

Matthew 13:24-43

Section 1: 13:24-30

²⁴ He presented another parable to them: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵ But while people were sleeping, his enemy came, sowed weeds among the wheat, and left. ²⁶ When the plants sprouted and produced grain, then the weeds also appeared. ²⁷ The landowner's servants came to him and said, 'Master, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Then where did the weeds come from?' ²⁸ "'An enemy did this,' he told them. ²⁹ 'So, do you want us to go and pull them up?' the servants asked him. ³⁰ "'No,' he said. 'When you pull up the weeds, you might also uproot the wheat with them. ³¹ Let both grow together until the harvest. At harvest time I'll tell the reapers: Gather the weeds first and tie them in bundles to burn them, but collect the wheat in my barn.'" (CSB)

Have you ever bought something and then when you got it and it was nothing like you thought? Kammy is really good at that. Once she bought a couch online. And when we got it...let's just say it was on the smaller size. I mean Kammy and I fit on the couch but our kids did fit a little better.

Here we find a parable about a farmer who plants in his field, only to find out that his enemy had planted weeds amongst his crop. Now this would be devastating for a farmer. You don't want weeds choking out your crops. So, how does the farmer respond? He will wait until the harvest to separate the wheat from the weeds. Fun fact: the word weed or tare here comes from the word zizanion; which is a type of weed that closely resembles wheat. The way to tell them apart is to wait until the wheat produces the grain. The weeds will not produce heads of grain.

We will go into more details later when Jesus explains the parable to the disciples.

Section 2: 13:31-33

³¹ He presented another parable to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. ³² It's the smallest of all the seeds, but when grown, it's taller than the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the sky come and nest in its branches." ³³ He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and mixed into fifty pounds of flour until all of it was leavened." (CSB)

Jesus gives us two short parables in these verses. First, we have the mustard seed parable and second, we have the leaven parable. Even though the parables are different in subject matter the principle about the Kingdom of Heaven is the same. What is the principle for us to learn? Simply put, the gospel is more than a one-time event. It's an eternal life change.

Many people make the mistake by thinking the gospel is a one-time event. In reality, the gospel is a commitment to a relationship that will change every aspect of your life for eternity.

- Let's examine this truth through the lens of the mustard seed parable. The mustard seed is small and seems insignificant but when it grows it over takes all the other garden foods. Once the gospel takes root in your life, it will and should over shadow everything else in your life.
- Now let's reflect on the leaven. When you are preparing bread you only need a pinch of leaven and then it mixes into the entire loaf. Like the gospel, once you commit your life to Christ, Jesus does and should consume your entire life.

The gospel should impact every aspect of your life. Your job, family, friends, morality, personal beliefs. We must live with a view of eternity. We must not be so short sighted that we focus on the moments here and forget the bigger picture. I personally believe this is one of the great ploys of the enemy to get us focused on the temporary so much that we can live an entire day and never consider the eternal things.

Application

It's too easy to lose sight of what's truly important. We need reminders. For example, place Bible verses around your house, in your car or on your desk at work. You can also listen to the Bible app on your phone. There is so much available to help us along our faith journey. Let's take full advantage of them. And if you ever feel inadequate or unworthy to be used by God, remember the disciples. They were uneducated, poor, least among their people, slow to understand, slow to believe and definitely not leadership material. Yet God used them to start the church. Don't lose sight of what is truly important and enjoy the amazing things God will accomplish in and through your life.

Discussion Questions

- ❖ How much has the gospel influenced your life?
- ❖ How do you daily acknowledge that you are to be living for the Kingdom of God and not the kingdoms of this world?
- ❖ What are some tips you can give others on how to stay focused on the mission of God and not get distracted by the world?
- ❖ What are you going to do today to be more focused on the Kingdom of God rather than the things of the world?

Section 3: 13:34-35

*³⁴Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables, and he did not tell them anything without a parable, ³⁵so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled: **I will open my mouth in parables; I will declare things kept secret from the foundation of the world.** (CSB)*

Why did Jesus speak in parables? To fulfill Scripture. Jesus was always extremely specific and purposeful in every word spoken or action taken. Jesus was never random. This particular OT quotation is from Psalm 78. Psalm 78:1-4:

¹My people, hear my instruction; listen to the words from my mouth. ²I will declare wise sayings; I will speak mysteries from the past— ³things we have heard and known and that our ancestors have passed down to us.

⁴We will not hide them from their children, but will tell a future generation the praiseworthy acts of the Lord, his might, and the wondrous works he has performed. (CSB)

God's people know His voice and understand His instruction. This is a very important distinction that separates believers from nonbelievers. Nonbelievers can not understand the things of God. Why? Because they are not filled with the Holy Spirit. John 14:26

²⁶But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you. (CSB)

We need the Holy Spirit in order to know God. Therefore, you can not know God without being saved.

Application

We have been given the incredible privilege of knowing God. But not just any type of knowing, we can know Him as our Father. This relationship should be our greatest treasure. Yet do we treat our relationship with God as our greatest treasure?

Discussion Questions

- ❖ Why is it important to remember that those who are not in Christ can not understand the things of God?
- ❖ Why is it important that Jesus was always fulfilling Scripture?
- ❖ Is your relationship with your Heavenly Father your greatest treasure? Why or why not?

Section 4: 13:36-43

³⁶ Then he left the crowds and went into the house. His disciples approached him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.” ³⁷ He replied, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸ the field is the world; and the good seed—these are the children of the kingdom. The weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. ⁴⁰ Therefore, just as the weeds are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will gather from his kingdom all who cause sin and those guilty of lawlessness. ⁴² They will throw them into the blazing furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in their Father’s kingdom. Let anyone who has ears listen. (CSB)

Of the parables spoken by Jesus, this is the one that God preserved in His Word for us to meditate on. Jesus explains the parable by providing the meaning behind the symbolism.

- Sower = God the Son, Jesus
- Field = World
- Good Seed = Children of God
- Weed = Children of the evil one
- Enemy = Satan
- Harvest = End of the age
- Harvesters = Angels

Through many of these parables Jesus is reminding us of the reality that eternity is coming. And in eternity there are only two types of people: those that embrace the gospel and those that reject the gospel. This parable should cause us to pause. The reality of anyone spending an eternity in the lake of fire should cause us to pause and consider how diligent we are in sharing the gospel with others.

Earlier we mentioned how the weeds would have looked very similar to the wheat and only time would prove their difference. This reminds us that just merely looking “Christian” is of no value. God sees the heart. We can “pretend” all we want and fool people, but we can never fool God. One day we will stand before Him and all things will be brought to light. Beloved, the gospel is so vital. This reminds me of John 17:14-16:

¹⁴ I have given them your word. The world hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I am not praying that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. (CSB)

Believers are sharing the world with nonbelievers. We must keep the faith and share the gospel.

Application

Reality can be a tough pill to swallow. Remember leaving home and realizing there are more bills than paychecks? Remember when your car first broke down and you had to call dad? Reality it going to hit people hard when they stand before God. We must get the gospel out! Ask yourself, am I wheat or a tare that looks like wheat?

Discussion Questions

- ❖ When was the last time you considered the reality that people will spend eternity in a lake of fire?
- ❖ Is it enough to act like a Christian? Why or why not?
- ❖ How vital is believing the gospel?
- ❖ How do you plan on sharing the gospel this week?