**Principles For Harvest**

**Matthew 13:24-30 KJV** Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: **[25]** But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. **[26]** But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. **[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? **[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? **[29]** But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. **[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.

1. **INTRODUCTION—THE “LIKE/AS” PRINCIPLE**

-There are some very strong principles for living in this particular parable. While I have at times in the past made illusions to this parable, I have never specifically preached from this text.

-When Jesus starts to explain things in His parables, He will resort to what some biblical scholars have come to call the “Like/As Principle.” For instance:

* **This generation is like**. . . children sitting in the marketplace—Matthew 11:16
* **The Kingdom of Heaven is like**. . . a grain of mustard seed about to be planted—Matthew 13:31
* **The Kingdom of Heaven is like**. . . unto leaven—Matthew 13:33; Luke 13:21
* **The Kingdom of Heaven is like**. . . a treasure hid in a field—Matthew 13:44
* **The Kingdom of Heaven is like**. . . unto a merchant man seeking goodly pearls—Matthew 13:45
* **The Kingdom of Heaven is like**. . . a net—Matthew 13:47
* **The Kingdom of Heaven is like**. . . a man who has been instructed and then brings out treasures, both old and new—Matthew 13:52
* **The Kingdom of Heaven is like**. . . a man who is going out to hire men to work in his vineyard—Matthew 20:1
* **The Kingdom of Heaven is like**. . . a king who invited wedding guests to his son’s wedding—Matthew 22:2
* **The wise man is like**. . . one who dug deep and put his foundation on the rock—Luke 6:48
* **The foolish hearer who only hears and does not do is like**. . . a man who builds his house on the sand and the storm will blow it away—Luke 6:49
* **The Kingdom of God is like**. . . a mustard see that grew into a large tree with various types of birds lodging in the branches—Luke 13:19
* **Hypocrites are like**. . . painted graves that are beautiful on the outside but full of bones inside—Matthew 23:27

-In the Old Testament, there are some powerful illustrations of who God is when you look into this principle:

* **The glory of the Lord was like**. . . a devouring fire—Exodus 24:17
* **God is like**. . . a mighty man that shouts—Psalm 78:65
* **God is like**. . . a shepherd—Isaiah 40:11
* **God is like**. . . a mighty man, a man of war—Isaiah 42:13
* **The Lord will come in chariots like**. . . a whirlwind—Isaiah 66:15
* **God’s word is like**. . . fire and a hammer—Jeremiah 23:29
* **God is like**. . . a bear and a lion—Hosea 13:8

-These are just a few of the examples of this principle. This parable is a good illustration of Jesus saying what the Kingdom of Heaven is going to be like.

-One of the most important Kingdom principles that you will ever understand are the laws of the harvest. That is, you will get what you plant. If you plant okra, you will not have a harvest of vine-ripe tomatoes.

* If you want to change what you are reaping, then you need to change what you are planting.
* You can change what you are reaping by changing what you are planting.

-There is not a person in this house who is not a farmer. Yet far too often we have a tendency to blame our difficulties and problems on the devil. When the reality is that we are responsible for a lot of the calamities of our life.

* Financial problems are related to undisciplined spending.
* Rocky marriages are related to husbands and wives not honoring each other.
* Poor relationships are directly related to unbridled tongues.

-Yet we continue to keep planting the bad seeds and expecting a good harvest. That kind of thing just won’t take place.

-A concert pianist gains an audience because of the disciplined practice that has set them a cut above. A concert violinist can play to a sold out coliseum where tickets for seats are sold for $1200-1500.

-If you are going to be a good preacher, you are going to have to study! Some preachers believe that if they get “anointed” enough they can preach. As one preacher said, “You can grease yourself down with olive oil and be as greasy as a KFC chicken leg, but if you don’t study, you will not be a great preacher!”

-There has to be a discipline of time that is spent with that particular gift. Don’t worry about someone taking your gift because until they do what you have done, there is no way that they can get it.

-Here is the way that God works. When you ask for something, sometimes His answer doesn’t even faintly resemble what you asked for. You may ask Him for an oak tree, be prepared to get an acorn! The oak tree is confined to the seed but until it is planted, it will never become a tree.

* Some desire to be prayer warriors but don’t want the circumstances that will put them on their knees.
* Some desire to be greatly used of God but don’t want the trouble and conflict that it takes to get there.
* Some desire to know much about Scripture but don’t want to entertain the hard questions that come with learning the Scripture.

-No one can bypass the laws of the harvest!

**Zechariah 4:10 KJV** For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel *with* those seven; they *are* the eyes of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth.

* Don’t be frustrated with the small beginnings of the seed.
* Don’t be frustrated with the pediatrics of prayer.
* Don’t be frustrated by the small amount of faith that you have.
* Don’t be frustrated by the small amount of wisdom and revelation that you have.

1. **PRINCIPLES OF HARVESTERS**
2. **There Will Be Tares In the Harvest.**

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

-When the blade sprung up and brought forth fruit. . . There appeared tares. In getting their harvest, the best of what the seed had to offer; the bad appeared there at the same time. There are times in life when you gain the harvest but amidst that great harvest, the dilemma of the unexpected sets in.

-It was something that you did not anticipate coming with the harvest. You have gained the harvest but you also have to contend with the conflict that comes with the wheat. There are night seasons that every saint of God will have to endure.

-The tares were planted by the enemy. Don’t think for a moment that the enemy is going to roll over and just let the harvest take place in your life. There can be an anxiety about the harvest when you begin to think about the mixed conditions of the crops.

-The enemy will work to assassinate, terrorize, destroy, and cripple the plan that God has for your life. *Charles Dickens said, “The best of times. . . the worst of times. . .”* It is one of the devil’s chief efforts. . . hindering the work of the harvest.

-You will never get a full harvest without some calamitous things taking place. Just when you are about to touch the harvest, expect the tares to come against you!

-Be careful that you recognize what is truly a spiritual battle and what is a bad choice. There are sometimes that we have problems because of our own planting. It is an expression of seed time and harvest. If you planted it, it is going to grow. What you have to embrace is the need for discipline and priorities.

-This is one of the things that sometimes entrap Pentecostals; we have a tendency to give the devil too much credit for our bad choices. Be careful that you don’t get deep when you need to get disciplined.

-However, the Scripture bears out the fact that the enemy slipped in and planted something that was opposite of our expected harvest.

-God sometimes allows us to get into trouble so we can see how strong that He is. All that we have to do is look to the Old Testament for this kind of thing.

-God could have gotten the children out of Egypt without any problem but the Bible tells us that He hardened Pharoah’s heart. God determined to set Pharoah’s teeth on edge and He did. Pharaoh got nasty, sarcastic, and deadly all because God let him play into His plan.

-The lesson that God wanted to hold forth was the thought that Israel really had not seen God in action for about 430 years, so He stirs up the hatred of Egypt’s king. He makes life miserable for Israel and they begin to cry out to the Lord.

* It put panic in their hearts.
* It put terror in their minds.
* It put fear in their faith.

-So when God turns into a Deliverer and pulls you out of a horrific situation, you can’t help but to give yourself to some exuberant worship and praise! God allowed an unexpected enemy to go to work in Egypt.

**Isaiah 54:17 KJV** No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue *that* shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness *is* of me, saith the LORD.

-The way that we want it is for the weapon to never be formed. . . but God determines to show us the weapon and then the deliverance!

-If you get scared enough, you will buckle with the fear. That is why the “water-boarding” technique was put under such scrutiny a few years ago. Some of the captured terrorists were subjected this form of interrogation and they sang out all sorts of secrets when they thought they were going to die.

-I did a little reading about it and discovered that it was a grueling process where men are put into conditions that they think they are going to drown. The toughest of them all lasted about 30 seconds before they begin to give up the secrets.

-Even some of our Special Forces soldiers were subjected to this type of training and they sang too! It is amazing what fear will do to your faith. It will paralyze it! However, when God decides to deliver, your praise will pour out!

-So don’t let the presence of tares—in your life and in the Church—cause you to want to throw in the towel and quit!

-Somewhere along the way, you will have to decide that God is God and you are going to serve Him! Don’t halt between two opinions. . . Choose you this day whom you will serve! Don’t ever let the presence of tares get you rattled. God let the enemy in simply to preserve your integrity.

-That is the story of Job! He refused to give in to the voices that were all calling for him to violate his integrity with God. Tares don’t mean failure. . . they simply are pointing to a harvest that is simultaneously taking place.

1. **Don’t Look for Quick Fixes.**

**Matthew 13:28-29 KJV** He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? **[29]** But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

-Remember that there will be *tares in the harvest.* The next principle for harvesters is *don’t look for quick fixes*.

-One of the things that we can do when we are in the panic mode is make irrational choices that 24 hours later, we are going to wish that we would not have made.

-They discover the presence of the tares and report to the man in charge. “Our enemy has planted this among us. What are we going to do? Do you want us to rip them up now?”

-Sometimes the best thing to do is just stand still.

**Psalms 46:10-11 KJV** Be still, and know that I *am* God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. **[11]** The LORD of hosts *is* with us; the God of Jacob *is* our refuge. Selah.

**Ephesians 6:13 KJV** Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

-Our emotions will do their best to control us but don’t give in to the panic to do something quick.

-Quick fixes will be destructive. Scripture gives us several valid examples of this kind of thing:

* Abraham and Hagar. Conflict with Ishmael.
* Jacob deceiving Isaac. Conflict with Esau.
* Naomi and her family fleeing in a famine.
* Moses tried to help God in his flesh and murdered a man and it put him on a 40 year detour.

-If you do what you are going to do what you want to do, you are going to destroy the harvest. This is God’s business, let Him deal with it! Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord!

-Sometimes you can do the right thing at the wrong time. You can be right and still be wrong. If you lose your sense of timing, it will come to nothing. Let God’s timing take care of it! It is not that God is not going to deal with it, but He will let those tares remain in your life until the timing is right.

-You may pray for God to deliver you but He wants to walk you through and teach you how to live with the troubling tares that you think are destroying the harvest. So God will tell you to leave it alone because it doesn’t matter.

-There will be times in your walk with God that you will have to deal with the inconveniences of life so that the harvest can come to pass in its fullest measure! It is for the glory of God! He can bless you in a hostile environment!

* Pharoah may hate you!
* The tares may be present around you!
* Pharisees wagging their heads and their tongues!
* Giants trying to kill you!
* Critics trying to derail you!

1. **The Season Belongs to God.**

**Matthew 13:30 KJV** 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.

-Remember that there will be *tares in the harvest* and *don’t look for quick fixes*. Lastly, know that the season belongs to God.

-The tares and the wheat were both dependent on the season. That means that neither of them controlled the season, God was in charge of the season. When the time is right, the tares are going to be gathered, bundled up, and burnt in the fire.

* Don’t let the tares choke you.
* Don’t let the tares destroy your faith.
* Don’t let the tares push you to bad choices.
* Don’t let the tares annihilate your courage.
* Don’t let the tares cast down your vision.
* Don’t let the tares squeeze the hope out of you.

-God can set things in such an order that He will put your enemies under your feet! Don’t be upset that they aren’t under your feet right now. . . Give it some time, the season is coming and God will settle it all out.

-You can know beyond the shadow of a doubt that when you begin to see God working the harvest, he is about to take the tares and haul them off to the fire.

* What was trying to attack you. . . about to be burned.
* What was trying to hinder you. . . about to be burned.
* What was trying to afflict you. . . about to be burned.
* What was trying to discourage you. . . about to be burned.

**Psalms 18:36-38 KJV** Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, that my feet did not slip. **[37]** I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were consumed. **[38]** I have wounded them that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet.

-Believe it. . . There is coming a time in your life when all of the attacks of the devil and the attacks of the tares are going to be put under your feet.

**Isaiah 54:17 KJV** No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue *that* shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This *is* the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness *is* of me, saith the LORD.

**John 8:44 KJV** . . . . He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. . .

1. **CONCLUSION—GOD IS IN CHARGE!**

-Give God every single detail of your life. You fears, worries, tribulations, and difficulties and in time, He will put them under your feet.