

**Story Time - Read the story to the children**  
**Lesson 194: PARABLE OF WHEAT & TARES**  
**MATTHEW 13:24-30, 36-43**

Then Jesus used another story to teach them. Jesus said, "God's kingdom is like a man who planted good seed in his field. That night, while everyone was asleep, the man's enemy came and planted tares (tares are weeds) among the wheat and then left. Later, the wheat grew, and heads of grain grew on the plants. But at the same time the weeds also grew. Then the man's servants came to him and said, 'You planted good seed in your field. Where did the weeds come from?' "The man answered, 'An enemy planted weeds.' "The servants asked, 'Do you want us to go and pull up the weeds?' "He answered, 'No, because when you pull up the weeds, you might also pull up some of the wheat. Let the weeds and the wheat grow together until the harvest time. At the harvest time I will tell the workers this: First, gather the weeds and tie them together to be burned. Then gather the wheat and bring it to my barn.'"

Then Jesus left the people and went into the house. His followers came to Him and said, "Explain to us the meaning of the story about the weeds in the field." He answered, "The man who planted the good seed in the field is the Son of Man. The field is the world. The good seed are the people in God's kingdom. The weeds are the people who belong to the Evil One. And the enemy who planted the bad seed is the devil. The harvest is the end of time. And the workers who gather are God's angels. "The weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire. It will be the same at the end of time. The Son of Man will send His angels, and they will find the people who cause sin and all those who do evil. The angels will take those people out of His kingdom. They will throw them into the place of fire. There the people will be crying and grinding their teeth with pain. Then the righteous people will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. You people who hear me, listen!

# 194. PARABLE OF WHEAT & TARES

MATTHEW 13:24-30, 36-43



"Jesus told His disciples a parable about wheat and tares."

Matthew 13:24 – 30, 36 – 43

# 194. PARABLE OF WHEAT & TARES

MATTHEW 13:24-30, 36-43

## MEMORY VERSE:

*"Then the righteous will shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father...."*

MATTHEW 13:43

## Review Questions

### True or False

#### Jesus told the parable of the wheat & the tares, or weeds:

1. "...The kingdom of heaven is like a man who planted good seed in his field."
2. "...but while men slept, his enemy came and planted more good seed with his wheat and then left."
3. "But when the seeds had sprouted and produced a crop, only the wheat appeared."
4. "...The servants said to him, 'Do you want us to go and pull up the weeds?'"
5. "But he said, 'No, because when you pull up the weeds, you might also pull up some of the wheat.'"

### Questions

1. What did the man say to do with the weeds and the wheat until the harvest time?
2. What will the man tell the workers to do when it is harvest time with the weeds?
3. What will the man tell the workers to do when it is harvest time with the wheat?
4. In Jesus' story, who is the man that is the planter?
5. What did Jesus say the seeds were?
6. What did Jesus say the weeds were?
7. Who was the enemy that planted the bad seed with the wheat?

## Lesson 194 Visualization/Activity

### Wheat or Tares?

#### Supplies needed:

Bowl full of dirt

Enough toothpicks to double the number of children in class

Black magic marker

Read this to the children:

#### MATTHEW 13:38b

"...but the tares, or weeds, are the sons of the wicked one."

The tares are people who do not know the Lord. Tares are weeds that grow alongside the good crops in a field. Those who are tares follow the ways of the world, because they are not born again.

They may look just like a believer and even be planted in the same field, but without Jesus planting that good seed in their hearts, they are just tares or weeds in the Lord's field. **Not everyone who says he is a Christian really is a Christian.**

How many of you have ever seen a weed? Maybe you have helped your mom or dad pull them out of your family's flowerbeds? What is so bad about weeds? After all, they look like normal plants. But weeds are not wanted in a garden because they do not produce anything good. All they do is take water and nutrients away from the good flowers and plants. They do not produce good fruit. In fact, weeds can even cause harm to the good plants that you are trying to grow. So, we pull them up. But in this story we are told not to pull up the weeds.

Why were the servants told to leave the weeds in the field? It is because they might accidentally pull up the wheat along with the weed. Sometimes the weeds are so close to the wheat that we cannot tell the difference between the two. Many times people come to church, and they look like Christians. They participate in Christian activities. They even say that they are Christians, but they are not. Why? It is because they have never asked Jesus to plant the seed of life in their hearts. **Not everyone who says he is a Christian really is a Christian.**

These people are like weeds that grow next to the wheat. We are supposed to let God take care of the weeds that grow in the church.

Only God can look into the heart and know for sure if someone is a tare or wheat.

*(See next page for activity)*

## LESSON 194 Visualization/Activity

### ACTIVITY:

Take a bowl full of dirt and enough toothpicks to at least double the number of children in the class. Color half of the toothpicks with black marker half-way down. Leave the others clean. Stick the clean toothpicks randomly into the dirt, and keep the black-ended ones in your hand out of sight of the children.

Have the class close their eyes (tell them NO peeking!) and read to them:

### MATTHEW 13:25

"...but while men slept, his enemy came and planted weeds among the wheat and then left."

(While you are reading this verse, place the blackened parts of the colored toothpicks randomly into the dirt.)

Have the class open their eyes now and read:

### MATTHEW 13:39a

"The enemy who planted them is the devil ..."

Tell the class that while they were sleeping the enemy came in and planted weeds among the wheat. Give the children an opportunity to "weed" the toothpicks. Let each child pull up only one 'weed'. As they pull out the "weeds" make note of how much wheat they are pulling up as well. Explain to them why we are not good at being weed pullers for Jesus. Only God can see into peoples' hearts. We are to love one another and share that love with everyone, even those we suspect of being "weeds".

### MATTHEW 13:39b

"...the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels."

One day God will make sure that we are separated from the weeds. When He returns, He will work everything out. Now we live in a world with a lot of evil people. One day, God will send the angels to pull up all the weeds and throw them into the fire. Weeds cannot get into heaven.

How do we know if we are good seed? If we have accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, He has made us good seed. Have you ever done that? (Let the children each answer as they want to.) One day all of the true Christians will be taken to heaven to live with God. Our prayer is that there is a great multitude of wheat in heaven, including everyone here today. Pray that God will help us tell our families and friends about Jesus who plants the good seed of life into our hearts!

### PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of boldness to share the love of Jesus with everyone in their lives. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.