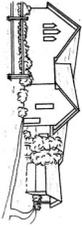


**NORTHWOODS
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**



**4723 GRIFFITH AVENUE
CHEYENNE, WY 82009**

WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH. JOHN 4:24

**But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed
tares among the wheat and went his way.
Mat 13:25**

THE NORTHWOODS NEWS

Tares Among the Wheat

By

Rich Cesal

The parable of the tares and wheat is generally thought to be about end times because of the reference to the harvest. However, that application is about the future, but there is another application that speaks to the present. The planting field could be the church, the wheat are the church members, the tares could be the sin that the devil has sown in amongst the church members, the end result is a tearing down of the biblical church.

Jesus said, “So the servants of the owner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ ” (Mat 13:27).

The history of the church is one of tares continually invading the truth as taught. In the modern church, the tares are those people who insist on changing what the church believes. A very good point to illustrate this fact is the desire to allow women into the ministry. The biblical teaching on this issue is not of the kind that says *thou shalt not* but is none-the-less quite pervasive to suggest that women should not be allowed in the pulpits.

But you have all kinds of people who are taken in by the feminist movement that says there is no difference between a man and a woman. They see no problem with abortion, homosexuality, and women in the ministry. How any person, especially one who professes to believe in

God, can condone the killing of a baby in the womb and by its own mother is beyond any biblical understanding. And is it not the Bible which should govern our moral positions? It's ironic that those who are very vocal about protecting life at all costs can make the exception in the case of a women desiring to eliminate a pregnancy by killing her child. Surely they must know that is murder.

Our Lord using the tares example is giving to us a severe lesson in people and their actions. Of course the immediate application of the tares among the wheat is the weeds in a wheat field. During WWII, the government urged people to plant victory gardens in order to allow the farm produce to go to feeding the troops. So many folks who otherwise would not know a thing about tares discovered the meaning in their victory gardens.

Every year in the open pasture land around our house you can see patches of weeds. Those patches grow larger with every passing year because those tares produce many more seeds than the original plant and thus next year there will be many more of them. The wind scatters the seeds beyond the immediate area of the plant. If a farmer does not do something about the tares among the wheat, they will over a period of time overtake his fields. And if we do nothing about the sin in our lives, sin will overtake our lives.

Jesus in the parable of the tares gives this advice on how to deal with this recurring problem, Mat 13:30, "Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I [the owner of the field] will say to the reapers, 'First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.' " This will destroy much of the tare seed so that they will not grow next season.

In the church, we need to be diligent in ridding the congregation of tares among us. People who hold views contrary to Bible teaching need to be dealt with. If not, just as in the wheat fields and the vegetable gardens, the tares will take over.

One only has to look at the history of Presbyterianism in the United States to see the dangers. What now goes by the name of The Presbyterian Church in the USA (PCUSA) demonstrates what happens to a strong denomination when the tares are allowed to take over. This, once supreme representative of Presbyterianism in America, is now nothing more than a country club and has disqualified itself as a church of the living God. Highlands Presbyterian Church is an excellent example of this situation. The pastor of that church in the newspaper not too long ago said among other statements on the Bible that the book of Genesis is a myth. He positively does not believe that the Bible is God's Word.

Jesus in a parable preceding the parable of the tares says, "For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and

turn, so that I should heal them." (Mat 13:15 which is a quote from Is 6:9-10). This is addressing those among us (the tares) who cannot see and hear the truth. Those who march by a different drummer have to be purged from our churches.

The true meaning of this parable has proven to be controversial. There are those who insist, in opposition to Calvin, that this is an allegory depicting the last days. Others say as Calvin said this is depicting tares in the church. I think it could also be an illustration of the sin in our lives. Each of these applications is noteworthy. Although the prophecy of the end times is fitting, the tares in the church is much more meaningful today. It is real now and not held to the future.

How do we identify the tares among us? People who speak out against the truth given in the Word need to be removed if they do not reconsider. It is like the story of the frog in a pot of cold water on a stove. He does not realize what is happening to him as the water heats up and gets to boiling. It can be very subtle. But as the Bible says in many places we must be good watchmen. And the warning is clear. Mat 13:35, "But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way." We cannot be caught sleeping.

There are those who profess a belief in God but their lives do not show that belief. The evangelical church today has capitulated to false ideas of Christianity. The reality is that church service on Sunday morning is to worship our holy God. It is not for entertainment. What takes place during the Sunday morning service is to be a reverent ceremony which should demand a posture of on your knees before an awesome and holy God. Repenting of sin and asking forgiveness. Unfortunately, the church leadership cannot know the hearts of everyone in the congregation. There no doubt will be some unregenerate people who are not truly there seeking God's forgiveness.

In the paper several months ago and this happens often, at the end of an obituary, it can be found to say "may Jesus greet [the deceased] with open arms with all the blessings he/she deserves." This is the only mention of any spirituality and there is no church membership on behalf of the deceased. It seems that people expect a person to go to be with Christ at death by osmosis or wishful thinking. To be a Christian of course requires a certain set of beliefs given to us in the Scriptures. This is known as faith. Without such beliefs, the person is subject to the condemnation of the words Jesus said in Mat 7:14, "Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it." Followed by "You will know them by their fruits" in verse 16.

Many people feel that they believe in God but do not do anything to advance their knowing Christ. It takes some work and due diligence. It takes regular Bible study and meditation to fully appreciate what the Bible teaches.

Then, to put the nail in the coffin so to speak, He says in Mat 7:21-23,

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' "

So, those who do good deeds, even deeds of great spirituality, will not necessarily be with Jesus. The Bible makes it quite clear that deeds will not get you through the narrow gate. The only criteria to be heaven bound is by faith alone, by grace alone, and by Christ alone. And this faith comes by hearing (Rom:10:17). If a person is unchurched, they do not hear nor apply the Word of God.

It is so sad to see people express non-qualifying deeds for entry into heaven. Deeds which prompt statements like at someone's death "he/she should get all the blessings that he/she deserves" when the Bible is so clear about the entry qualifications. And of course we do not really want to get what we deserve because we are all sinners and are condemned to God's justice and deserve hell. It is not what you do, but what is in your heart. Those things which will spill out beyond yourself which Jesus calls your fruits.

We see the fruit of the common actions of people in the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. The people were overjoyed that Jesus had come. They stepped all over themselves to honor Jesus. By this time Jesus' fame in being the great healer was well known. Many of those who flocked to receive Jesus into Jerusalem were there with the hope that they would be cured or at least they might witness a healing. Of course less than a week later they were shouting to crucify him. Not much good fruit there.

This is the kind of motivation that prompts many people to go to church. It is not so different than those who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem. They are looking to acquiring something for themselves and not looking forward to worship. These people do not come to learn or serve but to get.

How do you acquire the good fruits of Christian living? By reading and knowing the Bible. Today, the common reference to the Bible is it is a good book but full of fairy tales and stories which probably never happened. The other day I heard someone refer to Eve in a way which demonstrated a belief that Eve was not a real person and did not come from Adam's rib. This same person when asked about God would no doubt express a belief in God. But it takes much more than that to exhibit the true faith that is needed.

People live their lives totally apart from God's requirements and expect to get what goodness they deserve. But of course "what they deserve" is hell not heaven because any sin gets you into hell without the

covering of Jesus' sacrifice of the cross. Faith in the finished work of Christ is the ticket.

Jesus said it is only those "who do the will of My Father" will get to heaven. So, how do you know the will of the Father so that you can qualify? Read and meditate on the Bible. Believe the Bible to be the actual word of God. Jesus also said, John 8:32-33, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

How people think that somehow they will qualify by simply being and not knowing so that the truth can set them free is a mystery. The formula is simple. Go to church regularly. Hopefully the pastor will preach the Word. Meditate on study aids to learn what the Bible says. Through much effort and study, you will find the truth that will set you free.

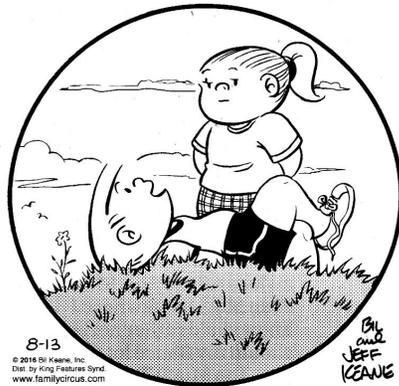
When I first found my heart in true worship of our Father, one thing I embarked on was to daily meditate on the Scriptures. The pastor who God used to bring conversion to me insisted that a Christian should daily meditate in prayer and reading the Word. I started this practice by using a publication known as the Upper Room. This was a daily offering of someone's personal experience of God's will in their life. Since coming to Cheyenne, I changed to the booklet we offer on the Worship Folder table in the narthex. It is called Today and is published by the Christian Reformed Church. I have found this booklet to be very helpful in reading some verses of Scripture and a short meditation offering every day.

Another excellent publication is Tabletalk Magazine published by R. C. Sproul and Ligonier Ministries. Every month there are a few issues available on the table in the narthex.

Find a quiet spot somewhere where you will not be disturbed and truly meditate on the Scripture you have just read. Offer your meditation as prayer as you talk to God.

Quiet time can be any time of the day when you can escape from all distractions. Some prefer morning as I do. Before anyone else is awake I meet with the Lord daily. Some prefer before going to bed. Whenever, just do it. You'll be glad you did. Ω

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



8-13
© 2018 Bill Keane, Inc.
Dist. by King Features Synd.
www.familycircus.com

"How do you know I'm just lying here doin' nothing? Maybe I'm meditating."

Come, ye thankful people, come, raise the song of harvest home;

All is safely gathered in, ere the winter storms begin.

God our Maker doth provide for our wants to be supplied;

Come to God's own temple, come, raise the song of harvest home.

All the world is God's own field, fruit unto His praise to yield;

Wheat and tares together sown unto joy or sorrow grown.

First the blade and then the ear, then the full corn shall appear;

Lord of harvest, grant that we wholesome grain and pure may be.

For the Lord our God shall come, and shall take His harvest home;

From His field shall in that day all offenses purge away,

Giving angels charge at last in the fire the tares to cast;

But the fruitful ears to store in His garner evermore.

Even so, Lord, quickly come, bring Thy final harvest home;

Gather Thou Thy people in, free from sorrow, free from sin,

There, forever purified, in Thy garner to abide;

Come, with all Thine angels come, raise the glorious harvest home.

Henry Alford

Alford, Henry, D.D., son of the Rev. Henry Alford, Rector of Aston Sandford, b. at 25 Alfred Place, Bedford Row, London, Oct. 7, 1810, and educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, graduating in honours, in 1832. In 1833 he was ordained to the Curacy of Ampton. Subsequently he held the Vicarage of Wymeswold, 1835-1853,--the Incumbency of Quebec Chapel, London, 1853-1857; and the Deanery of Canterbury, 1857 to his death, which took place at Canterbury, Jan. 12, 1871. In addition he held several important appointments, including that of a Fellow of Trinity, and the Hulsean Lectureship, 1841-2. His literary labours extended to every department of literature, but his noblest undertaking was his edition of the Greek Testament, the result of 20 years' labour. His hymnological and poetical works, given below, were numerous, and included the compiling of collections, the composition of original hymns, and translations from other languages. As a hymn-writer he added little to his literary reputation. The rhythm of his hymns is musical, but the poetry is neither striking, nor the thought original. They are evangelical in their teaching, but somewhat cold and conventional. They vary greatly in merit, the most popular being "Come, ye thankful people, come," "In token that thou shalt not fear," and "Forward be our watchword." His collections, the *Psalms and Hymns of 1844*, and the *Year of Praise, 1867*, have not achieved a marked success.

Session Report

October 2016 Session Report

We had a fantastic conference in September. We had record attendance this year as well. Dr. Carl Trueman was an excellent speaker. His teaching was very challenging. Thank you to all of you that helped with the conference. All of your efforts were greatly appreciated.

Important Things



Daylight Saving Time ends Sunday Nov 6th at 2:00AM. Turn your clocks back one hour or if you don't and you are not accustomed to attending Sunday School, you will miss this Sunday.

Men's Breakfast— At the church, Saturday Morning, October 15, 8:00 AM. Brian Church is teaching from the book *God's Promises* by R. C. Sproul. This is a very interesting study. We always have a hearty hot breakfast and a great fellowship time. See you there.

Men's Bible Study— October 10 & 24, 7:00 PM. Meet at the Norgauer home. We are studying in-depth the book of Ephesians.

Women's Bible Study— The women will continue their monthly Bible Study on October 11th and October 25th at 7:00 PM. The study book is *1st, 2nd, and 3rd John*. The women are continually finding these lessons to be very helpful and interesting.



Nursery Schedule for October

- 2nd - KENDRA TUNNICLIFF
- 9th - LAURA TWITCHELL
- 16th - KAIRA TUNNICLIFF
- 23rd - YVONNE NEWSOM
- 30th - KELLEIGH ANDERSON

Please trade with someone if you are unable to do nursery duty on the assigned day.

Birthdays this month

Laura Twitchel	6th	Amiee Davison	23rd
Abigail Sackett	15th	Janet Anderson	27th
Hunter Anderson	16th	Ken Tunnicliff	29th
Megan Church	18th	Marilyn Reuer	30th
Kelsie Nelson	22nd		

Anniversaries this month

Willis & Mildred Christie 30th

Tares

By
Ed Tarkowski

A friend recently wrote to me about how prolific her garden was, but that the weeds were prospering as well. She said that because of the rains, the weeds would be easy to pull up. I thought how when we allow the rain of God's word into our life, the lies, untruths and deceptions are also easy to weed out. But if the word is not given its place of priority, then when those evils take root and the ground hardens, how hard it is to pull up the weeds! Have you ever tried to pull a weed out of a dry, caked, hardened piece of ground? What usually happens is you pull off the green foliage above the soil, but the root remains, only to quickly grow up again. Notice the word "quickly." Weeds don't grow slowly. But the trick in pulling them up successfully is to soak the ground with water, soften the soil and then weed-pulling becomes a pleasure again. I remember when I was a boy and I had to weed my Dad's garden. The tops of the weeds would come off and I would say to myself, "Oh, well, at least it LOOKS LIKE I got that weed out. Dad won't know," and I would leave it, being satisfied with that. In the spiritual realm, apathy towards the weeds in our life is just as deadly to us as the real weeds are to the future fruit of a vegetable garden. Water, or the word of God, plays a crucial part in both the natural realm and the spiritual in staying weed-free.

Jesus told the parable of the tares and the wheat in Matthew 13:24-30. The tares are a weed plant, but Jesus didn't say to pull up the tares. He said to let the wheat and the tares grow up together and the angels would deal with the tares at the end of the age. I sure would have liked to apply that to my Dad's idea of weeding. The difference between the garden I weeded and the wheat field Jesus spoke of is this: my garden was vegetables, planted and grown in rows with dirt paths between. The weeds were easy to get to and pulling them without harming the good plants was easy enough. Wheat is grown in fields, each sheaf next to another with no paths, creating a carpet effect when looked at from a distance. Pulling up the tares in this situation would endanger the wheat stocks as well. You just don't weed wheat.

Jesus said,

Mat 13:24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

Verse 25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

Verse 26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

Verse 27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

Verse 28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

Verse 29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

Verse 30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

Holman's Bible Dictionary defines TARES as follows:

"TARES KJV term for grassy weeds resembling wheat, generally identified as darnel (genus *Lolium*)"

It is pretty much accepted today that the tares Jesus spoke of are darnel of the genus *Lolium*. Secular dictionaries also define the tare as most likely being darnel:

"Darnel is a weed grass (probably bearded darnel or *Lolium temulentum*) that looks very much like wheat until it is mature, when the seeds reveal a great difference. Darnel seeds aren't good for much except as chicken feed or to burn to prevent the spread of this weed" (World English Dictionary).

Easton's Bible Dictionary describes "tares" as follows:

"the bearded darnel, mentioned only in Matt. 13:25-30. It is the *Lolium temulentum*, a species of rye-grass, the seeds of which are a strong soporific poison. It bears the closest resemblance to wheat till the ear appears, and only then the difference is discovered. It grows plentifully in Syria and Palestine."

There is a time to distinguish between darnel and wheat. The fruit of the darnel is smaller than the fruit produced by true wheat. They say the difference is very distinguishable and obvious, and the difference in the sizes of the seeds makes separating them an easy task. There are those who have convulsed, been made drunk, trembled uncontrollably, stammered in their speech, were stupified, turned giddy, etc., who have tried to tell us that that was wheat. There are also those who have not fallen into such things, but have brought confusion into the Church with darnel such as the non-trinitarian doctrine, a watered-down gospel, and agendas that lead the Church off into corporate efforts God never sanctioned. Are these things wheat or darnel? Some are obviously darnel, while with others, it takes time to make the distinction. This I know for sure: the One who planted the good seed which bears fruit will come back to harvest His wheat, and not one grain of darnel will be found in the barn. Ω

Are There Degrees of Sin?

By R.C. Sproul

Historically speaking, both Roman Catholicism and Protestantism have understood that there are degrees of sin. The Roman Catholic church makes a distinction between mortal and venial sin. The point of that distinction is that there are some sins so gross, heinous, and serious that the actual commission of those sins is mortal in the sense that it kills the grace of justification that resides in the soul of the believer. In their theology, not every sin is devastating to that degree. There are some real sins that are venial sins. These are less serious sins in terms of their consequences, but they don't have the justification-killing capacity that mortal sins have.

Many Evangelical Protestants have rejected the idea of degrees of sin because they know that the Protestant Reformation rejected the Roman Catholic distinction between mortal and venial sins. As a result, they've jumped to the conclusion that there are no distinctions between sins in Protestantism.

We should return to the views of the Reformers themselves. John Calvin was an outspoken critic of the Roman Catholic Church and their distinction between mortal and venial sin. Calvin said that all sin is mortal in the sense that it deserves death. The book of James reminds us, "For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it" (James 2:10). Even the slightest sin is an act of cosmic treason. We fail to feel the gravity of our actions to this degree, but it is true.

When I sin, I choose my will over the will of God Almighty. By implication I'm essentially saying that I'm more intelligent, wise, righteous, and powerful than God

Himself. Calvin said that all sin is mortal in the sense that God could justifiably destroy each of us for the smallest sin we've committed. In fact, the penalty for sin was given the first day of human creation: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Gen. 2:17). Yet God doesn't deal with us always according to justice. He deals with us according to grace. He allows us to live, and He moves to bring about our redemption. Calvin said that all sins are mortal in that we deserve death from them but that no sin is mortal in the sense that it can destroy our saving grace. We have to repent, yes, but the justifying grace that the Holy Spirit brings to us is not killed by our sin. Calvin and every one of the Reformers strenuously maintained that there is a difference between lesser sins and what they called gross and heinous sins.

This distinction is important for Christians to understand so that we can learn to live charitably with each other. The sin of pettiness, by which people begin to dwell on minor transgressions in the community, can tear the body of Christ apart. Great damage comes when it is fueled by the fire of gossip and slander. We are called to patience and tolerance towards the struggling failures of other Christians. It's not that we're called to be lax on sin, for there are certain sins listed in the New Testament that are serious and ought not be allowed in the church. Adultery is serious. Incest calls for ecclesiastical discipline. Drunkenness, murder, and fornication are repeatedly mentioned. These sins are so destructive that they call forth church discipline when they are manifested.

It's clear that we have different degrees of sin when we consider the warnings of Scripture. There are at least twenty-two references in the New Testament to degrees of rewards that are given to the saints in heaven. There are different levels, different rewards, and different roles in heaven. The Bible warns us against

adding to the severity of our judgment. Jesus said to Pontius Pilate, "He who delivered me over to you has the greater sin" (John 19:11). Jesus measures and evaluates guilt, and with the greater guilt and greater responsibility comes the greater judgment. It's a motif that permeates the New Testament.

The idea of gradation of sin and reward is based upon God's justice. If I commit twice as many sins as another person, justice demands that the punishment fits the crime. If I've been twice as virtuous as another person, justice demands that I get more of a reward. God tells us that entrance into heaven will be only on the basis of the merit of Christ, but once we get to heaven, rewards will be dispensed according to works. Those who have been abundant in good works will receive an abundant reward. Those who have been derelict and negligent in good works will have a small reward in heaven. By the same token, those who have been grievous enemies of God will have severe torments in hell. Those who have been less hostile will have a lesser punishment at the hands of God. He is perfectly just, and when He judges, He will take into account all of the extenuating circumstances. Jesus said, "I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak" (Matt. 12:36).

Why is it important for us to emphasize this point? Many times I've talked to men who struggle with lust and they say to themselves or to me, "I might as well go ahead and commit adultery because I'm already guilty of lust. I can't be in any worse shape in the sight of God, so I might as well finish the deed." I always answer, "Oh yes, you can be in much worse shape." The judgment of actual adultery will be much more severe than the judgment upon lust. God will deal with us at that level, and it's a foolish thing for a person who has committed a misdemeanor, to therefore say, "I'm already guilty; I might as well make it a felony." God forbid that we should think like that. If we do, we face the righteous judgment of God. We must keep this in mind as we seek to build a Christian conscience and a Christian character. Ω

Have a need? Contact one of the officers.

Office Telephone	307-637-4817
Web Site	northwoodspca.org
Email	church@northwoodspca.org
Milan Norgauer, <i>Pastor</i>	635-1865 mnorgauer@gmail.com
Tim Anderson, <i>Elder</i>	274-8951 tim@northwoodspca.org
Brian Church, <i>Elder</i>	221-9966 b.church@outlook.com
Alex Davison, <i>Elder</i>	245-9348 alex@pattondavison.com
Alex Ramig, <i>Elder</i>	638-8927 Alex4tek@aol.com
Rich Cesal, <i>Deacon/Treasurer</i>	637-6195 cheyoming6195@gmail.com
Dale Vosler, <i>Deacon</i>	632-0133 tuliphill2@gmail.com

If you have a request for the prayer chain contact Branda Church 221-9206 and if not available, Kelleigh Anderson 635-2578 or send an email to churchfamily@outlook.com.

*Finally, brethren, whatever things are true,
whatever things are noble, whatever things are
just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are
lovely, whatever things are of good report, if
there is any virtue and if there is anything
praiseworthy—meditate on these things. - Paul*

Hallelujah, Amen