

Christ's Object Lessons Series  
03 The Parable of the Tares

Matthew 13:24-30 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field;<sup>25</sup> "but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.<sup>26</sup> "But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared.<sup>27</sup> "So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'<sup>28</sup> "He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?'<sup>29</sup> "But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them.<sup>30</sup> 'Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."

Matthew 13:36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."<sup>37</sup> He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.<sup>38</sup> "The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked *one*.

Jesus said, "the field is the world." Jesus' parable is concerned with the Kingdom of Heaven and the efforts of God to save people. Thus the field, that is the world, represents especially the church in the world because it is especially through the church that God's work of salvation of people is accomplished. Paul wrote this:

Ephesians 3:10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly *places*,

Through whom is made know the manifold wisdom of God to the principalities and powers? That is right, through the church. The church is a means that God uses to save people. The Holy Spirit works on people hearts all over the world but it is in the church that we grow and ripen for the harvest.

"He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man." The Son of Man is Jesus.

Matthew 13:38 (b)-39 "... the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked *one*.<sup>39</sup> "The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

The good seeds are the people who are truly born again and accept the truth. The tares however are those who don't show the fruits of truth. They are people who are enemies of God and man and they are sown by Satan. God and Christ do not sow seeds that become tares.

In ancient times sometimes people would take revenge on an enemy by sowing noxious herbs in their newly sown field. These tares resembled the real wheat. These tares would sprout with the wheat and would damage the crop and create hardship and loss for the owner. In a similar manner, Satan sows evil seeds in the church because of his hatred of Christ. Church members who are not consecrated to Christ bring shame and reproach upon the church. Satan attributes these evil results on God and Jesus.

Sometimes people say, "I don't join the church There are hypocrites there." But they go to the cinema and the mall and sporting events that hypocrites go to. They even vote for hypocrites! But they don't go to church! Excuses!

Some people stay away from church because they are not on speaking terms with another member. What did Jesus say?

Matthew 6:14-15 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. "But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

In short, if you harbor animosity towards another you will not be saved. You will not be able to enter heaven. Where will you get a forgiving heart? Where will you find love? You must be born again.

With this parable, Jesus said that Satan will always bring to the church people who are not good. True believers are sorry when they see false believers among them. The believers want to remove these false believers from the church because they are always doing something shameful and making trouble. They are an obstacle to winning new members to the church. The kingdom of God suffers loss. Is it necessary for true believers to remove false believers from the church.

It is necessary to remove from church membership those who persist in open sin. Jesus openly taught this.

Matthew 18:15 " Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup> "But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' <sup>17</sup> "And if he refuses to hear them, tell *it* to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

But we have not been given authority to judge people's character and motivations. We cannot read people's hearts. If we attempt to do it we will make mistakes. We would remove people from the church that Jesus is drawing to Himself. So what should we do? Jesus said in the parable:

Matthew 13:28(b)-30 The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' <sup>29</sup> "But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. <sup>30</sup> 'Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I

will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."

When the weeds grow, their roots entwine in the roots of the wheat. If we pull up the tares, we will also uproot the wheat. In the church, the true believers have close ties with the false believers. If the church would disfellowship the false believers, some of the true believers would stumble and fall. Jesus said, "Let them grow together." There will always be false believers in the church.

Satan began his rebellion in heaven. The Lord did not destroy Satan immediately. The other angels did not understand his true character. If the Lord had immediately destroyed Satan, angels that loved Satan and were bound to him would have doubted the Lord's goodness. The Lord gave opportunity for the real face of Satan to be seen. As the Lord behaved patiently with Satan, so we must be patient toward false believers.

We saw in the Great Controversy Series how the church in the Middle Ages persecuted the true believers and burned them alive. We see that while the church was trying to rid itself of false believers how wrong it was! While killing the true believers the false ones remained at the head of the church! Not everyone in the church is a Christian!

Jesus continued with His explanation:

Matthew 13:39(b) "... the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.<sup>40</sup> "Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age.<sup>41</sup> "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness,<sup>42</sup> "and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.<sup>43</sup> "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

In the day of judgment everything will be manifest. Nothing will be hidden.

Ecclesiastes 12:14 For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.

The time to choose is now. The place is the church. The character that Jesus will judge we form now, in the church, that is while we are in the field. Are you seed that was sown by the Lord? Are you growing in the Lord? Are you developing a character that resembles His? Or are you bringing shame and reproach to the church? The choice is yours.