

**Introduction:**

- Jesus often spoke in pictures when He taught the people. Those pictures are called parables.
  - We looked at a parable at the start of June. When Jesus used the expression, "A man who has a lamp doesn't cover it. No, he places it in the room so that the whole room gets light. You are the light of the world." Then we looked at the parable of the Waiting Father. And the parable of the dishonest manager—who had sense enough to act now to secure his future.
  - A parable essentially is a comparison, it's putting something alongside something else to compare. Parables were originally to be heard and not to be read. What came out of that was the fact that the hearers of parables had to make an instant appraisal of what the teacher was saying. So there wasn't time for them to sit down with a black-and-white text and dissect each detail, and try and correspond it to spiritual truth, while we can do that now they did not have that privilege. They had to, in a moment, grasp what the speaker was saying, and because of that we need to remember that really in all the parables there is one main fundamental point that the Lord Jesus was getting across.
  - Our parable today is: Mt 13:24-29, 36-43.
- I have always been amazed while growing up on the farm the incredible power of weeds to occur where ever a field or garden was planted. I have arrived at the conclusion there there are no fields in this world where only grain and flowers grow; the weeds are always there too. The weeds are here so how are we to respond?

**1. The Key To Parable of the Wheat and Tares****a. The Context**

- i. Mt starts this section with the parable of soil. (Mt 13:3-23), He then gives us the parable of the wheat and tares, and in between the giving of the parable and the explanation of the parable (which we are looking at today) he gives the parable of mustard seed and leaven (last weeks message:it looks minuscule but its seismic).
- ii. He starts this portion of Mt by saying the farmers sows the word. A message about sowing the word in the heart of a man and how that man's heart affects what is produced. He then goes into another parable about a farmer and this time the focus is on what happens between planting and harvest. He lets His disciples know that the kingdom may seem small at first but it is seismic! Then he explains the parable of wheat and tares. Look for the thread that Mt is weaving in chapter 13.
- iii. The interpretation is being given to His disciples. We also need to note: What is true of the content of the message is also true of the people who gathered around it. Remember Judas was in their midst.

**b. The Characters**

- i. The Son of Man is the Farmer who plants good seed. "That's me." Jesus says
- ii. The field is the world. This is important because he is not talking about the church...vital to arriving at a correct interpretation of the parable. If we do not see the field as the world and think it is the church then some would say that Jesus was teaching how the church is asleep and the enemy infiltrate the church to spread bad teachings and the like. But that is not the point of the parable.
- iii. Good seed are the people of the Kingdom.
- iv. The weeds are people who do not know God.
- v. The harvest is the end of the age and the harvesters are the angels.
  - 1. Luke 16 Lazarus is carried by angels to Abrahams bosom when he dies
  - 2. The certain rich man is buried and we find him burning.

3. Therefore given the context and the characters, what is the point? It's easy to find.

c. The Main Point

- i. We know the main point because Jesus gives it to us. Jesus gives us the interpretation of the parable in Mt 36-43.
- ii. "I got this!" "*Let both grow together until the harvest. Then I will ... sort out the weeds, tie them into bundles, and burn them, and to put the wheat in the barn.*"'" (Matthew 13:30, NLT)
- iii. "Let both grow together, then.." All we really have to do is apply it. What is our take away?

2. **One, There Will Be a Sorting Out**

- a. This is huge for us to understand. We have to know that the sorting is not done now but it will be done at the end of the age. What were the Pharisees guilty of? They were guilty of doing the sorting now. They wanted to kill the woman caught in the act of adultery. They wanted Jesus to not let the woman of the night to touch Him. They wanted nothing to do with 'notorious sinners.'
- b. If it is not my job, whose is it? God's, and God has a way of doing this.
  - i. II. I think we secretly, at times, would like to be like Darth Vader and with the power of our thought choke the sinners to death and eliminate them from our lives.
    - 1. It is not our job to be detectives as to who is in the kingdom and who is not.
    - 2. It is not our job to root out/destroy those who are not of the Kingdom.
      - a. There are ways that Paul gives us about dealing with brothers and sisters in the body of Christ.
      - b. But this parable is not about the church it is about the world we live in. It is about Christians and those who do not know God. What are we to do about this? We are to understand that there will be a sorting and it is God who will do it, not us.
  - ii. Who does God sort out?
    - 1. Those who do not believe. "*He who believes has everlasting life.*" Jn 3:16, 36. This is a belief in trusting God, not just believing that there is a God. James 2:19 Says even demons believe...
    - 2. Those who offend or cause others to sin. "*...Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!*" (Matthew 18:6–7, NKJV)
    - 3. Those who practice lawlessness. Mt 7:21-23 "*For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.*" (Ephesians 5:5, NKJV)
  - iii. How does He sort out?
    - 1. God looks at the heart but man looks at the outside. His perspective is different.
    - 2. God is patient. He is in absolutely no hurry to do this. *Let them grow together until the end of the age.* "*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.*" (2 Peter 3:9, NLT) We tend to be much more impatient like those in the parable "do you want us to pull them up?" Or like Peter James and John, "Do you want us to call down fire on them?" So, number one we know there will be a sorting out. Two....

3. **Two, It Is Not Up To Us To Sort Out**

- a. We are to leave the sorting to God. We do not want to be Pharisees. Therefore there are three major implications or applications here for us.

- b. One: Because God is doing the sorting, I can not think that I can exterminate evil in this world by my personal activity or by my personal exertions. We are not fighting 'flesh and blood' but this is a spirit that we are up against and this is God's job.
  - i. This is the tragedy of social reforms and moralists: they want to root out the sin, vices, etc. without love.
  - ii. The reformer do what the servants in our parable want to do: exterminate the tares by force and will power, while failing to realize that their own wills are filled with tares. To not see this will make us a Pharisee and to see this to royally rest in Christ until the end of the age.
  - 1. Therefore, human power is of no use in sorting. If it were we would not need Jesus sacrifice and mere moral appeal to people would be enough. We have to go back to parable of sower or of the Mustard seed and yeast.
  - 2. Therefore, we are not to judge!
- c. Two, because God is doing the sorting, Jesus rejects/or the farmer rejects and forcible intervention on the part of the servants/you and I.
  - i. Jesus gives a clear answer to the servants: "NO!" It is not for you to do any of the separating, uprooting or destroying.
  - ii. Again, Jesus rebuked Peter, James and John... "*Shall we call down fire...*" Lk 9:54-55 "*You do not know what spirit you are of.*"
  - iii. If we called down fire we would be spoiling the plan of salvation for someone. If we called down fire we would deny people the chance to hear the Word of God and to take it to heart.
  - iv. If we are to be the judges then we would be rounding people up evaluating them and giving them the verdict: 'you passed' and 'you failed'.
- d. Third, because God is doing the sorting, Jesus points out that the servants are incapable of doing the sorting. "You will destroy the good with the bad if you try to pull them up." This presents us a bit of a challenge. Because they are able to see a difference between the wheat and the tares. Yet Jesus says, NO because he does not want the fruit pulled up with the weeds.
  - i. He is not saying that it is o.k. to be worldly. That would go against the sermon on the mount.
  - ii. But he is asking the servants, "Is this person a weed and nothing but a weed?" or "Is there possible something in this 'weed' that would make a fine Christian?" Who dares to separate or weed out here? Rather we must LOVE. This may very well be wheat that is waiting to be loved into existence.
  - iii. Dostoevski wrote, "To love a person means to see him as God intends him to be." We must see him not as he is but as God intended him to be. This is what Jesus the second Adam did for us maybe that is what qualifies him to be the Sorter. IL. Maybe Jn 8 could be read: "Let he who is without sin pull the first weed."

### **Conclusion:**

- The point of this parable is: There will be a sorting out of the wheat from the tares. We will not be a part of that sorting. God is telling us, "I got this!" We are to loves and grow right along side the tares. We do not exist to remove them but to love them.