

Parables of Value

In verses 44-46 Jesus gives us two other pictures of what the Kingdom of Heaven is like. What are they, and what do they tell us about the nature of the Kingdom?

How do these parables challenge us to live? What is the principle of investment in the Kingdom of Heaven illustrated here? (See also Phil. 3:7-8.)

Personal Application

The parable of the sower encouraged us to “look within,” as to our own soil, while the parable of the wheat and tares asks us to “look without,” as to the fields in which we are planted. How are we to live in the midst of “tares”? What is Jesus cautioning us about?

In verse 51 Jesus asks the disciples if they have understood the parables. Why does he do this? What is he asking of each of us? How ought we share these “treasures”?

What Is the Kingdom of Heaven Like?



Parable of the Sower of the Tares, Domenico Fetti, 1620-21

Read Matthew 13:24-51 (See also: Mark:4:30-32 (mustard seed); Luke 13:18-19 (mustard seed); Luke 13:20-21 (yeast))

Study Questions:

Place this set of parables in context. Where is Jesus teaching? Who is his audience? Does the scene change in the course of the passage?

The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares (vv. 24-30, 36-42)

What are the elements of this parable, and what does each signify? What do you think the parable means?

Who are the servants in this parable? Why doesn't the master want them to pull the weeds?

What does the parable show us about the relationship between the Kingdom of Heaven and the world in this present age? What does it suggest about the church?

What is the nature of the evil that is in the world? What comfort can we derive from being shown the end of the age? (See Gen. 3:14-15.)

The parable of the net (vv. 47-50) teaches us a similar truth about the Kingdom. Identify the elements of this parable.

In what way is the message the same? In what way does it shed new light on the principle being taught in the parable of the tares?

Parables of Growth

Verses 31-33 state that the Kingdom of Heaven is like two things. What are they, and what mystery of the Kingdom do they teach?

Why do you think that these parables are placed *before* Jesus tells us the meaning of the parable of the wheat and the tares? Do you think that these parables may have a negative purpose?