

The Just shall live by Faith

Volume 1 - Study 6 Matthew 13:24, Another parable...the kingdom of heaven...the Son of Man sowed good seed...but wheat and tares grow together...

C. Ronald Johnson, Christian Wilderness Press: He who hath ears to hear, let him hear. Jesus said: lest while ye gather the tares (children of the wicked one), ye root up also the wheat (children of the kingdom). Let both grow together until the harvest, when the reapers will gather first the tares to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.

Studies - Slaves of the Householder: Sow to the Spirit, walk by faith in holiness, and reap what you sow.

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These are brief studies, not “teachings” or “doctrines”.

Volume 1, Study 6

The Parable of the Tares

Sow to the Spirit, walk by faith in holiness, and reap what you sow.

Mat 13:24-26) Another parable [of wheat, see 13:3 and following] **put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up,** [and a growing season was well along] **and** [so it was that both seeds] **brought forth** [enough] **fruit** [that their kind could be recognized], **then appeared** [among the wheat] **the tares also.**

You and I would not be able to distinguish tares from wheat, but those who knew wheat production, though fooled thus far, could easily recognize the tares when they arrived the early season of forming the wheat and tare kernels, i.e. the ‘fruit’.

13:27) So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it [i.e. the crop] **tares?**

While conscientiously observing during the growing season, all along the servants had assumed that the householder knew what he was doing and that all was well with the crop. The householder and the servants had much at stake regarding this crop of wheat.

3:28-30) He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up [since now the maturing fruit shows to us what they are]? **But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together** [i.e. side by side] **until the** [season of] **harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles** [and put them in stacks throughout the field for when it is the time] **to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.**

When the harvest of wheat has finished the bundled tares are to be collected and brought to a central place in field for the purpose of burning them. Note that the tares are not simply burned at the time of uprooting them; if that were the case then there would be no need to ‘**bind them into bundles**’.

Instead, the first chore at harvest time will be for the workers to meticulously find and cut down the tares. Working in pairs, the labors will hold up the tares above the still standing mature wheat and tie them into bundles and carefully lay such bundles on the ground so as not to disturb the standing (not yet harvested) wheat. The effect is to finally separate the tares from the standing mature wheat and thus protect the wheat stalks (with their precious wheat kernels) for their own harvesting process in which they also will be cut and bundled.

What is the desired purpose of the householder in doing this? In the process of harvesting (i.e. cutting and bundling) there will always be some wheat kernels dislodged from the stalks that fall to the ground. The same will be true of the tare seed-kernels. These are not considered a product of the harvest and next spring when they sprout together and grow, then the tillers will come in and plow then back into the ground for fertilizer, which will allow the field to rest until the next growing season.

The harvesting process continues in taking the bundles of wheat to the place of thresh-

ing the wheat stalks to separate the wheat kernels. Then the precious wheat kernels will be winnowed (i.e. cleaned) and gathered and stored in the householder's barn. (Something of the process can be observed in the Book of Ruth.) This entire process guarantees that the stored wheat crop is pure with no tare seeds mixed in.

13:34-36) All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, *I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world* (Psalms 78:2). Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, **Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.**

This Parable of the Tares particularly puzzled the disciples. Becoming somewhat familiar with Jesus' parables they understood about sowing wheat seed; but in sensing the importance of this parable in regards to the Kingdom of Heaven, they desired private explanation for the rest of the parable.

Jesus Explains

13:37-38) He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

Note in this parable that the servants of the householder did not do the sowing. Though the parable is regarding '**the kingdom of heaven**', Jesus is portrayed as a householder (verse 27) and he alone accomplished the sowing.

The field is the world and Jesus is the householder of this field. Therefore, we know that he is speaking of his own kingdom, which pertains to this world (see also verse 41), and there will be a season of harvesting the wheat of his field when he arrives to claim it.

This explains why the servants observing the field thought that the crop was good quality wheat growing from good quality seed. Indeed, until the maturing season arrived for the stalks to begin forming fruit-kernels (which manifested their kind) no one but the householder and his enemy knew about what was growing together in the field. Therefore, until the truth became known to the servants, the entirety of Jesus' crop was considered to be *Jesus' wheat...owned by the Savior*. Note that the tares grew among the wheat in the same protected and nourished condition. Who could know that they were tares? Ah, but at the same time, they were stealing nourishment intended for the wheat.

The word '**children**' (verse 38) infers two different *sources* from whence sprang two different *types* of children. Jesus sowed the 'good seed'; and in verse 43 near the end of the growing season, the fruit-kernels of the '**good seed**' are revealed to be '**righteous**'. Moreover, they shall '**shine**' in the kingdom of the Father (i.e. as compared to the kingdom of the son)...for in verse 24 the parable began as pertaining to '**the kingdom of heaven**'. Jesus is king of his own kingdom of the world, which though marked out for him is not yet claimed; he has sowed in his field '**good seed**' for his Father...so that the fruit-kernels of '**good seed**' might '**shine**' in the Father's kingdom.

Refer again to verse 30. In the time of harvest, before the actual harvesting of Jesus' crop of wheat, '**reapers**' will carefully separate out the tares and bundle them together... *leaving the ripe, fruitful, and righteous wheat-stalks growing unto themselves*. This purpose of the '**reapers**' is so that *all will be ready for proper harvesting and handling of the wheat*. On the one hand the wheat-stalks will experience more room for unhindered maturing while on the other hand they will be gazing up unto the hills from whence cometh the Householder and His harvesters to work out the very purpose for this very fortunate crop of wheat.

Who are these '**reapers**' or harvesters? They are not '**the servants**' who have been

watching. Harvesters know harvesting and they are hired by a household especially for the work of harvesting. Harvesters can make or break a harvest. My wife's father was a tomato farmer in South Florida and he had to hire harvesters to come in several times to pick his crop. It took two good pickings to pay for the expenses of the crop so that any additional pickings would make for a profit.

For the time of conclusion of this growing season, Jesus' harvesters will know their business. Their first duty will be to separate out the mature tares, which will have become as well rooted and established amidst the wheat crop as are the wheat-stalks themselves. Therefore, the removal of the mature tares will make for a difficult time for the wheat-stalks, as the tares are forcefully separated from the wheat-stalks and bound together unto themselves. The wheat-stalks will be entirely surprised in observing the mature tares among them being taken out. And the wheat will be surprised to experience the added nutrients coming to them now that the tares have been removed.

At that time, then, not only will the servants understand, but everyone will know the wheat from the tares. Thus, with the tares taken out, the 'enemy' (i.e. as much as the Father will allow him) will be able to damage many wheat-stalks growing throughout the field without the worry of damaging his own tares. Nevertheless, any and all wheat-stalks damaged by the 'enemy' will have born good and profitable wheat-kernels. (It is the wheat-kernels and not the wheat-stalks that are food for the Master's table.)

Bundled together, the tares will have been set throughout Jesus' field in varying places waiting their burning. To any observer gazing upon such a field, these stacks will appear dauntingly and fortress-like...seemingly dominate above the fragile yet un-harvested unbundled wheat-stalks. Ah, but the strongly congregated tares, though seemingly dominate, will have no power over the wheat stalks awaiting their harvest.

13:39) The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world [i.e. the conclusion of this world age as we know it]; and the reapers are the angels.

Obviously this is about the conclusion of final things...the time of the end which precedes Jesus' coming again and his reign over his world kingdom. However, I think there is more here to consider. The word 'world' in the passage actually is more correctly 'age' and the word 'angels' is more correctly 'messengers' or 'those sent to do something'. We will get into this below.

13:40-41) As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world [or age]. The Son of man shall send forth his angels [or messengers], and they shall gather out of his kingdom [i.e. as compared to the kingdom of heaven] all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

Can such a field-cleaning occur through the ages? I believe so. A very early one occurred with God's flood at the time of Noah. Moreover, we can see several such mini-cleanings during the time of the Exodus as God dealt with His people Israel; and then, just before entering Canaan for battle, God accomplished one last cleaning or purifying of His people during the "episode of the whores of Peor" when He plagued His people. So important was this final cleansing of the Exodus People that as they were in Canaan doing battle (Joshua 7) and Achan secretly took forbidden spoil (verse 21), we see that Achan had defiled the entire army...which not long before had been purified in that last plague. Therefore, when found out, the Israelites put Achan out of the camp and he was destroyed. Do you see that this was similar to the end of the age: when '**and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity**'?

Also we see a small episode of it in Acts 5 regarding Sapphira and his wife. They were cleansed out of the early church. There have been times through the history of the Church when various kinds of turmoil and sufferings resulted in removed of both tares and wheat ...sometimes together and sometimes separately, leaving a remnant of wheat (but also tares) to continue.

Indeed, too often in history there have been segments of the Church that have taken it upon themselves to purify itself (which is God's business to do and not ours) and in the process there have been many true-wheat-stalks killed by true-tares in the Church. Did not the 'householder' tell his 'servants' not to clean out any tares...for otherwise many true-wheat-stalks would be destroyed in the process? I fear that the tendency to do God's work for Him remains with some of us today.

13:42-43) And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Note in verses 40-41 that Jesus 'shall send forth his angels (or messengers), and they shall gather out of his kingdom (i.e. as compared to the kingdom of heaven) all things that offend, and them which do iniquity. Sapphira and his wife fell dead at the hand of God and not by Peter and any in the church. Such things are God's business.

The time of Billy Graham is in its conclusion. Did Jesus use Dr. Graham's ministry to sow much 'good seed'? Certainly, but how many of the enemy's 'tares' were sown during Dr. Graham's season? Surely many. Many 'good seed' and 'tares' continue to be sown. Which are which? Even the 'messengers' and angels in heaven do not know the tares from the wheat. It is God's business...the Son's and the Father's business.

During the latter stages of Dr. Graham's season, the affect of that whole season upon the world (i.e. Jesus' field) has turned from *wheat-type influencing to the world* to *tare-type influencing to the world*.

Please be aware that we have not been considering wheat and tares of the world, rather wheat and tares growing together in (and known as) "Jesus' wheat" or "belonging to Jesus". In other words, the Church (in its many splinted churches and split-off groups and individual ministries) is not having the impact in the world (i.e. Jesus' field) as in bygone days. The Church in America still has influence, but not with the result of bygone days. It used to be that the creatures of darkness (always around in their dark corners and holes) stayed pretty much in their dark corners and holes.

But now they are out and about in broad daylight (i.e. human light and worldly light). Creatures of darkness by their very nature hate light. So what was the light that had kept them in their dark corners and holes (it was not human light and worldly light of which we have an over abundance)? And why are they now out and about in broad daylight?

Consider also the Word

Now I wish to make a slight but meaningful change to the parable, which I believe is appropriate; for there has been and is a lot of teaching and preaching of "words" all through this age. Such teaching and preaching is a function of the ongoing growth of wheat and tares together in Jesus' field (i.e. the world). I will simply make a substitution in the text which you will easily notice -

Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good *word* in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tare-*words* among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth *fruitful words*, then appeared the tare-*words* also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good *words* in thy field? from whence then hath it tare-*words*? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tare-*words*, ye root up also the *wheat words* with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tare-*words*, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the *wheat words* into my barn.

All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable

spake he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world. Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tare-words of the field.

Does the reader see that *wheat words* and *tare-words* are from two very different sources, but that they actually seem “good” and pretty much the same (i.e. this being the reason for the parable)? Can *tare-words* accomplish the same as *wheat-words*? Of course not, because God only honors on the latter.

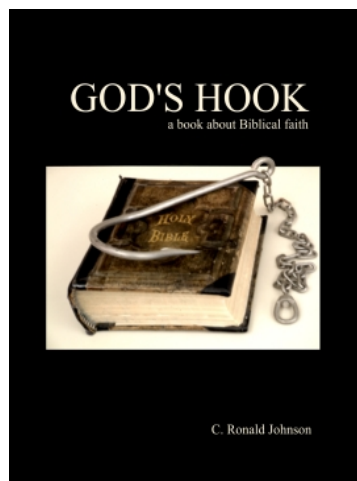
When hearing religious words, how can you and I tell which is which? I suggest that we usually cannot tell, distinguish, or discern between them. After all, *tare-words* come at us from indistinguishable sources living and growing among the wheat. Moreover, I suggest that if you think you have discernment of such things that you are fooling yourself. Yes, thank goodness, the Spirit gives some little help from time to time. Yet, it is God’s Will that tares and *tare-words* continue among us indistinguishable.

The *human intellect* likes to think of itself as trustworthy in such matters, but it discerns only *human things* familiar to it; and such discerning also is faulty. The mind of man does not discern the things of God. You say, “But by the Spirit I do discern such things.” And I respond, “You are a little sheep and do not know the mind of the Shepherd. Ah, but can you tell what He says when He decides to speak a command or offer “a leading” to a little sheep (i.e. you)? Yes of course you can; but even so, you do not know the mind of the Shepherd; and neither do I.”

So, are we at fault if we continually listen and heed *tare-words*? I believe the answer is “Yes, in that we are fallen sinners saved by Grace...and that we are dumb, smelly sheep belonging to the Master Shepherd...and that we have little if any ability to discern such things...and... Well, should we who are made of clay say to the Potter, “Why have you made me thus?” In think not, dear reader. Nonetheless, the Shepherd and His Father have Ways and Methods to ‘keep’ what is Theirs (i.e. you and me).

Such things are above us...and thank goodness they are controlled by the Ones above us. I would rather depend on my Shepherd and His Father to ‘keep’ me than to depend on my ability to ‘discern’. Any small amount of discernment that I might have is faulty, in the sense that I am faulty in trying to use it. I learned long ago to be thankful for the little such things that I might have, but at the same time to lean wholly upon the Shepherd and his Father.

These are short Bible studies by C. Ronald Johnson at Christian Wilderness Press



a book
about
Biblical
Faith

the life of
Moses
and the
Exodus

