

=THE PARABLES=

Lesson 7

The Tares

AIM: to teach my pupils the danger of profession without possession, and the true meaning of the tares.

POINT OF CONTACT: Bring some seed and soil to class. If possible, you might even bring some grass—a blade of good grass and a blade of bad grass. Perhaps you have some indoor plants which could illustrate this. You might bring a weed and a good plant to class. Then let the pupils decide which is the good plant. This demonstration would show us the parable of the tares.

I. WHAT A TARE IS NOT.

1. A tare is not simply an unsaved person. A tare does not typify a lost, wicked man who makes no profession of Christianity.
2. A tare is not a wicked person, as men count wickedness.
3. A tare is not a vile, filthy church member. To be sure, such people may be lost, but these are not typified in the parable of the tares.

II. WHAT A TARE IS. A tare is a weed that grows among the wheat. It looks like the wheat. It is not even distinguishable from the wheat by the untrained eye. Consequently, the tare here represents people who belong to the church, tithe, pray, maybe even hold offices in the church—but at least they look like Christians. We cannot tell them from the Christians. Only God can distinguish them.

III. DEFINITION OF TERMS. See Matthew 13:24-30.

1. In verse 24 the man represents God.
2. In verse 24 the good seed represents the Word of God. Show the pupils the seed that you have brought to class.
3. In verse 24 the field represents the world.
4. In verse 26 the fruit represents born-again people.
5. In verse 26 the tares represent church members who have not been born again but who are good members of the church.
6. In verse 28 the enemy is the Devil.
7. In verse 28 the harvest is the coming of Jesus Christ or the end of the age.
8. In verse 30 the reapers are the angels.
9. In verse 30 the burning of the tares represents the unsaved professing Christians being thrown into Hell.

IV. THE SOWING OF THE TARES.

1. Notice the words, “But while men slept.” Matthew 13:25a. The tares were sown while men slept. We must be alive and awake all the time in the service of Christ lest tares be sown by Satan even in our church.
2. Notice the words, “his enemy came.” Matthew 13:25. The enemy is the Devil. Never forget, the Devil is our enemy, and all of his actions are against us. Let us never play into his hands.

V. THE GROWING OF THE TARES.

1. Notice, the tares spring up beside the wheat. Matthew 13:26. The wheat represents Christian people. Right beside the Christians there grows the professing Christian—the man who joins the church, looks like a Christian, talks like a Christian, smells like a Christian, but has really not been born again. He is an imitation. (Teacher, ask the pupils here to discuss with you some imitations, and then let them know that there are imitation Christians.)
2. We are not to separate the tares from the wheat. Matthew 13:28. You will notice the servants (which represent us) ask if they should go and gather up the tares. In verse 29, the answer is “Nay.” We do not know the difference. We might root up some wheat along with the tares. Let us never be guilty of judging who is saved and who is lost. Let us never say about anyone that he is lost if he

professes to be a Christian. Let us believe him and await the end of the age so God can rightly divide the tares from the wheat.

3. “Let both grow together until the harvest.” Matthew 13:30a. This does not mean that we cannot preach and warn people of being tares, but it means we should not personally decide who the tares are.

VI. THE KNOWING OF THE TARES.

1. Just as sure as the tares have been sown by the Devil among the wheat, they will be found out. False believers will someday be found out.
2. Notice that both grow together until the harvest. Again, read Matthew 13:30. The harvest here represents the end of the age. This is the time when all unsaved people will be found out. We may fool the Preacher, the church members, and even our family—but we will be found out when Jesus comes again.
3. The reapers here represent the angels. The angels will come and someday expose the unconverted professing Christians.
4. “...and bind them in bundles to burn them...” Notice again, Matthew 13:30. This represents the end time when all unbelievers shall be cast into Hell. Notice, the professing church member shall be in Hell right beside the drunkard, the adulterer, the harlot, the thief, the murderer, the extortioner, etc.

VII. TESTIMONIES. Teacher, ask how many in the class were once church members but not converted at that time. These changed from tares to wheat. You might ask them to raise their hands and have a few testimonies about this. Maybe even you have had this experience. Pause for a while to see if there are those like this. If there are none of this nature, why not ask if they know of someone—a close friend or relative—who was once an unsaved church member but who came to Jesus Christ and became wheat.

VIII. INVITATION. Teacher, have the class bow their heads. Ask everyone who knows they are real wheat to raise their hands. Then ask those who are tares, who are religious and profess faith in Christ but are not really saved, to raise their hands. Lead them to Christ. Sit with them in the service and bring them forward in the invitation.