

Title: Growth Of The Kingdom

Text: Matthew 13:1-51

(omit)

Will you open your Bibles, please, to Matthew chapter 13...Matthw 13... Matthew chapter 13 has a number of parables. And I want to consider all of these parables as one unit. Because I believe they teach the growth of the Kingdom. The kingdom of God in this present age.....

Matthew chapter 13.....(Read Vs 1-51)

### Prayer

Our Father in heaven, we come to you, once again, and thank you for the privilege of opening up the greatest book of all...the Bible. We pray, Father, that you would teach us through the person and work of the Holy Spirit. <sup>And</sup> Father God, we pray, that you would help us to be sensitive to the Spirit as He speaks to us. We pray that we would not take lightly the things of God's precious Word. But that it might make a deep and abiding impression on us. And we pray this in Jesus name.....AMEN.....

+++++++

Now, Jesus is talking about the Growth of the Kingdom in these 7 parables. This is not a reference to the 1000 years reign kingdom of Christ on the earth. But, Jesus is talking about the growth of the kingdom in this age. The times we are in right now. This age began with the Cross and resurrection of Jesus; and it will end at the second coming of Jesus. That is the age that Jesus is talking about. He is not referring to the future millennial Kingdom.

I Now, we have all these parable in Matthew 13.....Number one, we have a sower who sows seed on four kinds of soil.

Number two, we have a sower who is sowing seed for wheat. And his enemy is sowing tares.

The third parable, found in Vs 31 and 32, concerns a man sowing a grain of mustard seed...The fourth parable found in Vs 33 concerns a woman hiding leaven in three measures of meal.

The fiveth parable in Vs 44 concerns a man finding a hidden treasure.

The sixthe one in Vs 45-46 concerns a pearl of great value.

And the seventh parable, Vs 47-50, concerns a net being cast into the sea....

~~Now~~ Now, I would like to make some general observations about these parables, which are abviously one unity. Jesus taught them as being the parables of the kingdom. And they are all dealing with the growth of the kingdom in this present age. That is, untill the millimial kingdom is set up on earth. ~~This is all~~

~~Sow~~, the sower in the first parable, the sower who is sowing seed on four kinds of soil, is the same <sup>person</sup> as parable number two: the man which sows, that is "THE SON OF MEN."

I also believe that in Parable number 3 the man sowing the grain of mustard seed is, also, the same individual.

In parable number 5, the man who finds the ~~hidden~~ hidden treasure is still the same individual.

And in Parable number 6, the merchant who finds the pearl of great price is the same individual.

All of these are the same. It is refering to Jesus. { Now, again the first parable is the clue to the whole thing. A sower sowes on four types of soil. And the primary interpretation of that ~~it~~ parable is that we who know Christ are the soil, And the sower, Jesus, is giving us the seed. And the seed is the Word of the Kingdom, or The word of God, or simply "The Word" as it is called in Mark and Luke. { He is talking about our responsibility to spread the Word of the Kingdom. Only one out of four ~~were~~ <sup>was</sup> furitfull. Only one life out of four believers produced as God wanted them to produce. Only one was concerned with getting the Word of God out. Three of them had a problem. So, the first parable deals with the condition of men's hearts who are in the kingdom. WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH THE WORD, THE MESSAGE, THE GOSPEL, WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH IT NOW THAT THE SOWER HAS GIVEN IT TO EACH ONE OF US?.....

He has given to us the message of reconciliation. It is our responsibility to be ambassadors of God to proclaim the Gospel to every creature who has ever lived. WHAT WILL WE DO WITH THAT Responsibility?

So, parable number one deals with the condition of our hearts in responses to the <sup>Great</sup> ~~the~~ commission that is ours.

Now, parable number two, <sup>concerning</sup> ~~parable number two~~, the wheat and the tares, deals with the subject of the counterfeiters that are in the kingdom. Jesus, in this parable, is dealing with one of the most important subjects <sup>that</sup> ~~we~~ we could talk about, ~~in an audience like this~~. COUNTERFEITERS IN THE KINGDOM.

Jesus was always concerned with counterfeiters. Over and over again he dealt with the issue of false profession. That some people have the ability to appear on the outward surface that they really have Christ, either by what they say or by what they do. In fact, Jesus taught that some people could even do the miraculous in the name of God. And yet, ~~he~~ tells us very clearly that many shall say to him in that day, which by the way is the day of the reapers, of the parable of the tares, in that day Jesus said: "Many will say, Lord! Lord! have ~~de~~ not done many wonderful works in thy name?" And he will say, "Depart from me you workers of iniquity, I never knew you."

So, this parable deals with counterfeiters. And there is an interesting thing that I want you to know. In this parable, notice the word "tares". It is found in Vs 25. Now, these tares are very familiar in the land of Palestine. I am told that they look just like wheat. And only the very informed and the ~~eye~~ eye of the most experienced farmer can tell the difference between the tare and the wheat. And the average person, if he went through the wheat field, could not tell the difference. They all looked alike. And the point of this parable is that there are many who profess to be citizens of the kingdom, and on the outward surface they really look like they are <sup>Christians</sup> ~~in Christ~~. But, they are tares, false professors.

In one of his books, Dr. Torrey made this statement. It was a statement coming out of his experience as a pastor ~~and speaker~~ in many churches throughout the United states. He made a statement many, many years ago which I often wondered whether or not it was the truth....

He said, after preaching in all these churches, "I seriously question whether one out of ten people ~~in all of these churches~~ really possess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.".....

I use to think he was kidding. But then I remeber that for 8 years I lived and served in the Bible belt of California: the San Joaquin Valley. And people in the Bible Belt are acustom to things religious. And I am amazed at people who seemingly ~~do~~ not go to church, who ~~had~~ no interest in the things of Christ, <sup>yet</sup> knew so much about the Bible and about Christ. And I meet scores of people who outwardly professe that they ~~were~~ <sup>are</sup> christians, but I meet very few who sincerely ~~had~~ <sup>have</sup> the life of Christ within them. It was all surface profession. They are tares in the kingdom. And Jesus said that you are going to expereince tares.

~~And~~ the disciples came and said ~~to~~ Jesus. "Well, Jesus, shouldn't we pull out the tares. Shouldn't we get them out off the church." Jesus said, "be carefull, least you pull up the wheate also. Don't worry, God has a day in which he will judge every motive and intent of the heart. God has a day of reaping and evaluation. And he will show who is a wheat and who is a tare."

It is not our responsibility to go around and judge who is and who isn't a wheat or tare. Jesus said to the disciples: "That is not your responsibility. But, it is your responsibility to recognize that there wheat and tares. And do not accept simply a person's profession."

Jesus warned in the Sermon on the Mount that many profess. But few pocesses. And by your fruits you shall know them. Especially in relationship to false ~~prophets~~ prophets.....So, there are counterfiets in the kingdome of God.

Now, there are some interesting points in this one parable that gives us a key to other things in the other parables. Let me show you what I mean.

In Vs 32, Jesus in giving the interpretation of this, definitely clears up what some of these things mean throgghout the parables.

For example: the one who sowes. Who is he? He is the son of man: Jesus.

Also, the field in which He sows is the world. Another thing we know is that good seed is the children of the kingdom. And tares are the children of the wicked one. Also, we know that the enemy is the devil. ~~Another thing we learn is that~~ the harvest is the end of the <sup>age</sup> ~~world~~. ~~Finally, the end of the age.~~ Also, reapers are angels. And we know that there is a final consequence for all tares. They are gathered and they are burned. Jesus says in Vs 42 that they will be cast into the furnace of fire; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. In other words: unbelievable torture and punishment. And this is what Jesus thought about FALSE PROFESSION.....The great danger of false profession.

You know, I have always been impressed with what the Apostle Paul said in the book of Corinthians when he said to examine yourself to see whether or ~~not~~ you are in the faith. Examine yourself as whether you be in the faith.. *of course, Very important*

I think so often about how easy it is to just go along with the crowd. To ride along on the religion of others. To assume that we believe these things in our hearts simply because we outwardly accept them. To be raised in a christian home, to have christian parants, to attend church regularly does not make us Christians. These are all wonderful influences. And Praise God for them. But never assume that because you have been trained and educated in Christ that this brings salvation in Christ..No... In fact Jesus warned of this....

And I pray that each one of us, today, might examine ourselves as to whether we are in the faith. <sup>For Discern</sup> Counterfiets in the kingdom...

3 Now, the third parable you will find in Vs 31 and 32. And in this parable we have the chief characteristic of the kingdom in this present age. The chief characteristic. And what is that? It is outstanding growth.

You will notice what it says in Vs 31: (Read Vs 31-32)

Now, again, there is one central truth in every parable Jesus told.



In this parable we see the growth of the Kingdom. The central truth is that the son of man sows this mustard seed and it has fantastic growth. Now, remember from the parable of the tares, the seeds that the son of man sows are the children of the kingdom. Those are the real thing. They are not the tares. The point of this is that it grows so fantastically that the birds can make nest in its branches. It becomes an example of tremendous growth. All from a small mustard seed.

And that is the chief characteristic of the kingdom in this present age. It's tremendous growth. *The church has grown throughout the world*

Have you ever stopped and ask yourself how many christians will be in heaven? Dr. Hocking at a Passtors conference once said that there will be more people in heaven than most of us ~~who~~ would like to admit.....

Jesus said on one occassion that if a man comes with the faith of a little child, he will enter the kingdom of God. AREN'T YOU GLAD OF THAT? When I examine my life as to whether or not I am in the faith, that ~~examination~~ examination brings me to the wonderful truth that salvation is by faith. And the faith of a little child....that trust and belief...that confidence in the object of its trust.....Faith procures and brings to us salvation. And I wonder if many times we don't get to the place where by our constant habit of judging people, that we have the tendency not to accept citizens of the kingdom that we shall share an eternity with.....

Faith brings salvation. And the chief characteristic of the kingdom now, is the tremendous growth.....

I don't know how many christians will be in heaven. But there is going to be many. And I am sure of that.

(4) Parable number four is an interesting parable. It deals with a woman who hids leaven in three measures of meal. And again there is one central truth being taught in this parable. And it is simplely this: there is compromise in the growth of the kingdom.....COMPROMISE..... *Read vs 33* Now, what does leaven represent? What did Jeuss teach as to the meaning of leaven?

Would you turn, please, to Matthew chapter 16....Matthew 16:11-12...



While there will be great growth in the kingdom. And many people will be coming into the kingdom. Yet, there will be compromise. And we are to be aware of this. Matthew 16: 11 and 12(Read)

According to Jesus, leaven represents the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Pharisees taught a self righteousness that contradicted the righteousness of God. Because God place's in a man's life by faith his righteousness.

The Sadducees taught that Jesus did not arise from the dead. They taught that after he died, after the evidence of his resurrection. And also during his life they denied the possibility of his resurrection. They were the liberals of Jesus' day. They denied the subernatural.

Now, Jesus said that in this kingdom, as it is growing in the present age, there will be compromise in teaching. There will be false teaching. And we are to be aware of this. It is like leaven in three measures of meal. The Bible also says that a little leaven, leaventh the whole lump.

And I believe that one of the things we should be aware of in the growth of the kingdom in this present age is that there is much in the way of false teaching. If you do not believe that, may I invite you to turn on your radio or your T.V. on any given Sunday of the year. Much of what we are hearing today is not based upon the Word of God, the Bible. <sup>Apostasy</sup> And please remember the first Parable. In that Parable we learn that the Son of Man has intrusted to us the Word of God. The word of the kingdom. And we must be aware of the fact that their is a leaven growing in the kingdom. And Jesus said that at the end of the age, this will become so fantastic that it will seem as though <sup>is</sup> there one great apostatcy and a turning away from the kingdom of God. <sup>Then</sup> And in that 7 year peiidd of tribulation, when the Antichrist, the one world political leader, has his way, and the false prophet, the one false religious leader of the day, you will see apostatcy as you have never seen before. Men will be departing from the truth. And what we are experiencing today is merely a fortast of what is going to be unlashd.....False teachers.....Compromise with the Word of the Kingdom.

Now, Parable number 5 AND 6 to me are two of the most beautiful statements of the Lord Jesus in all of the Bible. And again remember who is involved. In Vs 44 we read (Read VS 44).....

Again, Jesus has already given us the interpretation of the field, and the man. It is the son of man which finds the treasure. The treasure is where it is hidden in the ~~field~~ field. WHAT IS THE FIELD? The field is the world. The treasure refers to those who are going to come to Christ. And please notice they are hidden in the field which is the world. But do you ~~notice~~ notice what he does? He goes out and sells all that he has and buys the whole field. I think that is fantastic.

One of the most ~~truths~~ blessed truths in all the Bible is right here there in these verses. God loves us so much. He has his treasure. He has those ~~who~~ whom He will bring to Himself. He has his body. And there are those in this great vast world who will come to Christ. And God loves that treasure. But do you know what Jesus does? To get the treasure he buys the whole field. He buys the whole world. That is what the Bible teaches. Christ died for the sins of the whole world.

And here in parable number 5 we see the real cost of the kingdom. Somebody has rightly said that salvation doesn't cost you anything. But it cost God his son. The Father gave his only begotten son. Jesus died for the sins of the whole world. And salvation is open to every single person. Because Jesus has paid for the sins of all. He bought the whole world.

Parable number 6 takes it just one step further. In Vs 45 it says (read) You know, Jesus sees a lot more in us than we see....It sees a life that he wants. He is a merchant seeking fine pearls....I think that is tremendous. And Vs 46 says.....(Read)...

Now, you must compare the two together. In the first parable, in the treasure that is hidden in the ~~field~~ field, you see the cost of the kingdom. That is that Jesus died for the whole world just to purchase you and me. But in Vs 45 and 46 you see the real concern of Jesus for one soul. You realize that Jesus would have died for you, if you were the only person alive



Even though he died for the whole world, this one little parable teaches that Jesus died for individuals...If you were the only person who had ever lived, he would have died for you. What tremendous love. What tremendous compassion and concern. One pearl of great price. The value of one soul. Isn't that thrilling?.....The merchant seeking one fine pearl.

You know, maybe you get to the point where how full your life is. Such inconsistency. A lack of doing in your life what God wants you to do. And you get to the point of wondering why God saved you in the first place. Well, he is a merchant seeking fine pearls....He sees something in us that we cannot see. He loves us. For he loves a human soul more than we shall really understand.....And that brings great comfort to me...The concern of Jesus for the people of his kingdom....

Then the final parable in verse 47...(Read 47-50) In this parable Jesus is dealing with the final consequence of those in that kingdom that are not His. But who have merely professed.

In parable number 2 he was dealing with the counterfeiters themselves. The fact that they look like wheat. They have <sup>profession</sup> possession, but not real possession. And here he is emphasizing again a point that he made in parable number 2, and that is that there are final consequences: the furnace of fire, separating the wicked. And right in this verse we see the whole principle of death. For death in the Bible is separation. And eternal death is separation from God forever.

That is an awful statement really. He will take out the wicked from among the righteous. A great day of separation in which the lost will be lost forever. And it will happen at the end of the age. The end of what age? The end of this age, now, preceding the coming of the new age: the millennium. It is going on now. It continues through the tribulation period. And at the end of the tribulation there will be one great harvest. It will be the end of the age. And final consequences will be given out.

The unbelievers will have a ~~one~~ future day to stand before the Great white throne judgement. But there sense will be final at that point.

And during the tribulation period, we know from the Book of Ezekiel, that there will be some, even of the nation of Israel, who will believe and turn to Christ when they see Him whom they have pierced. ~~AND~~

And, yet, the Bible tells us that there will be many rebels. Many in that day who will still refuse to believe. And whether Jew or Gentile, so many, in this day, are not recognizing there are final consequences. And so they don't flee to Christ.

I have been studying, recently, motives for coming to Christ. And I have heard so much ~~in~~ in the way of the great motive of love that draws men to Christ. But I have meet many men, hard nose stubborn working men, ~~and~~ ~~men~~ who could care less about the subject of love. Coming to Christ because God loves us.....There is no motive there, unless you understand it.

As I have studied the motives of Jesus, I have learned something. The motive that Jesus used to bring men unto himself, was the final consequence. ~~Flee~~ Flee the wrath of God that is coming....Flee the consequences of sin....

And he describes these consequences....furnace of fire...weeping and gnashing of teeth.....separated from God forever.....*in a place called Hell*

And as we conclude these parables I see two important things.  
One, if you are a professor and not a possessor, these parables are very important to you. They are the parables of the kingdom in this presentation. And you may look like a ~~wise~~ *what!* You may look like you belong. You may say the right thing, do the right thing. You may even give intellectual consent ~~to~~ to the things of the Gospel. But if you have never come to know Christ, may I urge you that faith, alone, in Christ ...trusting Christ for salvation, that faith in what Jesus died for you on the cross will save you. And I urge you to receive him today....Right now....

And then for the believer..that child of the kingdom, that one who has really been born into the kingdom by faith, recognize what Jesus said in Vs 52 (Read)....We have a responsibility to share that which Jesus has now taught us. As we understand the consequences of rejecting the Gospel, may we understand our responsibility to share the WORD OF THE KINGDOM....

Let us close in prayer