

Parable of the Weeds – Matthew 13 - 5 July 09

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

In the parable of the Sower, Jesus told his disciples to listen carefully, to understand the word, and to bear fruit. These are the people who are the true children of the kingdom.

Now Jesus told them (the crowd) another parable.

Let's read Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43.

Dr Jack Scott says that there are only two kinds of people in the world according to Jesus:- those who are the sons of the kingdom and those who are the sons of the evil one.

Two main points stand out in this parable:-

1. The mixture of good and evil in the present world
2. A strong emphasis of Jesus' second coming and what will happen at the end of the age to the weeds and wheat.

Parable of the Weeds (13:24-30)

In verse 24, Jesus said the kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed. The word for good is the same word used for the good soil in verse 23.

In verse 25, there is the action of an enemy who came at night and sowed weeds among the wheat. Then he slipped away unnoticed.

In Jesus' day this very thing would occur. An angry farmer would sow weeds in another man's field. This is a kind of agricultural sabotage to prevent the other farmer from having a good harvest.

The weeds concern is darnel, which is a member of the grass family and resembles wheat-like grass. It *looks like* wheat, it *appears* like wheat but it is *not* wheat.

Darnel grass looks very similar to wheat until it is mature when the head of the wheat plant drops down whereas the head of the weeds remains upright.

If Jesus was telling this parable in Malaysia, he would probably used our Malaysian equivalent – lalang for the weeds and rice for the wheat.

V27 - The owner's servants, who were managing the field, discovered the weeds and wanted to act immediately to pull up the weeds.

V29 - Surprisingly, the owner replied “No. Let both grow together until the harvest.” The reason is the root of the wheat and weeds have intertwined and the owner fears that in pulling out the weeds would endanger the wheat. The owner said, “Don’t do anything until the harvest, when the wheat can be gathered in and the weeds to be collected up for burning.”

Parable of the Weeds Explained (v 36-43)

This is one of the two parables that Jesus explains the meaning of the parable to the disciples.

1. Jesus is identified as the sower of the good seed – The Son of Man
2. The field is the world. DA Carson pointed out that many commentators misinterpret this parable with reference to the church. He said, “The parable does not address the church situation at all but explains how the kingdom (of God) can be present in the world while not yet wiping out all opposition. That must await the harvest.”

The Gospel According To Matthew, Leon Morris, pg 351

3. The good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom.

Joh 1:12 Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—

Joh 1:13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

4. The weeds are the sons of the evil one.

In John 8:12:42. Jesus was engaged in a dialogue with the Jews. Jesus was very direct and straightforward with those who rejected him.

Joh 8:44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

5. The enemy who sows the weeds is the devil
6. The harvest is the end of the age
7. The harvesters are angels.

What can we learn from the Parable of the Weeds

God's Patience with the world.

This parable teaches us that God is patient with the world. Waiting till the time is right before he sends his angels to reap the harvest and separate the wheat from the weeds - the sons of the kingdom from the sons of the evil one. He is giving people the maximum opportunity to choose Him. He is waiting for us to respond and to rescue us from the dominion of darkness and to bring us into the kingdom of heaven.

2Pe 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Brother and Sisters, the riches of God's kindness, tolerance and patience is to lead us toward repentance?

Living as God's children in this world

Robert Chapman was a pastor, a teacher and an evangelist in the 18th century. He was one of Hudson Taylor's close friend and a spiritual mentor to George Muller of Bristol, determined early in his life not only to preach Christ, but to live Christ. He was best known for his remarkable life of godly love. Charles Spurgeon said, "RC Chapman is the saintliest man I ever know"

Read chap 7 from Agape Leadership

We must live in such a way as to reflect the heartbeat of God, to have a deep, sincere love for the lost.

Let us tell people who would listen of God's love for them and encourage them to trust in Jesus because a time for judgement is coming and then it'll be too late.

God's Final Judgement

It is God, at the final judgment, who will separate the weeds from the wheat.

- The weeds will be gathered together and burned, but
- The wheat will be gathered into God's barn. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.
- God is to be the judge and will determine the good from the bad, the true from the false.
- It is the Lord God who is to make the final determination and final separation.

Conclusion

There is a two stage process to the strategy of the Kingdom of God.

1. A holy God would not take dominion over a sinful world. So He first send His Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross to pay the debt for man's sin and thereby provide for men and women to be made holy as sons of the kingdom of God. Christ's death and resurrection assure His ultimate victory.
2. The second stage, which will take place when Christ returns, will assert God's rule over all the universe; His Kingdom will be visible without imperfection. At that time there will be a final judgement of all people, peace on earth and the restoration of harmony unknown since Eden.

Charles Colson, Kingdoms in Conflict. Pg 84-85

Challenges

1. Jesus said there are only two groups of people in the world – those who belong to God and those who do not belong to God.

Who do I belong to? Am I in his kingdom or outside his kingdom?

If you are unsure, let me invite you come into the kingdom of God by trusting in Jesus Christ and receive Him as Lord and Saviour.

If you need to talk to someone, the church elders will be available upfront here.

2. For us who have experienced the grace of God in our lives, how do we response to God's Word this morning?

How do we display Christ's love among so many people around us who still do not know Him?

Do we reflect the heartbeat of God, to have a deep, sincere love for the lost and reach out to them in love?