

# PARABLE: WEEDS IN THE WHEAT FIELD

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

## STRUCTURE

**Key-persons:** Jesus; in the parable: the farmer and his workers

**Key-location:** A boat at the edge of Lake Galilee

### Key-repetitions:

- Seeds: good wheat seeds (Mat 13:24, 27, 37, 38); weed seeds (Mat 13:25, 38-39).
- Wheat: (Mat 13:25, 26, 29, 30).
- Weeds: (Mat 13:25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 36, 38, 40).
- Harvest/end of the age: (Mat 13:30, 39,40, 41).
- Enemy/evil one: (Mat 13:25, 28, 38, 39).

### Key-attitudes:

- Serenity of Jesus as he told and explained the parable.
- Enemy's hostility toward the farmer; the devil's hostility toward Jesus.
- Workers' concern.
- Farmer's wisdom.
- Positive attitude toward farmer.
- Negative attitude toward enemy.

### Initial-situation:

Jesus was in his second year of public ministry. John the Baptist had been arrested, and the crowds that once followed John now followed Jesus. So Jesus was popular with the multitudes; however, the religious leaders were beginning to resist him. Jesus had chosen his twelve apostles, preached the sermon on the mountain, and performed some miracles. Jesus sat in a boat teaching the multitude by telling parables.

### Initial-problem:

Jesus told another parable, "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a farmer who sowed good seed in his wheat field. One night while everyone was sleeping, an enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat field."

### Final-situation:

Jesus was never without a story when he spoke to the crowd.

## BIBLE STORY

Jesus went to Lake Galilee. The gathered crowd was so large that Jesus entered a boat, while all the people stood on the shore. Jesus sat in the boat and told the people many stories called parables (Mat 13:1-3).

## **Parable of the Weeds in the Wheat Field**

Jesus told another parable, "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a farmer who sowed good seed in his wheat field. One night while everyone was sleeping, an enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat field and slipped away before dawn. When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, the weeds also showed up.

"The owner's workers came to him and said, 'Sir, it was good seed you sowed in your field. Where did the weeds come from?'

"The farmer replied, 'An enemy did this.'

"The workers asked, 'Do you want us to go and pull up the weeds?'

"The farmer answered, 'No! Because while you are pulling the weeds, you might pull up the wheat with them. Let both grow together until harvest time. Then I'll instruct the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned. Then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn'" (Mat 13:24-30).

Later, Jesus was in a house. His disciples came to him and requested, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the wheat field."

Jesus answered, "The farmer who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world. The good seed are the people who belong to the Kingdom. The weeds are the people who belong to the evil one. The enemy who sowed the weeds is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

"Just as the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age, the final event in history. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will weed out of his Kingdom all those who cause people to sin and all others who do evil. The angels will throw them into the fiery furnace, where they will weep and gnash their teeth in pain. Then God's people will shine like the sun in their Father's Kingdom. The person who has ears, let him hear" (Mat 13:36-43).

## **Jesus Speaks in Parables**

Jesus told parables to the crowd. Jesus wouldn't say a thing to the crowd without telling a parable (Mat 13:34-35). Jesus spoke to the crowd with other similar parables, fitting the stories to their level of understanding. Jesus was never without a story when he spoke. When he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything (Mk 4:33-34).

## **GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS**

1. What catches your attention in the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand?
3. Who are the main characters in the story?
4. What problems did the characters face?
5. How did the characters face their problems?
6. How have you faced similar problems?
7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you?
8. What does the story tell about God?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In the Parable of the Wheat and Weeds, who represents:
  - The farmer who sowed good seeds?
  - The wheat?
  - The weeds?
  - The enemy?
  - The harvesters?
2. Why is it dangerous for people to prejudge who belongs to God and who belongs to Satan?
3. When will it be determined who belongs to God and who belongs to the evil one?
4. What does the parable teach about the final event in history?

## LIFE-LESSONS

1. **The parable of the Wheat and Weeds teaches that on the day of the final judgment, God will separate his true people from those who pretend to be his servants** (Mat 13:24-30). The pretenders deceive many; however, they will be destroyed while God's true servants will continue to be in his presence.
2. **Satan causes problems among the children of God's Kingdom, influencing them negatively and harming the life of Christ's church.** The parable of the Wheat and Weeds teaches that Satan puts his bad seed in the wheat field (Mat 13:25). Wherever the children of God's Kingdom gather "in the middle of the wheat" (Mat 13:25, 38-39), Satan places "the children of the evil one," who falsely profess to be children of God's Kingdom. Evil people exist in the church among the believers, just as Judas was among the disciples.
3. **The children of evil can deceive many by disguising themselves and pretending to be children of God.** The parable of the Wheat and the Weeds teaches that for a certain time, the children of evil are similar to the children of God; however, at harvest time they are differentiated (Mat 13:29). Only at the end time will angels receive the responsibility of separating them (Mat 13:40-43). So great is Satan's power to deceive, that the "Weeds" may believe that they are truly children of God (Mat 7:21-23).
4. **The church should be careful in establishing rules and traditions to determine who is a "Weed."** There is a need for caution in church discipline; the attempt to pull the unfaithful out of the church can cause confusion and be detrimental to many people. The danger exists that the wheat may be pulled up with the weeds (Mat 13:29-30).

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. **Pantomime Retelling of the Story:**

The storyteller tells the story one time. Then the storyteller:

- Asks for three volunteers to pantomime different characters in the story: a farmer, a worker, and the enemy.
- Retells the story with the participants pantomiming their part at the appropriate time.
- Invites a listener to retell the story.

2. **Chant:**

Words in **bold and underlined** are stressed. Stress words by stretching them out instead of increasing volume.

<b>ALL</b>	
<p>“Just as people are destined to <b><u>die</u></b> once, and after that to face <b><u>judgment</u></b>, so Christ was <b><u>sacrificed once</u></b> to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to <b><u>bring salvation</u></b> to those who are waiting for him” (Hebrews 9:27-28).</p>	
<b>GROUP 1</b>	<b>GROUP 2</b>
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