

# Message 1: Good and Bad Seed

Eternity Series

Message 1

July 10, 2022

Main Idea: Eternity is real.

Matthew 13:24–30, 36-43 (CSB)

## Introduction: Why this series?

A. Back on January 2 of this year, I was in bed reading and studying.

1. That night, I believe the Lord dropped this message into my heart:

2. The Spirit said "Paul, prepare these messages for when the time is right." 1/2/2022.

3. He then added this instruction:

a. This sermon series can't be pithy.

b. No play on words or puns.

c. Must be preached with tears, With longing and, With sincerity and desperation.

4. In other words, this is not a joke. It's serious.

B. Two weeks ago, I was sitting at my kitchen table studying.

1. These days, I've been studying more at home so I can focus on the Word and Prayer.

2. During this preparation, there was a nervousness and a heaviness upon my life.

3. Preaching is always a serious task.

4. But sometimes the anointing lays heavy upon a person's body and mind.
5. When this is true, the servant must pay close attention.
6. I believe that this simple series of messages are to capture our attention.

#### C. Why this message?

1. Because we have lost sight of eternity.
2. Furthermore, Jesus believed in hell and warned us of its dangers.
3. Yet, I'm afraid, the American Church no longer believes in hell or eternity.
4. We do not want to live in fear of hell, but we do not want to forget that the "wages of sin is death."

#### 1. Jesus taught on eternal death often.

A. R.C. Sproul said, "Jesus talked more about hell than he did about heaven."

1. For those inclined to believe in eternity, nobody doubts that there is heaven.
  - a. But doubting the existence of hell makes sense.
  - b. Not believing in "hell" feels right.
  - c. Not believing in "hell" makes us feel superior than all of the ignorant people who came before us, we think.
  - b. That's why this is a tough topic and it's confusing.
2. Why is it confusing?
  - a. Because it deals with eternity.
  - b. Because Christians do not agree on this doctrine.
  - c. Because Satan has made a mockery of hell in music and movies.

d. Because we hope hell isn't true.

3. Part of the reason there are many theories about hell is not because Scripture isn't clear, but because we hope it isn't true.

a. I wish nihilism (also called conditionalism) was true: where the good live forever with Jesus and the evil simply cease to exist.

b. I wouldn't mind believing in purgatory.

c. But these are not true biblical doctrines.

d. What did Jesus say about eternity?

2. Jesus uses strong language to emphasize the reality of eternity.

A. Notice what Jesus says in Matthew 13

Matthew 13:24–30, 36-43 (CSB)

### **THE PARABLE OF THE WHEAT AND THE WEEDS**

<sup>24</sup> He presented another parable to them: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. <sup>25</sup> But while people were sleeping, his enemy came, sowed weeds among the wheat, and left. <sup>26</sup> When the plants sprouted and produced grain, then the weeds also appeared. <sup>27</sup> The landowner's servants came to him and said, 'Master, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Then where did the weeds come from?'

<sup>28</sup> " 'An enemy did this,' he told them.

" 'So, do you want us to go and pull them up?' the servants asked him.

<sup>29</sup> " 'No,' he said. 'When you pull up the weeds, you might also uproot the wheat with them. <sup>30</sup> Let both grow together until the harvest. At harvest time I'll tell the reapers: Gather the weeds first and tie them in bundles to burn them, but collect the wheat in my barn.' "

### **JESUS INTERPRETS THE PARABLE OF THE WHEAT AND THE WEEDS**

<sup>36</sup> Then he left the crowds and went into the house. His disciples approached him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field."

<sup>37</sup> He replied, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; <sup>38</sup> the field is the world; and the good seed—these are the children of the kingdom. The weeds are the children of the evil one, <sup>39</sup> and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. <sup>40</sup> Therefore, just as the weeds are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. <sup>41</sup> The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will gather from his kingdom all who cause sin and those guilty of lawlessness. <sup>42</sup> They will throw them into the blazing furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup> Then the righteous will shine like the sun in their Father's kingdom. Let anyone who has ears listen.

B. At first, Jesus teaches about eternity with a parable.

1. Parables are great.
2. Parables are images that illustrate a truth.
3. But surely Jesus didn't not mean that there would be a harvest and a reckoning.
4. If Jesus had not interpreted this parable, we could interpret this however we saw fit.

C. But Jesus interprets His own parable.

1. He tells His disciples exactly what this means.
2. People are the seed.
  - a. There are righteous people.
  - b. There are sinful people.
3. Actually, the imagery is more like: There are sons and daughters of God and there are sons and daughters of Satan.

D. They are sown together, and grow together, in the same field.

1. When harvest comes, there is a separation.
2. God keeps the good crop, "the children of God".
3. He burns the bad crop "the children of Satan."

### 3. Jesus believed there would come a day of reckoning.

#### A. We all believe in death.

1. Every person dies.
2. All of us adults have been to a funeral or have known someone to pass away.
3. We do not question that death is a reality.

#### B. We do question the reality of eternity.

1. Part of the reason we question eternity is because both life and death seem unfair.
2. Overtime, we may start to question how eternity works, why it is the way it is, and how could God allow a place like Hell to exist.
3. These are not bad questions.
  - a. Questions are not sins.
  - b. The problem arises when we look for answers to questions that God has already answered.
  - c. When our answers to these questions come from philosophers, fiction writers, athletes, influencers, and YouTubers, we are opening up ourselves to the wrong answers and the wrong way of thinking.

#### C. A helpful question for us is, "What did Jesus believe?"

1. It is obvious that Jesus believed in eternal life and eternal death.
2. Notice verses 42-43

<sup>42</sup> They will throw them into the blazing furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup> Then the righteous will shine like the sun in their Father's kingdom. Let anyone who has ears listen.

3. Jesus saw the righteous shining like the sun.

4. Jesus saw the unrighteous weeping and gnashing teeth.
5. These comparisons are side-by-side.
  - a. In other words, **if Life is eternal, Death is eternal.**
  - b. Jesus compared Life and Death equally.
  - c. We cannot believe in an eternal heaven if we do not also believe in an eternal hell.
  - d. Either humanity lives eternally after we die or we do not live at all after we die.
6. **In this day and time, we need reconvincing of eternity's reality.**

#### 4. Where did the unrighteous or bad seed come from?

A. Jesus said it was from the enemy.

1. This is interesting.
2. Jesus doesn't say "oh, they are good at heart but got a little lost on the way".
3. He actually says that the bad seed comes from HIS enemy.
  - a. The devil isn't our enemy.
  - b. Satan is God's enemy.
  - c. Satan attacks us because that is how he strikes at God.
4. God created humanity in HIS IMAGE.
  - a. What Satan is attacking is not my image but God's image within me.
  - b. God is not some disinterested observer in this cosmic warfare.
  - c. **The main battle is between God and Satan, and we are in the middle.**

B. The seed the enemy planted was designed to look just like the wheat and to be indistinguishable until it was growing.

1. The hope of the enemy is to ruin the harvest.
2. The enemy sows bad seed in hopes that the harvest will be lost.
3. Some believe that Jesus had a “bearded darnel” seed in mind.

This weed looks rather like wheat when young, but matures to have a black seed and plays host to a fungus that can be quite toxic to humans. The verse starts and ends with the features that mark the invisibility of the act: the enemy acts while others sleep and after a busy night does not stay around to be seen afterwards.<sup>1</sup>

C. What we know about the seed:

1. There is good and bad seed.
2. The seed represents people.
3. The “bad” seed is indistinguishable from the good, at least initially but is obvious after it starts producing after its kind.
4. At harvest time, the crop is gathered.
5. The wheat stays while the tares are destroyed.

## 5. Didn't you buy the good stuff?

A. This was the question of the servants who were sowing the fields.

1. The seed could have come from two places.
  - a. First, the farmer could have held seed over from a previous harvest.
  - b. Or, the farmer could have bought the seed from elsewhere.

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<sup>1</sup> Nolland, John. 2005. [\*The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text\*](#). New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press. 545

2. Either way, the servants noticed that the quality was very mixed after they planted.

3. But, if they dealt with the bad seed NOW, they could pull up the tares and save the crop.

a. This sounds wonderful, doesn't it!

b. In the 1956 short story "Minority Report", which became a movie starring Tom Cruise, we see this kind of thing happen.

c. There is a "precrime" unit that is able to stop crime BEFORE it happens.

d. If we HAD OUR WAY, stopping sin and crime BEFORE it happens by eliminating the evil people sounds like an amazing deal.

B. But this isn't what the master in Jesus' story does.

1. Because this is a parable, Jesus is teaching an aspect of the Kingdom here.

2. It is true God could eliminate all the bad people and evil people from the start.

3. It is true that God could take the nuclear option, so to speak, and eliminate what is wrong before the seed produces the tares..

4. But the Master in this story says "NO! you might also harm the wheat."

C. Why the delay?

1. The Gospel according to Barney Fife says, "Nip it in the bud."

2. The Gospel according to Jesus says, "Wait a little longer, I don't want anyone lost."

**3. The Father is willing to allow weeds to thrive, for a season, so that His seed may flourish.**

2 Peter 3:9–11 (CSB)

<sup>9</sup>The Lord does not delay his promise, as some understand delay, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance.

<sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come like a thief; on that day the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, the elements will burn and be dissolved, and the earth and the works on it will be disclosed. <sup>11</sup>Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, it is clear what sort of people you should be in holy conduct and godliness

## 6. Do not confuse love for weakness.

A. The Master refusing to immediately deal with the problems is not a sign of weakness.

1. It's an act of love.
2. It is also an assurance of His ability.
3. The Master knows that, when it is time for harvest, He and his servants know how to properly sort the good from the bad.

B. God's patience is for our benefit.

1. At the end of the age, God isn't going to miss a thing.
2. Every sin will be punished, either through the Blood of Jesus or through the fires of eternal death.
3. Nothing good goes unnoticed and nothing evil is eternally rewarded.

C. When the End comes, and the angels are sent to gather humanity, God's love will be on full display.

1. The love that rewards the Righteous is the same love that condemns the Unrighteous.
2. The presence of Hell does not make God unjust or unloving.
3. The presence of Hell means that God is just and good.
4. A good God could not allow sin to go unpunished.

- a. That is why He sent His Son to receive the punishment for our sin.
- b. So that everyone who believes upon Him will be saved.

### Conclusion:

A. Reflecting upon Jesus' parable, notice that He lets both seed grow and produce.

1. He doesn't judge the seed until it produces its crop.
2. The seed that produces righteousness is saved.
3. The seed that produces unrighteousness is burned.

B. James 1:15 says it this way: (CSB)

<sup>15</sup>Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.

1. This of this through the imagery of seed again:
  - a. Conception is because of a "seed".
  - b. The "seed" produces whatever it was designed to produce.
2. The Good News is that Jesus changes this!
  - a. **Because Jesus was not of human "seed", He breaks the cycle of desire, sin, and death for all who believe in Him.**
  - b. Even though all of us have been tainted with sin and, left to our own will produce death, we can be changed.

C. PRAYER: Two areas of prayer for us this morning.

1. If anyone here today does not know Jesus, this is the first place we must pray.
  - a. Please do not wait to confess your sins to Jesus.
  - b. Please do not take a chance on entering eternity without knowing Jesus.

2. Second, Let us pray for boldness to tell others about eternity.

a. We all have friends and neighbors who may not know.

b. No one is guaranteed tomorrow!