

The Parables

May 8, 2016 – Mother's Day

"Wheat with Weeds"

Happy Mother's Day!

- Moms – did you get a rose?

Recap "United for Tucson" NDP Event...

(next) Stuart and I tag-teamed last week's message on Trusting God with Money last week.

- This week, we're tag-teaming again.
- Personally, I'd like to make a habit out of this – Stuart has great wisdom!
- Stuart is going to come in 20 minutes or so and share about his time in Brazil in early April.
- But first, I want to set up what you're going to hear from him, and today's parable helps me do that perfectly.
- Pray...

In Matthew 13, Jesus is teaching on general principles surrounding the Kingdom of Heaven.

Mat 13:24 He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field,

Mat 13:25 but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away.

Mat 13:26 So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also.

Mat 13:27 And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?'

Mat 13:28 He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' So the servants said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?'

Mat 13:29 But he said, 'No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them.

Mat 13:30 Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

The parable's meaning is pretty straight-forward:

- The Kingdom of Heaven is both on earth, and in heaven – the kingdom made up God, His Son, His Spirit, His angels, and saints who will be known by their faith in Christ.
 - For the Jews, this "Kingdom of Heaven" is rife with confusion, due to poor interpretation of the OT by Pharisees and other teachers, but also due to their soon-to-be-discovered full rejection of God's Son, Jesus Christ.
- So in the parable, we have a man, a field, seeds, "slumbering men," wheat, weeds, an enemy, servants, harvest, reapers, fire, and a barn.
 - **Man = God**
 - **Field = World**
 - **Good Seed = Gospel of Christ – the New Covenant**
 - **Slumbering Men = Shepherds**
 - **Enemy = Satan**
 - **Weeds = Counterfeit Wheat**
 - **Wheat = Believers/Saints**

- Servants = the Church
- Harvest = Second coming of Christ
- Reapers = Christ and His Angels
- Fire = Hell
- Barn = Heaven

Among these, some are simply understood, but let's clearly define Weeds, the Enemy, and two others:

- **Weeds = Counterfeit Wheat**
 - **Weeds that appear like wheat (tares)**
 - KJV and other translations use the word "tares" – a specific kind of weed.
 - The man could have pulled all (wheat and weeds) up together once His enemy sowed the bad seed, but he cared too much for the wheat.
 - However, in NOT pulling everything up, the weeds are ALLOWED to grow next to the wheat, scratching, being buddy-buddy, looking and acting like wheat, but ultimately wreaking havoc on the wheat until the harvest.
- **Enemy = Satan**
 - This parable sheds a little more light on earth's beginnings
 - God sows seeds, calls them "good," but in sneaks Satan
 - He plants BAD seed, but rather than starting over, God devises a plan to save the wheat from the bad seed.
 - Satan's purpose:
 - **1 Peter 5:8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.**
 - **2Co 11:12-15 Paul: "And what I am doing I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds."**
 - **2 Thess 2...** is an entire chapter related to this specific parable: the works of Satan, those who are deceived, the victory of Christ, and grace and truth prevailing.
 - Satan is very REAL
 - He hates God, and therefore You.
 - Jesus tells us we have the power – Christ in us – to cast out Satan and his demons anytime, anywhere.
 - When the saints do this, sometimes it's uncomfortable.
 - Oh boy, here we go – we've got a weird one in the group.
 - **NO! The "weird" ones are believers who refuse to obey Christ in the supernatural.**
 - And Jesus also emphasizes (as does Acts and other passages) the significance of His name – the name of Jesus!
 - Praying "in your name" is a trick, by the way.
 - In whose name?
 - "in your name" is safe.
 - In Jesus' name is POWER.

- More on “casting out Satan” in a bit...
- **Slumbering Men = Shepherds**
 - Recently, both I and Wayne have spent entire sermons teaching on poor shepherding
 - In this parable, the shepherds (men, asleep) are **guilty of allowing Satan entry unnoticed.**
 - They wake up and see **no evidence** of his break-in UNTIL wheat and weeds start appearing together.
 - Jesus makes a distinction between “men” (v25) and “servants” (v27)
 - Some think nothing of this
 - However, I propose this is no error – the servants are different from the slumbering men:
- **Servants = the Church.**
 - Wise shepherds and others in the body – THE CHURCH - who recognize the difference between wheat and tares
 - I go even further, and propose to you that the **slumbering men are shepherds who just try to teach people to be nice to each other**, don’t make waves, live among the world as if you’re just like them, sporting co-exist bumper stickers, and not allowing “weird” doctrines into the church.
 - **The problem – among others – is that The New Covenant is FULL of weird, supernatural, hard to explain truths!**
 - Consider the calls to obedience for ALL believers – so many examples:
 - **Give without expecting anything in return (scripture)**
 - **Hold loosely (or not at all) to material wealth**
 - **Visit the sick with NO caveats**
 - **Entertain strangers with NO caveats**
 - **Visit those in prison with NO caveats**
 - **Cast out demons**
 - **Expect miracles**
 - **Forgive forever**
 - **Heal the sick**
 - **Have faith to move mountains**
 - **Love those who hate you...**
 - You see, the tares aren’t just guilty of calling bad things good and good things bad.
 - **The Tares are masters of keeping the church asleep.**
 - Singing sweet lullaby’s to keep her from being effective in the purposes God has for the church.
 - *READ: “just exist, try to just survive the hardships... you’re too busy to get too spiritual... everybody else is getting too busy, too, so it’s cool... compared to most Christians, you’re doing fine... stop it with the weird spiritual stuff... ignore that list up there... what difference does it make, anyway?... we’re all going to heaven... just play along until Jesus comes back...”*

Of course, the problem is that as the church is lulled to sleep, the enemy wins souls, wins cultural battles, mocks godly morals in society, causes confusion in the body, causes division between congregations...

Now, I could focus on any number of false doctrines the tares try to keep submitting into the church, but there's **ONE major false doctrine** I believe Satan continually teaches for the purpose of keeping the church ineffective:

- **A disbelief in the supernatural**
- More to the point: **a basic misunderstanding of the Holy Spirit, His gifts, and God's purpose in them.**
 - And it's not "in your face" – it's usually quite subtle.
 - The largest protestant denomination in the world has a 100-page book describing their doctrines.
 - In it, the Holy Spirit is given ONE PARAGRAPH, in an oh-by-the-way brief attempt to define the Trinity.

Above all else, the tares job – looking and acting like Spirit-filled believers – is to redefine what constitutes as "spiritual" in society.

- ***Spiritual is more likely defined as "peace-filled" these days than "Demon-casting, leprous-healing, jaw-dropping miraculous acts" that make the world stand in awe of an other-worldly Almighty God.***
- If the tares can convince the church to chill out about spiritual things, then the supernatural will be **a thing of the past.**
- The end result: the church will fail to represent Christ at all.
 - The Church may still THINK she's representing Jesus, but it's a **tame Jesus.**
 - ***An un-ruffled, meek, mild, tolerant, pasty white guy with a perpetual wan smile walking through life like he's stoned.***

The Jesus in the New Testament, however, was nothing like that!

- **(next - blank)** Every gospel records dozens of instances in which He literally healed every kind of physical disease in whichever region or town He was passing through
- He cast out Satan and His demons in every one of the synoptic gospels – more than a few times
- He taught His disciples – and not just the 12, but 72 – to do the same, again, more than once.
- He raised the dead! A lot!
- All the while hinting as to his true nature: God, incarnate.
- And He was mocked for it, **beaten, shamed among His own people, and crucified.**
 - And when He rose from the grave, the Tares in Jesus' day tried to cover it up, make liars out of all witnesses, hunted down the 12 and killed them, and did everything they could to shield the supernatural from the physical world.

(next – final parables slide) And there are entire denominations and movements NOW that believe the supernatural is somehow obsolete.

- ***No longer necessary to reveal God, as if God isn't supernatural!***
- Well, church, as Stuart comes to share with you about his time in Brazil, prepare to be amazed at the awesome authority of God through His Son Jesus, and the power of the Holy Spirit!
 - You WILL have questions.
 - You WILL experience WONDER.
 - Therefore, we are prepared to take questions from you once he's finished.

(next - blank) Bring Stuart up – share for 10-15 minutes.

Q&A (Kyle and Stuart together)

- *Kyle will prep the Q&A by telling the congregation about how the elders just praised God and sat amazed, and even among ourselves had questions.*
- *One in particular: Stuart, what now? Now that you've seen God's power on display so mightily, how will you now live from this day forward?*
- *And Stuart said.... "I'm ruined."*
 - *Stuart explain to the congregation what you mean by that, and we'll then field more questions to finish out the day.*