

**THE WHEAT AND THE TARES**



**Passages to Study:** Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43.

**Read with the class:** Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43.

**Texts for memorization:**

**Younger:** “He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man”. Matthew 13:37.

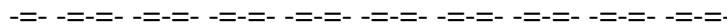
**Older** Matthew 13: 37 and 38.



**OBJECTIVES: To teach:**

1. That among those who are called Christians, some truly possess eternal life, but others are falsely so called, because they lack divine life.
2. That eternal life is an inner condition of the person, the truth of which is seen externally.
3. That it is not always easy to detect those who are false “Christians”, but the Lord knows those who are truly His own.
4. That at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His own, only those who have eternal life will be taken.
5. That at the moment of the Lord’s coming, it will be too late to change one’s spiritual state.

**Note:** This parable lays out in general terms the two great divisions of the human race. There are those who are children of God and those who are children of the devil, those who are saved and those who are lost. Outward appearances can deceive. The purpose is to demonstrate that the real condition of the soul is seen at the end, when it will be made manifest who truly have believed. The dispensational differences having to do with the coming of the Lord, the tribulation, the millennium, etc., are not included in this parable.



**SCENE No. 1. VISUAL AIDS:** A Sower sows seed in a field, followed at night by the enemy who also sows his seed. A black netting can be placed over the scene, if desired, to represent that which is done at night, or in the darkness. Afterwards, a figure of sprouting wheat should be added, with tares showing up among the wheat.

**DEVELOPMENT:**

- Cmt.** Care should be taken to show the difference between this and the previous parable about the four kinds of earth.
- Whereas in the previous parable, the seed is the Word of God, in this one the two seeds represent the children of the kingdom and the children of the evil one.
  - The Sower is the Lord Jesus, the Son of man.
  - The enemy is the devil.
  - The activity of the Lord is carried out in an environment of light (day-time).
  - The activity of the enemy is carried on in the darkness (night-time).
  - The field being sown represents the world.
  - The period of time is the present Church Age, the time between Pentecost and the Coming of the Lord for His church.
  - The reason for sowing is to have plants that will produce fruit.
  - The devil is the author of false religion. See 2 Timothy 3:5.
  - The true children and the false have an outward similarity, and not all of those who belong to Satan live a bad life.
  - The real difference is seen on the inside. If a person has not been born again, even when his/her outward appearance might deceive man, it cannot deceive God.
  - Although the servants recognize the difference between the wheat and the tares, the task of separating them is reserved for specialized reapers.

**Sug.** Ask the students where the real difference is to be found between one who is a child of God and one who is a child of the devil. Answer: the child of God possesses the life of Christ.

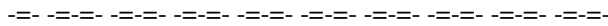
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**SCENE No. 2. VISUAL AIDS:** To the previous scene add the reapers and the bundle of tares ready to be burned, then add a fire and burning tares.

**DEVELOPMENT:** - “The end of the world” or “age”, v.39, is a general term that indicates the end time when God brings to a close His dealings with men in a certain way.

- It is at the end when those who are truly children of God will be made manifest.
- The children of the kingdom will be present with the Lord, enjoying His presence.
- The work of judging is carried out by the holy angels who belong to the Son of man. ( v.41)
- Judgment falls upon the children of the devil. They will suffer the same judgment that he does.
- The warning of vss. 41-43 should awaken the desire to avoid the judgment and to have the assurance that one belongs to the Lord.
- “Ears to hear” means to pay attention and respond to the gospel, believing it as to be the truth.



**SCENE No. 3. VISUAL AIDS:** This application can be done with figures that represent people of different ages engaged in some activity, for example, two children or young people on a picnic. A straight pin made of steel is attached to the back of some of the figures but not to others. Prepare figures of others involved in different activities or in other places, some with the straight pin attached, others without. These all need to be in place before starting the lesson.

At the proper time, a magnet is passed over the scene, while the children watch to see which of the figures are attracted to the magnet and stick to it. Others are not attracted to the magnet and show no response as it passes over them. The words “The Coming of the Lord” are attached to the magnet to show that only those who have the life of Christ in them will go to be with Him at His coming.

**DEVELOPMENT:**

- In a congregation of people, there are tares and wheat present.
- At the family table, there can be wheat present and tares.
- At work or at school, in the office or shop, there are wheat and tares.
- One may see little external difference among those who make up a group of friends, companions, etc, but some may be saved (wheat) and others not (tares).

**Cmt.** Before using the magnet, point out the different activities being carried out by the figures used in this scene and ask if there is any difference to be seen from the outside.

- Using the magnet, pass it over **ALL THE FIGURES**, showing that some respond and others do not.

**Sug.** To illustrate the difference between the figures, show the students that some have a steel straight pin and others do not.

**Cmt.** Only when the magnet finds something compatible with it is there a response. Some rise to the magnet, others remain unmoved and are left.

**Sug.** Apply this lesson to the coming of the Lord. Ask the students what would happen at the moment of the class if the Lord were to come.

- Those who have eternal life have it within themselves and are the ones who are taken when the Lord comes for His own. **Cmt.** The “seal” that every true believer has is the Holy Spirit of God. (Rom.8:9, Eph.1:13)

- The wheat and the tares look similar. It is the nature of the plants that make the difference.

**Cns.** If a sample of wheat and of tares can be shown to the students, or of grass instead of tares, it will help the students to understand the principle lesson: It is the new nature that makes the difference and it is those who are truly children of God who possess it.

- This basic and essential difference is what decides the final destiny of the tares as well as the wheat, and likewise that of the children of God and the children of Satan.

