

The Field and The Fishing Net – Matthew 13:24 – 30; 36 – 43

“When I die I’m going to come back as a bird and fly across the earth.”

“Well I’ll be like a ghost and travel through the spiritual dimensions of the universe.”

“Not me. When I’m dead, I’ll just be dead, and that will be the end of me.”

Have you ever heard people talk this way about life after death?

Because people in our post-modern society live with so much spiritual and moral relativism in the present, they also tend to assume that their eternal destiny will be their own personal choice. But in these two parables Jesus warns us against this kind of foolish and futile thinking. The spiritually and morally mixed-up nature of our world doesn’t change the fact that God’s kingdom has already been established on earth. God’s son Jesus has come into our world, died for our sins, and has risen from the dead. Now, through the power of his gospel, Jesus is calling the people of this world into his perfect and eternal kingdom. But just like the land owner who separated the noxious weeds from his valuable wheat or like the fishermen who removed the inedible fish from the good ones, so Jesus will soon return to judge the earth. Jesus has said, *The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.* (Matthew 13:41 – 43 TNIV)

So what is it that Jesus wants us to hear and understand from these parables?

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1. What connections can you find between the parable of the weeds (13:24 – 30) and the parable of the sower that precedes it (13:1 – 9)?
 2. Read Jesus’ explanation of the parable of the weeds in 13:36 – 43. In this story, what do the following symbols represent?
 - The sower of good seed =
 - The field =
 - The good seeds =
 - The weeds =
 - The enemy =
 - The harvest time =
 - The harvesters =
 3. Why does the man in this parable allow the wheat and weeds to grow together, and what does this story tell us about the nature of God’s kingdom?
 4. Read the parable of the net in Matthew 13:47 – 50. How is the sorting of the good and bad fish like the final judgement day?
 5. Jesus told these parables to explain what the kingdom of heaven is like. What aspects of God’s kingdom have become clearer to you through these stories?
 6. What lessons, warnings and encouragements have you heard through these parables?