

“Parable of the Tares—Part 1”

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BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I began a two-part series about the parable of the tares (which the Son of God gave in Matthew 13:24-30 and explained in Matthew 13:37-43). In the past, I discussed this parable in only one Bible study, but I decided to stretch the material over two presentations.

Let’s look at when the Son of God originally gave the parable. (In the future, we can review when the Son of God gave an explanation of the parable.)

What is a parable?

Matthew 13:24—“Another parable He put forth to them, saying . . .”

The Greek word for parable (*parabole*—Strong’s No. 3850) is a noun that means “parable, an illustration that teaches in a story or extended figure of speech; proverb, a short pithy saying.”

Kingdom of heaven

Matthew 13:24—“The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field.”

Many Bible students are aware of some different wording among the Gospel writers. One such example is the phrase “kingdom of heaven.”

Notice an excerpt from “gotquestions.org” about the kingdom of heaven. It presented: “The phrase ‘kingdom of God’ occurs 68 times in 10 different New Testament books, while ‘kingdom of heaven’ occurs only 32 times—and only in the Gospel of Matthew . . . Mark and Luke used ‘kingdom of God’ where Matthew used ‘kingdom of heaven’ frequently in parallel accounts of the same parable . . . The two phrases refer to the same thing.”

Enemy sowed weeds

Matthew 13:25—“But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.”

The Greek word for tares (*zizanon*—Strong’s No. 2215) is a noun that means “weed, darnel or some other troublesome weed.”

Grain and weeds together

Matthew 13:26—“But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared.”

In Matthew 13:27-30, the servants of the owner had a discussion with the owner.

Servants: Didn't you sow good seed in your field? Why does it have weeds?

Owner: An enemy has done this.

Servants: Do you want us to pull the weeds?

Owner: No. If we pull the weeds, we might uproot the wheat with them.

Good behavior can fool you

Some religious people are so arrogant that they believe that they can automatically and dogmatically identify true believers.

It is absolutely true that religious people should be observant to recognize good behavior (1 Corinthians 2:15 and Hebrews 5:14)

But a religious person who claims to dogmatically label a person's standing with God is presumptuous.

- Matthew 7:20—You will ultimately know people by their fruit.
- Matthew 7:21—Not everyone who sounds religious has a relationship with the Lord.
- Matthew 7:22-23—Notice some of the characteristics that do not guarantee that a person has a relationship with the Lord—prophesying in the Lord's name, casting out demons in the Lord's name and doing many wonders in the Lord's name.

Helpful reminder

2 Timothy 2:19—“Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal . . .”

- “The Lord knows those who are His.”
- “Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”