

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JUNE 20TH-21ST, 2020 // BOOK OF MATTHEW

WEEDS & WHEAT (MATTHEW 13:24-30)

COEXISTING

Matthew introduces us to Jesus' 2nd parable, the story of the weeds and the wheat. This parable will address two questions: **1. Why must believers live amongst evil in the world? 2. Is there any hope of justice for the oppressed?**

- It is safe to say that almost all Christians have asked these questions.

THE THEME OF SOWING CONTINUES

The 2nd parable tells us what happened with what the farmer grew from the first parable. We learn that until "plants" grow up, we cannot distinguish if they are good or bad.

- **Though we can do our best to discern who is good or evil, only God can see the depths of the heart, therefore He makes the ultimate judgment.**

AGAIN, JESUS WILL CLARIFY THE PARABLE

We need little commentary on this section because Jesus will explain it in detail later.

- The overall premise is simple: There is a farmer that has had His crops infiltrated by an enemy that plants weeds. These weeds must exist with the wheat for a time in order to not uproot the wheat as well.

SEEDS & LEAVEN (MATTHEW 13:31-33)

A COUPLET OF SHORT STORIES

The combination of two short parables about a mustard seed and leaven in bread address two closely related questions: **1. How can a humble beginning with "small" people become a great movement? 2. How can such a humble beginning become the world changing kingdom of heaven?**

THE POINT WAS ABOUT APPEARANCES

Similar to the wheat parable, Jesus' point with the couplet was that appearances can be deceiving. Mustard seeds were the smallest of garden seeds in that culture, but eventually grow into the biggest plant in the garden.

- This simple analogy taught the disciples that **small things can be powerful if cultivated well.**

YEAST WORKS SIMILARLY TO A MUSTARD SEED

Jesus said that a woman mixed a little leaven into a lot of flour and it changed everything about the dough.

- This is the same thing the Spirit does in the life of the willing Christian: He radically changes how we think, live, and act! When we start with a heart change, everything else follows.

THE KINGDOM OFTEN MOVES QUIETLY

Unlike most movements throughout history, Christianity has been behind the scenes, much like Christ Himself.

- Jesus didn't come to take over seats of power or political systems, He came to change the hearts of man and turn them to a greater kingdom.

AN EXPLANATION (MATTHEW 13:34-43)

GOING BACK TO WHY JESUS USED PARABLES

As we talked about last week, Jesus used a different style to teach the masses: parables. The point of these were to introduce truths not previously stated and in a way that was easy to understand if one was humble.

- Jesus was also putting Israel on the shelf because of their unbelief and establishing the church.

JESUS INTERPRETS THE WEED AND THE WHEAT PARABLE

The central theme is that Christians must patiently persevere while evil is allowed to persist. The other theme is that there will be justice in the end.

- Once again, **Jesus reserves the deeper revelations for those who are hungry to hear them. The disciples approached, and Jesus gave clarity.**

JESUS EXPLAINS (CONT.)

Jesus explains that the Sower was Himself, the "good seed" represents true followers of Jesus, and the field represents the earth. Satan is the enemy that has planted "weeds," people that choose evil over righteousness.

- He also explains that angels will "gather and burn" the "weeds" at "the end of the age."

THIS PARABLE EXPOSES SOME TOUGH TRUTHS

1. We learn that we will live amongst evil. 2. We learn that Satan is active, powerful, and persuasive. 3. We learn there will be judgment and evil will be eternally punished. 4. Righteousness will be rewarded for eternity. Deeper questions arise: **Do we care to know what evil is? Do we believe in an invisible war? Are we prepared?**

SHORT STORIES (MATTHEW 13:44-52)

THE IMPORTANCE OF DISCOVERING THE KINGDOM

The parables of the hidden treasure and the priceless pearl demonstrate how valuable a relationship with God is and how vital the church community is.

- **A relationship with Christ fulfills us and the church encourages us until He returns. God demands much, but He gives so much more in return.**

TO OWN IT, WE MUST OWN ALL OF IT

The caveat to owning the "treasure" is that it takes great sacrifice. Jesus says the man "sold everything" to buy what he had found.

- **If we're to inherit the kingdom, we must own all of what it is.** In this life, we must be **humble** and make **sacrifices**. There is **hardship** and **persecution** before we inherit eternity.

THE PARABLE OF THE NET

This parable teaches the same principle as the wheat and weeds: that we must coexist with evil until a time of judgment and separation. Jesus drew crowds of the faithful and faithless, but **in the end the trials and tests of life will separate who genuinely wants to follow God.**

THE STOREHOUSE OF TRUTH

Jesus restates something similar to Mt. 12:35. We're all storehouses with storerooms that we invest in. Jesus was helping the disciples personalize the parables.

- **What we invest in shapes what we are and where we will spend eternity.** We should all be asking **"What will we give up in order to find the truth?"**

"...TREASURES NEW AND OLD."

It is important for Christians to read and value the Old and New Testaments. Though we live in a new promise, it is important to value the lessons and history of the old promise. **The whole Bible reveals the nature and plan of God. Every word is inspired by Him and there for a reason.**

REJECTION (MATTHEW 13:53-58)

HARSH CRITICS

After teaching these parables to massive crowds, Jesus decided to go back to His small hometown of about 1500 people, Nazareth. When He arrived there, He began to teach in the synagogue and perform miracles. Ironically, the people closest to Jesus were His harshest skeptics.

THE WRONG KIND OF "ASTONISHMENT"

Matt writes the people "were astonished," but not because of the message or power, but that He was the "carpenter's Son." **Because Jesus didn't present Himself the way they would've preferred, they rejected the message, even in the presence of evidence.**

- **Do we value appearance more than substance?**

IT EVEN REACHED THE POINT OF OFFENSE

Though they rejected Jesus' approach, they struggled to completely dismiss what He was doing. This conflict of self-centeredness in the face of evidence caused the people to get angry and offended. It is not enough to disagree, we get hyper offended and lash out in anger.

HONOR EVERYWHERE BUT HOME

V58 is sad because it shows how willing Jesus was to help people, but because they rejected Him, He could do little for them.

- The recurring theme for the last several weeks has been **a desire to know the truth. It really does boil down to if we want to have Jesus impact our lives.**

GOOD AND EVIL / A VALUABLE DISCOVERY / REJECTION

There will be evil in this life until Christ returns. **Our job is to not partake in it and to love and reach out to those drowning in it.** It is sometimes difficult to recognize evil. **This is why we have the Word and the gifts of discernment and wisdom. All evil will be dealt with in the end.** Like the leaven in the bread, **the Holy Spirit can change us and make us into powerful weapons for His kingdom.** Like the treasure in a field, **we must be willing to give it all for salvation and living in relationship with Christ.** We must continue to invest good things into our "storehouse of truth." If Jesus was rejected by His own hometown, we can expect to be rejected as well. **We must be careful to not become too easily offended.** Though painful and discouraging, **we cannot stop loving people and sharing the good news about Jesus.** It is the only message that saves and liberates.