

Let's get the Weeds out!

"Parable of the Tares"



"But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." Matthew 13:16

Matthew 13 has several parables. One follows another. Early in Matthew 13 the disciples asked "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" Matthew 13:10.

Christ answered "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. This is pretty harsh in one way, but it also tells us that Christ didn't stop getting the message of salvation to anyone who would listen. That is the same today. The message is always there. God's love is always there. How we accept and relay this wonderful message is our responsibility just as it was the responsibility of the disciples and other followers of Jesus at the time He was among them on the earth. This is called the parable of the tares found in Matthew 13:24-30.

We are perhaps more familiar with the parable about the sower who had some seed on good ground, some on rocks, etc. In this parable, the sower planted good seed. They noticed that when it came up that there were weeds among it. According to the parable, after the man had sowed the good seed on good ground, an enemy came during the night and spread weed (usually thought to be darnel, a weed) among the good seed. The servants asked if they should go out and pull out the weeds. The master told them to allow the two to grow together until the harvest. He told them that if they pulled out the weeds they would also disturb the good seed. Then when the crop was ready to be harvested, they should gather the weeds and burn them and then gather the good wheat, bundle it, and put it in the barn.

On the practical side of this parable, we know that often when we pull a weed from around a flower or any plant, we can sometimes also get part of the good plant. But we have been taught to pull the weeds so that the nutrients of the ground are going to the good plant and not the weeds which will always get their share of the nutrients and grow very well.

But how does this apply to our lives. Christ told these parables to everyone who was there. He gave the good earth, the nutrients, to everyone. Sometimes we are not accepting what we should and we let other things crowd into our faith and weaken it. But Christ does not tear us out and throw us away. He allows us to grow. On the final day, we will have had much time to ask for forgiveness and follow God's will in our lives. According to the Scriptures, "God so loved the world that He gave that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. We will not perish in the fire as the weeds. We will be gathered into His arms for eternity.

When I first started studying this, I thought it was applying to the church. Then the more I thought about it and asked direction from God, I remembered that they didn't have organized churches at this time. Christ was talking to the multitudes. The group included the disciples and other followers of Him, but it also included the other sinners who had not yet accepted Christ. We are a part of that group today. Who are the weeds? Who is the wheat? If all sinners are weeds there is no wheat because we all sin.

But more important for us to hear is that we also do not tear out the weeds or the ones that we do not think know God's love. It is our responsibility to always have the nutrients available to feed them and allow them to make their own decisions. Sometimes in our eagerness, we pull the good seed out with the weed. That is not for us to judge. But we are anxious to do what we think is best. That is the real point. We don't always know what is right. Not only do we sometimes judge others, but we are also judged by others. We don't need to worry about what others think, as long as we are doing what we think is correct in the eyes of God. Sometimes we are like the wheat; sometimes we are the weed!

An old song written by Ina Ogdon in 1913 comes to mind called "Brighten the Corner Where You Are." According to research, Ina wanted to travel, but her father's illness forced her to stay close to home. She supposedly wrote these encouraging words to show how we can serve the Lord in many different ways and in many different circumstances. The first verse and refrain are given below.

"Do not wait until some deed of greatness you may do,
Do not wait to shed your light afar;
To the many duties ever near you now be true,
Brighten the corner where you are.

Brighten the corner where you are!
Brighten the corner where you are!
Someone far from harbor you may guide across the bar;
Brighten the corner where you are!"

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have given us so much. Help us to hear Your Word, to accept it, and then share that blessing with others so they may one day be with you eternally. Help us to brighten the corner for someone by sharing Your love. Amen

1. Why does the master recommend that they allow the weeds to grow along with the wheat?
2. Are you the tare or the wheat?
3. How can we help others to seek the good nutrients? How can we be sure that we always seek the good virtues of God's love?
4. What is our responsibility in separating the weeds and the wheat?
5. How can we be givers of nutrients to other people?
6. There is an old saying "pick your battles." How does that apply to this parable and our part in it?

“Parable of the Tares”

“Another parable 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 brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. 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 tares? 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 tares, ye root up also the wheat 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 tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.’” Matthew 13:24-30