

INTRODUCTION

Gotquestions.org defines a parable as “literally, something ‘cast alongside’ something else. Jesus’ parables were stories that were ‘cast alongside’ a truth in order to illustrate that truth. His parables were teaching aids and can be thought of as extended analogies or inspired comparisons. A common description of a parable is that it is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning.” In Matthew 13, Jesus tells a number of parables regarding The Kingdom of Heaven. What can we learn about the Kingdom from the first parable, The Wheat and the Tares?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you think of when you hear the words, “The Kingdom of Heaven”?
2. Read Matthew 13:24-30 and 36-43. List below the main elements of the parable and Jesus’ interpretation:

PARABLE ELEMENTS	JESUS’ INTERPRETATION

3. What initial thoughts do you have regarding the parable and its interpretation?
4. David shared on Sunday that the seed planting is done by Jesus, and he asked, “Where has King Jesus planted you and how are you going to be beautiful there?” Share with your group the answer to that question.
5. Strong’s Concordance defines “tare” as “a kind of darnel, resembling wheat except the grains are black”. The tare is counterfeit wheat – resembling wheat until the ear appears, and then the difference is discovered. How did the tares get mixed into the wheat? What implication does this have for believers?

Study Questions for Community Groups

6. Why do you think God allows tares to mix with wheat in His Kingdom?
7. Is it your job to identify the tares? If not, who is responsible to identify the tares and deal with them?
8. According to this passage, how are you to act towards people you perceive as a “tare” in your life?
9. Read 1 John 3:7-10. What is the difference between children of God and children of the devil? Does this mean if you sin you are a child of the devil? Why or why not?
10. Read Matthew 13:42, Malachi 4:1, 2 Thessalonians 1:9, and Revelation 20:15. What happens to the tares (unrighteous) at the end of the age? How does knowing their ultimate fate affect your attitude towards people who don't know Christ?

APPLICATION

Read Daniel 12:3. List ways that you can you “shine like the sun” in the Kingdom NOW. Put these ideas into practice this week.

SCRIPTURE

²⁴Jesus told them another parable: “*The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared. ²⁷The owner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’ ²⁸‘An enemy did this,’ he replied. The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’ ²⁹‘No,’ he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn’.*”...³⁶Then He left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to Him and said, “*Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.*”³⁷He answered, “*The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. ⁴⁰As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will weed out of His kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴²They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.*”

Matthew 13:24-30;36-43 (NIV)