Their god is their appetite, they brag about shameful things, and they think only about this life here on earth.

THIS PASSAGE REINFORCES THE PARABLE WE ARE STUDYING:

Philippians 3:20-21 (NLT) ²⁰But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior. ²¹He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same power with which he will bring everything under his control.

- If Christ is our Lord, we are citizens of Heaven.
- At the right time, He will bring everything under His control. There will be judgment, but He longs for people to repent and call on His name.

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS IN LIFE GROUP OR WITH YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS:

Passages to consider: Matthew 13:24-30,36-43

1. What passage or principle from the sermon is God using to strengthen your relationship with Him?
2. Read Matthew 13:24-30. Who is Jesus talking to? What does He want people to understand?
3. Read Matthew 13:36-43. How did Jesus explain the parable He told? A) What questions do you have about the parable and/or the explanation?
4. Wheat and darnel can look similar when they are young plants. What is something, in your experience, that looked good to begin with but with time proved to not be good?
5. What appears like wheat—sons of the kingdom of God—in your world at the moment? A) What seems to be weeds—sons of the evil one—in your world right now? B) How do you respond to each of them? [Read Romans 12:9-21 with this parable in mind.]
6. What is your response to what Jesus is saying in this week's parable? With whom can you share the story or your response?

Passages to prepare for next week: Matthew 12:24-30; Mark 3:23-27; Luke 11:14-23