



## Has the Gospel Been Corrupted? (Part I)

**Matthew 13:25:** (NASB) *But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away.*






So much of what Jesus taught was about the practical parts of living - learning to love, forgive and encourage one another, and these are the parts of his teachings that seem to garner the most attention. Jesus did, however, spend significant time imparting prophetic teaching as well. He had come to earth as a man to ransom the human race, and in so doing, to call out "a people for his name." Much of his prophetic teaching was focused on how that calling would work and what that calling would face by way of challenges and pitfalls. Jesus was specific about what to expect regarding that calling and Christianity in terms of corruption and deceit. It sounds odd to think about Jesus calling out some future failures of what would come to be thought of as the Christian world, but he did. How did he do it? What did he say? What did he mean? What should we be paying attention to?

### Context for the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares:

**Matthew 13:1-3:** (NASB) <sup>1</sup>*That day Jesus went out of the house and was sitting by the sea. <sup>2</sup>And large crowds gathered to him, so he got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd was standing on the beach. <sup>3</sup>And he spoke many things to them in parables, saying, Behold, the sower went out to sow...*



-  Many commentators say this was Peter's house by the Sea of Galilee near Capernaum.
-  It appears that the seven parables spoken in Matthew 13 are all on the same day.
-  Jesus will go on to uncharacteristically explain two of his parables (*the Sower* Matthew 13:3-9 and *the Wheat and the Tares*) to his disciples.



### Now the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares:

**Matthew 13:24-30:** (NASB) <sup>24</sup>*Jesus presented another parable to them, saying, The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. <sup>25</sup>But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away. <sup>26</sup>But when the wheat sprouted and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. <sup>27</sup>The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares? <sup>28</sup>And he said to them, an enemy has done this! The slaves said to him, Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up? <sup>29</sup>But he said, No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them. <sup>30</sup>Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.*





The first parable in Matthew 13:3-9 - the **Parable of the Sower** - has several similarities to the **Parable of the Wheat and the Tares**. People in that day would have understood the example of someone sowing seeds.

Observe the similar picture language used in both parables:

- Seeds were sown,
- there is a field,
- the seeds are interfered with,
- the grain matures, and
- both parables are explained.

In the book of Matthew, the **Wheat and Tares** story is placed right after the **Sower** is explained.

**Q.** There is a key difference in the introduction of these two parables: of all seven parables in Matthew 13, **The Sower** is the only parable to omit the beginning phrase of the *kingdom of heaven is like...* Why?

**A.** The answer: People versus Process. **The Sower** is about individual people and the other six parables are about the process of the *kingdom of heaven*.

Often, we think the *kingdom of heaven/the kingdom of God* is a future, perfect environment, filled with peace and harmony:

Daniel 2:44: (NASB) *In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.*

We like to think about the kingdom as a finished picture, but we suggest that when the *kingdom of heaven* is spoken of in parables, it is not about the finished picture but the process of getting to that finished picture; the process of developing the church, Jesus' footstep followers who are promised a heavenly reward if faithful.

**If the kingdom of heaven is not future, not perfect,  
and not in heaven, then what is it?**

Our perspective on this parable is that Jesus was prophesying about some serious future problems regarding his followers that would happen generations after his sacrifice was complete. The mere fact of problems and enemies tells us that the *kingdom of heaven* cannot be all clouds and harps.

Let's prove this through Scripture and the other teachings of Jesus:

**1. Jesus' explanation of the **Parable of the Wheat and the Tares** sets the kingdom of heaven in a very tumultuous time:**

Matthew 13:38-39: (NASB) <sup>38</sup>*and the field is the world; and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one; <sup>39</sup>and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels.*

Remember, this parable started with *The kingdom of heaven is...* but here we see conflict.



## The characters in Matthew 13:38-39

- ❖ **The field is the world**
- ❖ **The good seed are the sons of the kingdom**
- ❖ **The tares are the sons of the evil one**
- ❖ **The enemy who sowed the tares is the devil**
- ❖ **The reapers are the angels**

### 2. Jesus and John the Baptist pointed to *the kingdom* as being with them way back then:

Matthew 3:1-2: (NASB) <sup>1</sup>Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, <sup>2</sup>Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

(Source: Biblical commentary by J. Vernon McGee) "The kingdom of heaven was at hand," or was present, in the person of the King. That was the only way in which it was present.

The king is Jesus. If you understand what the kingdom of heaven is (the development process of the true church) you can see where the corruption happens. Corruption has been happening for thousands of years within Christianity since Jesus' sacrifice. Jesus warned us this would happen.

Mark 1:14-15: (NASB) <sup>14</sup>Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God <sup>15</sup>and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.

Jesus knew John was taken into custody. "Because I am here, the kingdom of God is here. By extension, if you follow me, you are part of the kingdom of God." But there was corruption in the belief system.

**Q.**

How do we avoid the corruption or the false seed?

**A.**

If we know something is destined to be corrupted, we are forewarned and can prepare against it. We need to be focused on what Jesus was telling us.

### 3. *The kingdom* is described as a present experience of those who are begotten by the spirit:

Romans 14:16-18: (NASB) <sup>16</sup>Therefore do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil; <sup>17</sup>for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. <sup>18</sup>For he who in this way serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men.

The *kingdom of God* here refers to the followers of Christ presently living righteously and having peace and joy in their lives.



Q.

In the Lord's Prayer, what did Jesus say about the kingdom? He told us to pray *God's kingdom come, His will to be done*, implying the kingdom is yet future. But here we are saying the kingdom of God was happening while Jesus was alive. How can both be right?

A.

The kingdom Jesus taught us to pray for is the finished product of the kingdom when righteousness will reign (refer back to Daniel 2:44.) The kingdom of God at hand right now has to do with the development of those who will be inaugurating that process later on. *The kingdom of God at hand is just for those being developed.*

Once those are faithful even unto death, then God's kingdom will rule throughout all of the earth. It is developing the governmental system in individuals now, so the full kingdom can be inaugurated later.

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD

THE BEGINNING:  
Jesus' first advent  
begins the kingdom  
process.

Jesus' faithful  
followers have their  
characters  
developed  
throughout the age  
of the Gospel  
message.

THE END:  
God's everlasting  
kingdom: Paradise  
restored, mankind  
resurrected,  
rehabilitated, repented,  
and living in harmony  
under God's rule.

#### 4. All of the above are describing God's own people under the guiding hand of their king, Jesus:

Matthew 28:20: (NASB) *teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*

Jesus promises his presence with his people throughout the Gospel Age - the age where the gospel has been preached for the last 2,000 years. The true gospel has never ruled throughout the earth. You can see the development of the kingdom because the king is there working with them in the development stage.





1 Peter 2:9-10: (NASB) <sup>9</sup>But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; <sup>10</sup>for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

A royal priesthood serves the people. Christianity is not yet serving the people. The development of the true church is still in a corrupted state.

Therefore, we can see the kingdom of heaven/the kingdom of God as being the context in which the true church is developed. This being said, we can now approach the parable from a clear position.

 I want I want, *The SCARY Truth About This New Age Modern Christianity* (sarcastic)

- (Woman speaking through fast food intercom) Welcome to First Unity Trinity Community Church of the United States. How can we feed you today?
- (Man) Who's teaching?
- (Woman speaking through fast food intercom) Pastor Wilkes.
- (Man) Nah, I'm not so crazy about him.
- (Woman speaking through fast food intercom) Oh, I meant, um, Pastor Johnston, of course. Sorry for the mix up.
- (Man) That's more like it. Now look, I don't want any of that Old Testament business today. I want to focus on the New Testament.
- (Woman speaking through fast food intercom) Well of course, Sir. The "Old Testament God" is mean.
- (Man) I mean, He's a lot happier now so let's focus on the present.
- (Woman speaking through fast food intercom) Certainly.
- (Man) And I want some creative illustrations. I want to laugh a little bit but not too much. I want my communion crackers broken for me with 100 percent natural grape juice. I know that stuff last week was from cans. Because is that honoring to God?
- (Woman speaking through fast food intercom) No, Sir. Of course not.
- (Man) I didn't think so. And I want to feel encouraged and uplifted and affirmed this week. And look, I want some healing for my bunion. And I don't want to be challenged too much, just a little bit, okay? Because I am challenged enough during work.
- (Woman speaking through fast food intercom) Certainly. This is a safe place. A happy place.
- (Man) I'd be a lot happier if you had something in the fifth row or so.
- (Woman speaking through fast food intercom) Certainly.



In this sarcasm, you can see the reality. Our designer Christianity placates to the desires, whims and moods of the people. Jesus did not do that. Jesus only



went down to their level to identify with them and then immediately showed them how to raise themselves up.

### The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares:

Matthew 13:24: (NASB) *Jesus presented another parable to them, saying, The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field.*



### Jesus' explanation of the parable:

Matthew 13:37-38: (NASB) <sup>37</sup>*And he said, The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, <sup>38</sup>and the field is the world; and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one;*

Two distinct differences from the previous parable to show People versus Process:

	❖ SOWER	❖ WHEAT AND TARES
❖ SEED	The word of God	The children of the kingdom; those who follow righteousness
❖ FIELD/ GOOD SOIL	The good hearts of those called to follow Jesus	The world, the unbelievers

The **Parable of the Sower** is about individuals and the condition of their hearts and minds when they hear the gospel. It is about individuals - people and their own lives versus the **Parable of the Wheat and Tares**, which is about the

journey of the true church as a class throughout the 2,000 years of the church's development - it is the process by which their collective faithfulness is achieved. It highlights the process of the church surviving massive corruption, violence and hypocrisy.

There are obviously people within the process of the wheat and tares, but the lesson is that the true church survives Satan's corruptive efforts.

**Next the enemy will infiltrate with counterfeit seed.  
Why were they not watching and ready for it?**

Hindsight is always so much easier than living an experience. For us to say they should have been more careful will of necessity require us to ask that same question of ourselves. Further, God's plan at every stage has allowed sin to play a role as spoiler and this allowance tells us that it is there for the testing of our fidelity to God's truth. We are being tested because we know there is corruption.



### First, a bit more on the son of man (Jesus) sowing the good seed in the world:

Matthew 28:18-20: (NASB) <sup>18</sup>*And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup>Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup>teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*

Jesus is showing us the sowing of the good seed by his commission before he is raised up to heaven before his disciples. He does not say "make all nations



into disciples." He says, *Make disciples of all nations*. By doing what he commanded, his disciples would expand the call of the church. In that call far and wide, we unfortunately find corruption.

### Continuing the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares:

Matthew 13:25: (NASB) *But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away.*

Corruption began right at the very beginning *while his men were sleeping*.

### Jesus' explanation:

Matthew 13:38-39: (NASB) <sup>38</sup>...and the tares are the sons of the evil one; <sup>39</sup>and the enemy who sowed them is the devil...

### What are tares?

(Source: Bible commentary by Albert Barnes) *Sowed tares*. "Tares" probably meant a degenerate kind of wheat, or the darnel grass growing in Palestine. In its growth and form it has a strong resemblance to genuine wheat. But it either produces no grain, or that of a very inferior and hurtful kind... It was extremely difficult to separate it from the genuine wheat, on account of its similarity while growing.

Tares look like wheat in their early stages while they are maturing. When the wheat is ripe, all the seeds are very heavy and they bow down. The tares stand straight up and proud. The "wheat class" are humble and "bent over." In the Parable, the master said, *Allow both to grow together until the harvest* and then they could tell the difference. The picture of the harvest is the end of the age or period of time of development - so far this time has been about 2,000 years since Jesus died.



- ☛ As the *good wheat* are children of the kingdom, so the bad wheat or *tares*, are children of Satan, those opposing Jesus' true message. (Not individual people, but classes of people.)
- ☛ There is definitely a warfare here being described between Jesus and Satan. Corruption comes because Satan intentionally planted it!

### 🔊 Social place, 1223 AD Medieval Realms - The Power of the Church

- (Narrator) *But what made the church in Medieval England so powerful that it could challenge kings? Saint Mary's Killpeck in Herefordshire, a 12th century parish church. There was a church in almost every village in Medieval England. So many survived today because most weren't built in wooden thatch but in stone. It shows their importance. The church was the center of village life.*
- (Priest, quoting from the Visitations of the Bishop of Salisbury, 1223 AD) *Churches are used for dancing and people come to church to drink ale, yes, and the churchyards are used for fairs and markets. Oh, there's wrestling and summer sport and much music.*

That does not sound like what Jesus taught. What is the place of Christianity in relation to social activities?



**This battle between Satan and Jesus was prophesied right from the start - Satan's curse and the "line in the sand" started in Genesis:**

**Genesis 3:15:** (NASB) *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.*



The *seed of the woman*, Jesus, will ultimately deal the destructive blow to Satan. Satan would wound him but not destroy him.

The battle continued in Jesus' day with the Scribes and Pharisees. They took the purity of the Jewish Law and built requirements around it, elevating themselves morally over the people.

**Jesus called them out:**

**John 8:41-42,44:** (NASB) <sup>41</sup>*You are doing the deeds of your father...*

<sup>42</sup>*Jesus said to them, If God were your Father, you would love me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on my own initiative, but He sent me...* <sup>44</sup>*You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*

One way to understand corruption in Christianity is to look at corruption within Judaism. We find there are many parallels between the age when Jesus came on the scene and was wrapping up the age of Jewish favor to our present time leading into the kingdom.

Have we in our churches built the same kind of thinking as they did in Jesus' day? If we have, we could fall into the same category of serving the devil.

**The battle continued after the Apostles - the sowing of the tares came while men slept:**

**Acts 20:28-30:** (NASB) <sup>28</sup>*Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.* <sup>29</sup>*I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock;* <sup>30</sup>*and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.*

*I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. In the parable, Jesus warned that when the Apostles died, once men slept, corruption would come in.*

Throughout the history of God's plan, Satan has sought to subvert it. Think of the birth of Moses and how Pharaoh tried destroying the newborn boys, the infancy of Jesus, the three temptations... Satan simply is continuing his devious work to try and destroy God's plan! One of the great ways to destroy something you do not like is to infiltrate its numbers and corrupt it from within. Jesus warned us that Christianity would become corrupt.





## Satan's role in this prophecy seems to be business as usual for him. What can we learn from this?

There is a saying that goes something like this, "Those who do not learn from history are destined to repeat it." Our lessons are powerful. We live in the end of times. We have the advantage of 2,000 years of Gospel Age hindsight. These things add up to our ability to be utterly prepared for standing for good while evil seems to rule. We need to be able to tell what is the corruption of the gospel and what is not.

### THE BELIEF IN THE RANSOM WEEDS OUT ERROR

1 Timothy 2:5-6: (KJV) *...the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*

1 Corinthians 15:22: (KJV) *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

A perfect man had to die for a perfect man. The word for *ransom* means "corresponding price." We test all our beliefs around this core belief of the ransom. For more on the ransom, please see August 9, 2012, CQ Episode 723: "Did Jesus Die for All or Just a Few?" Also please see the Bonus Material of this Rewind.



Matthew 13:26-28: (NASB) <sup>26</sup>*But when the wheat sprouted and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. <sup>27</sup>The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares? <sup>28</sup>And he said to them, An enemy has done this! The slaves said to him, Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?*

Jesus offers no explanation for these few verses. Perhaps there is no explanation because the conversation that takes place is not transferrable to prophetic reality. Jesus does not assign a prophetic identity to the slaves of the landowner as they are only in the story to explain the devious work of Satan to the listener.



### Moral guidelines, 1223 AD Medieval Realms - The Power of the Church

- (Woman villager) *But the church was more than a place where people could meet and be together. It taught how people should behave. It laid down rules; what was good, what was bad. And on Sundays and feast days and services across the country...*
- (Priest, quoting from the Visitations of the Bishop of Salisbury, 1223 AD) *Do not fall into sin. Be not proud, lazy, drunken. Do not keep a bad house. Come to church so that church can bless your children and make your marriage legal. Come to church to confess your sins. Come to church to celebrate the Christian faith respectfully and in the proper manner.*

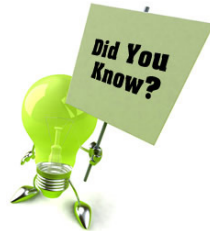
The churches were laying out moral and lifestyle guidelines - without scriptural basis - and turned them into hard, fast rules that hurt people. Wherever there is domination, there is corruption. That is one way we can tell if our brand of Christianity has been corrupted. Likewise, whenever there is a free-for-all in thought and action, there is corruption.



## We need to be prepared personally against any forms of pseudo-Christianity:

1 John 4:1-6: (NASB) *'Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.*

*Test the spirits* - test the powers and influences in your life. One way to *test the spirits* is to use the fulcrum doctrine of Jesus dying as a ransom for all men. If something does not line up with the ransom, we need to question it.



The word for *spirit* means "power" and "influence." It is the same Greek word used for wind, *pneuma*. In English, we get the word "pneumatic" from this word.

Wind is a power that can literally move things without being seen. God's spirit is explained to us in that way. God's influence and power cannot be seen with our eyes, but it can work within us to change our hearts and lives.

*<sup>2</sup>By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; <sup>3</sup>and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.*

To "confess" something is to truly believe it, to own it. Confessing or owning that Jesus is from God is far more than lip service to a doctrine - it is much more than saying words; it is heart service to a life-changing core belief. It also exposes the error that Jesus is God. He obviously is not; he is God's son. *Every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God* - confessing is not just saying words, it is following Jesus with every step. For more on "confessing," please see the CQ Bonus Material.

*<sup>4</sup>You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. <sup>5</sup>They are from the world; therefore, they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them. <sup>6</sup>We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.*

The point of the **Parable of the Wheat and the Tares** is that Jesus sows the good seed of the gospel and there is corruption alongside of it from Satan. We need to understand the spirit - the power and influence of truth - versus the spirit of error and what it produces.

Because of our responsibility to *try the spirits* against the truth of Scripture, and because of our deep personal confession of Jesus as God's son, coming as a man to be our ransom, we can find firm footing. The importance of this ransom is the centerpiece.



When I was a child going to Sunday School I loved the Bible stories and learning "God is love." I took it to heart and believed that. Then I would go to the church service and hear something different from the pulpit about hell, destruction and suffering. I thought, "Wait a minute, if God is love, He would not hurt anyone." It did not make sense to me. Later in life when I felt the Lord was calling me and I learned how to study and look up Greek and Hebrew



words to find the original definitions, I learned what I believed as a kid - God is love, and "hell" meant "covered over" and "buried in the grave." It does not mean torment and torture. What a relief that was, but I had to search to find the truth.

Finding the truth sometimes means digging through a lot of corrupted things.

### **Preparedness in discerning spiritual influences will not protect us from sad realizations:**

Philippians 3:17-19: (NASB) <sup>17</sup>Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. <sup>18</sup>For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, <sup>19</sup>whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.

The Apostle Paul warns us *they are enemies of the cross of Christ*, but they are walking as Christians. Things they glory in inevitably are shameful. They may not see it that way. It means their worship is feeding their own appetite. The things they are doing are bringing them to destruction. There is a blindness that can be purposeful, or it can be the "wool pulled over their eyes." A lot of Christianity is going in the wrong direction, just as the Apostle Paul warned us.

### **Preparedness requires us to always remember who we are, what we stand for and what protects us:**

1 Thessalonians 5:6-8: (NASB) <sup>6</sup>so then let us not sleep as others do but let us be alert and sober. <sup>7</sup>For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. <sup>8</sup>But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.

There is no room or time for night or darkness in our lives. We are children of the light. We can be armed with the ability to discern. Now we need to focus on godly goodness.

### **What happens as a result of the devious actions of the enemy? Who wins this battle?**

It would seem that the enemy wins, for the mixing in of that which is counterfeit among that which is genuine always presents a challenge. Think of counterfeit money. A well-produced counterfeit will not be detected by the average person and will flow through society until it is discovered by a trained professional.



Trish: (*Trish works in a bank.*) The best and first defense for detecting counterfeits is to know the real thing. We do not study counterfeit bills; we study the real bill, inside and out, so that when we see a counterfeit and something comes up that is not real, we will notice it. We also have machines that detect counterfeits, but the best thing is to know what it feels like. When you are used to handling money often it has a certain touch, and when counterfeit bills are presented, they do not feel the same; you can tell by the feel of the paper. You can also tell how counterfeits look. Some counterfeits



are excellent but there are certain distinct features on a real bill that you are trained to look at, so you can detect a counterfeit.

Know the real thing!



Back to the **Parable of the Wheat and Tares**:

**Matthew 13:28-30:** (NASB) <sup>28</sup>And he said to them, An enemy has done this! The slaves said to him, Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?

**The master declares an appropriate course of action:**

<sup>29</sup>But he said, No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them. <sup>30</sup>Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.

**Jesus' explanation of the parable:**

**Matthew 13:39-40:** (NASB) <sup>39</sup>and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. <sup>40</sup>So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age.

#### **Matthew 13:39-40**

❖ ENEMY	The devil
❖ HARVEST	The end of the Gospel Age
❖ REAPERS	Angels
❖ TARES GATHERED UP AND BURNED	False churches sifted out, found to be corrupted and unfaithful

Reminder: This is not about individual people; it is about the process of the development of the true church. If the true church is developing in a context where there is a lot of corruption, we call that the false church. If the two are working and growing together and you can hardly tell the difference until the harvest time, there has to be a sifting out or separation work.

**Verses 40-43 will be covered on our February 19, 2018 episode, "Has the Gospel Been Corrupted? (Part II)."**

Next time on this subject we will consider the next two very short parables -

**The Mustard Seed** in **Matthew 13:31-32** and **The Leaven** in **Matthew 13:33**.

We believe these other two parables are describing conditions that the timeline of the wheat and tares has brought us to. Jesus continues to describe what the corruption looks like, feels like and produces.

When the servant asks, *Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?* He said, *No, for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot (damage) the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together.* He would not take the chance of damaging that which is good to get rid of that which is bad. The true church grows in the context of the false church. In this age, God allows sin to do its work and will not let anything harm His true church. In the end, they are gathered into the barn.





## Hellfire 1070, Medieval Realms - The Power of the Church

- (Woman villager) *I am a poor old woman who knows nothing. I never could read, but in my parish church I see heaven painted with harps and lutes and hell where the damned are boiled. Hell frightens me, but heaven brings joy.*
- (Narrator) *Heaven was God's home. A place of light and rest. It was here, according to the church, that people who'd followed the church's rules when alive were rewarded after death. Those that broke the rules were punished in hell.*
- (Priest quoting from a poem by François Villon "My Mother" c. 1460 AD) *There is a weeping and a gnashing of teeth. There are devils that bind you hand and foot. And tortures that last forever.*
- (Woman villager) *My feet turned toad-like, for in life, I had stood in sin. My breast was eaten up with worms, my stomach devoured by snakes, for I had loved evil and rotten things more than I had loved God. My lips were cut off. My nose was cut off. My eyes hung down upon my cheeks.*

This captured the fear people lived with in those days. They did not call it the "Dark Ages" for nothing! It was much easier to control people with fear rather than with goodness. That is part of the corruption. For more on the topic of hell, please see our three-part podcasts, Ep. 869, 876 and 881: "Do the Fires of Hell Come From God?"



**Matthew 13:30:** (NASB) *Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers...*

### **Jesus' explanation of the parable:**

**Matthew 13:39:** (NASB) *and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels.*

### **The age of Jewish favor began its end with Jesus casting off Israel:**

**Matthew 23:37-39:** (NASB) <sup>37</sup>*Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.* <sup>38</sup>*Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!*

Jesus proclaims they had the opportunity to keep the favor by simply following him. He proved in many ways that he was from God and that his way was the right way. The religious leaders did not want him to change what they had in place. That is what corruption is. They had to keep their power.

### **The ending of the Jewish age continued with the calling of Gentiles to Christianity: (Here is Peter explaining the call of the Gentiles.)**

**Acts 15:8-9:** (NASB) <sup>8</sup>*And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us; <sup>9</sup>and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith.*

The Apostle Peter explains there is no distinction between a Jewish Christian and a Gentile Christian. Both can be true Christians given God's spirit. The call was expanded beyond the Jewish nation to anyone who would listen to that call and follow in Jesus' footsteps.



The ending of the age of Jewish favor culminated with the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 and the scattering of the people. Jesus forewarned this:

**Matthew 24:1-2:** (NASB) <sup>1</sup>*Jesus came out from the temple and was going away when his disciples came up to point out the temple buildings to him. <sup>2</sup>And he said to them, Do you not see all these things? Truly I say to you, not one stone here will be left upon another, which will not be torn down.*

The age of the Gospel will end when the call is complete and this corrupted world order is brought to an end, as predicted by the **Parable of the Wheat and the Tares**. Just as the Jewish age was brought to an end and the nation lost its national favor for a long period of time, so will this world's order come to an end:

**Daniel 2:44:** (NASB) *In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.*

What does it mean? How does it happen? What about false Christianity? How do we tell who is who? More in Part 2!

We need to study the Bible and stay close to the fundamental teachings of Christianity.



*So, has the Gospel been corrupted?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*

*And now even more to think about...  
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*Truth stands, even if there be no public support. It is self-sustained. — Mahatma Gandhi*

*There is no greatness where there is no simplicity, goodness and truth. — Leo Tolstoy*

The concept of the RANSOM is important because it is the entire basis for our Christian faith and the plan of God for the world of mankind.

What does it mean to say "Jesus is the ransom?" 1 Timothy 2:5-6: (NASB) <sup>5</sup>*For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who gave himself as a **ransom** <487> for all, the testimony given at the proper time.*

**Ransom:** Strong's #487, antilutron, a redemption price

Strong's #487 is only used in this one place in the Bible. It is derived from two Greek words:

**anti:** Strong's #473, instead of or because of; used to denote substitution or correspondence

**Lutron:** Strong's 3083, a redemption price, ransom

So, the word ransom in this one text means a "corresponding price."

Adam, a perfect man, chose to disobey God resulting in sin and death for him and all his offspring. The entire human race was doomed to the prison of death in order to satisfy justice - Adam paid the penalty of his disobedience to God. (Romans 6:23: (KJV) *The wages of sin is death...*) All of our race are either dead or dying.

Without the intervening sacrifice of Jesus, the cycle of sin and death would continue in misery until eventually the human race died out.

The death of the perfect man Jesus became the *substitute* or *corresponding price* for Adam. Jesus willingly volunteered to die and thereby paid the ransom by his perfect obedience to God. The man Jesus would take Adam's place in death, thereby satisfying justice.

Having paid the ransom price allows the work of the ransom to begin.

1 Corinthians 15:22: (KJV) *In Adam all die even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

This legal equivalency of "a perfect life (Adam) for a perfect life (Jesus)" allows for the resurrection of mankind and their opportunity for everlasting life in the kingdom. Mankind will finally have the full opportunity to be obedient without inherited sin. As a reward for his sacrifice, Jesus was resurrected as a highly exalted spirit being to complete the great work of bringing mankind back into a relationship with God.

The ransom does not excuse the sins committed by those in this lifetime - it does not suddenly count sinners as saints and usher them into everlasting bliss. It merely releases the accepting sinner from the first condemnation and its results, and places him again on trial for life, in which his own willful obedience or willful disobedience will decide if he may or may not have life everlasting.

John 1:29: (KJV) *...The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world...*

Romans 5:18-19: (NASB) <sup>18</sup>*So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. <sup>19</sup>For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.*





## Confess in the New Testament:

**Confess:** Strong's #3670 homologeo to assent, i.e. covenant, acknowledge  
KJV - con- (pro-) fess, confession is made, give thanks, promise

Greek English Lexicon: 1) to say the same thing as another, i.e. to agree with, assent  
2) to concede 2a) not to refuse, to promise 2b) not to deny 2b1) to confess  
2b2) declare 2b3) to confess, i.e. to admit or declare one's self guilty of what one is accused of  
3) to profess 3a) to declare openly, speak out freely  
3b) to profess one's self the worshipper of one 4) to praise, celebrate

### All uses:

Matthew 7:23: (KJV) *And then will I **profess <3670>** unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

Matthew 10:32: (KJV) *Whosoever therefore shall confess **<3670>** me before men, him will I **confess <3670>** also before my Father which is in heaven.*

Matthew 14:7: (KJV) *Whereupon he **promised <3670>** with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.*

Luke 12:8: (KJV) *Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall **confess <3670>** me before men, him **shall <3670>** the Son of man also **confess <3670>** before the angels of God:*

John 1:20: (KJV) *And he **confessed <3670>**, and denied not; but **confessed<3670>**, I am not the Christ.*

John 9:22: (KJV) *These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did **confess <3670>** that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.*

John 12:42: (KJV) *Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not **confess <3670>** him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:*

Acts 23:8: (KJV) *For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees **confess <3670>** both.*

Acts 24:14: (KJV) *But this I **confess <3670>** unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:*

Romans 10:9: (KJV) *That if thou shalt **confess <3670>** with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

Romans 10:10: (KJV) *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth **confession is made <3670>** unto salvation.*

1 Timothy 6:12: (KJV) *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast **professed <3670>** a good profession before many witnesses.*

Titus 1:16: (KJV) *They **profess <3670>** that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.*

Hebrews 11:13: (KJV) *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and **confessed <3670>** that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

Hebrews 13:15: (KJV) *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving **thanks <3670>** to his name.*



1 John 1:9: (KJV) *If we **confess <3670>** our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

1 John 2:23: (KJV) *Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that **acknowledgeth <3670>** the Son hath the Father also.*

1 John 4:2: (KJV) *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that **confesseth <3670>** that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:*

1 John 4:3: (KJV) *And every spirit that **confesseth <3670>** not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*

1 John 4:15: (KJV) *Whosoever shall **confess <3670>** that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.*

2 John 1:7: (KJV) *For many deceivers are entered into the world, who **confess <3670>** not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.*



Join us next week for our February 5, 2018, podcast,  
"Do We Have to Turn the Other Cheek?"