

The Field is the World

Parable of the Sower: Matthew 13:3 – 9, 18 – 23, Luke 8:5 – 15, Mark 4:3 – 9, 14 – 20

Parable of the Tares: Matthew 13:24 – 30, 37 – 43

“A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside and the birds came and devoured them. Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. But, when the sun was up, they were scorched and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. But some fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty.”

“The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares (weeds) among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the owner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The servants said to him, ‘Do you want us to then go and gather them up?’ But he said, ‘No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, ‘First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles and burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

The Hard-Packed Pathway

Matthew 13: 19, “When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and not understanding, then the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who is the pathway.”

Satan

Revelation 12:7 – 12 describes the war in heaven and Satan’s exile to earth for “a short time.”

Zechariah 13 (confirmed in 2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6, and Revelation 20:2) predicts that, shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, Satan and his guys were to be locked up in the abyss and, as in Revelation 20:3, “Deceive the nations no longer.”

Overcoming Satan

Christians in the First Century were assured that they could overcome the worst Satan had to offer, as confirmed in Ephesians 6:11, James 4:7, 1 John 3:8, and 1 John 4:4.

The Hardpacked Pathway

What can we do about those who hear the Word but don't understand it?

- Ask questions. How did they get so hard? Where to they want to be?
- Offer gospel alternatives to get where they want to be: peace and joy.
- Offer the power to get there: The Spirit.
- Use simple words. No religious jargon.

The Shallow Soil

“But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, he falls away.”

The Shallow Soil

Remove the rocks and expose the soil.

- Address potential conflicts
- Dig deep. Expose and remove the rocks.
- How to access the power of the Spirit
- How to find peace and joy.

The Thorny Soil

“Now he who receives the seed among the thorns is he who hears the Word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word, and he becomes unfruitful.”

The Thorny Soil

- The cares of this world
 - Family, work, the economy, the government
 - Manage expectations
- The deceitfulness of riches
 - Do you control it or does it control you?
 - Seek trust and selflessness
 - Wealth is just comfort food

Weeds among the Wheat

“He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore, as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

Weeds among the Wheat

- Pulling weeds is not our job.
- In the US, we have the right to influence government. So, use that right just as the weeds do.
- Recognize that, in most countries, Christians have no avenue to influence government.
- Making more Christians makes more influence.
- Miraculously turn weeds into wheat.

The Field is the World

- The world is not the enemy; we live in it.
- Don't curse the hard places, the rocky places, and the thorny places.
- Be a good farmer and prepare the ground to receive the Word.
- Rejoice that there really is good soil that yields a good crop.
- Don't hate the weeds, fear for their plight, rescue them.
- Turning weeds into wheat is a miracle.
- Harvest time is coming.