

## THE ENEMY OF THE CHURCH

Matthew 13:24-30

(Not entirely original with me)

**Introduction:** The parable of the tares and the wheat gives an explanation of the Church age and how Satan has tried to infiltrate it and the methods He is using. In the parable of the farmer sowing the seed and how it was received reveals how the gospel is being spread and the different results as it is received. The Sower of the seed is the same one as the One who will harvest the seed, which is the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus Christ. The field is the religious world, the good seed are believers, the Children of God and the tares are imitators of God's Children. This message is about the Enemy and his work.

### I. WHEN THE ENEMY WORKS

#### 1. "...while men slept..." (v25)

- It is under the cover of darkness that Satan sows his tares.
- Darkness is characteristic of Satan as he hates God's light therefore secrecy, stealth and dishonesty are his favorite tactics.
- God never sleeps nor grows weary, neither does Satan as he is always going about,  
*"...seeking whom he may devour..."*

#### 2. "...while men slept..."

- An unwatchful condition which is prevalent among the Church.
- *"...There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness..." (Jude 4)*
- *"...I have a few things against thee because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam....etc.." (Revelation 2:14-15)*
- Today there are false preachers, teachers, Church members as in the early Church, all Satan's "tares."

### II. HOW THE ENEMY WORKS

1. The Son of Man sowed good seed in His field (**vv24, 37**) and Satan (God and the Church's enemy) turned farmer also.
  - Satan never originates anything but duplicates, imitates, produces counterfeits of God's works.
  - Satan imitated Jesus Christ as he did not sow thorns nor briars but he sowed "tares" which looks like the real thing (wheat) and cannot be distinguished from the real thing until harvest time.
2. The "tares" are false Christians.
  - God will wait to root them out until "harvest" time which is when the Lord Jesus will return.
  - When things are "ripe" and when it is in God's time.
  - Until "harvest" time, Satan's people will be alongside God's people.
3. Satan's method is to imitate the real thing.
  - Satan has an imitation Gospel.
  - People going about to establish their own righteousness, etc.
  - Satan has an imitation Church.
  - None of the members of his church will be saved, although they profess the name of Christ, teach "some" of the basic biblical fundamentals so subtly that millions are being fooled and deluded.

- Satan will eventually bring an imitation Christ.
  - He is the great "antichrist."
  - He will have power to work miracles and will claim at first to be the true, real Christ who has come back and multitudes will be deceived and wander after him.

***Revelation 13:4.***

- Satan does indeed sow "tares" imitation wheat - not thorns and briars, thistles.

### III. THE ENEMY WILL HAVE SUCCESS

1. In the parable of sowing the good seed, there were difficulties but not so with Satan and his tares.
  - There is no "wayside" ground.
  - There are no "thorns" to choke them and they grow everywhere.
  - There are no "fowls of the air" to catch them away.
  - There is no cultivation needed for Satan's tares grow by themselves.
2. The Owner of the field forbade any interference with the tares growing.
  - Why not? Why has God given Satan so much freedom for so long?
    - The "tares," Satan's people have rejected Jesus, preferring "Barabbas" and have chosen a murderer in preference to the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Gentiles will reap what they have sown.
3. God has a time when the "tares" will be harvested.
  - **v30** - The "tares" will be gathered into "bundles" before the wheat is gathered.
    - Everything that has not come from God's sowing His seed will be separated.
    - God's "wheat" will be gathered before the "tares" are burned. (**1 Thessalonians 4:16-17**)
  - The commercial world of today is becoming an organization, a gathering, co-operations, unions.
    - A gathering of the tares into bundles.
  - The social world is being gathered into one "bundle."
    - Class distinctions are disappearing.
    - Social barriers are breaking down.
    - Individual enterprises are disappearing.
    - A gathering of the tares into bundles.
  - The religions are becoming more and more "united."
    - Denominations are uniting, Pastors of various faiths are uniting.
    - Christian churches are joining other faiths and combining their fellowships.
    - A gathering of the tares into bundles.
  - Nations are uniting together to form "bonds" and "leagues" in a movement to unite power and thus gathering themselves into a bundle of tares.

### CONCLUSION:

1. Satan is using reform movements and efforts to unite "tares."
2. It was while men slept that the enemy came and sowed his tares. The Church must stay awake and watch.
3. God doesn't want a single one of His Seed, His Children to be hurt, therefore He is delaying the rooting up of the "tares."
4. In God's time, He will gather up all the "tares" and cast them into a furnace of fire.
  - ***"...And shall cast them into the furnace of fire and there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.."***
  - Those who follow Satan although act like Christians are doomed to a lake of fire.
5. This is not just a story, it is all FACT!

