

Protests that turn violent, injuring officers and destroying property. Deadly confrontations over the wearing of face masks. Gay agenda constantly being thrown in our faces. Such are some of the stories which are making the news. At times it almost makes our heart sick. Is this really the way that we have to live in this world? We claim to be a Christian nation, so shouldn't we require our citizens to follow God's laws? If that is not possible, should we withdraw from the evils of society and live by ourselves? What would Jesus have us do as His children while we live here on earth? In the parable which is before us, Jesus gives us His answer. From this parable, we see that JESUS PLACES HIS CHILDREN IN THIS WORLD. 1) That means that we live alongside unbelievers, 2) at least until we are separated on the Last Day.

When Jesus tells a parable, it is based on an earthly story which is familiar to all. So here: **“The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field.”** (24) Even today farmers want to sow only good seed. That means that not only is the seed good in that it will sprout and grow and bring forth a yield, but it is also good seed in that it is cleaned, that is, the weed seeds are removed along with all of the broken seeds. It is this good seed that a farmer plants in his field. Well, Jesus would do no less in His kingdom. He does not use defective seed. In explaining this portion of the parable, Jesus said, **“The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom.”** (37f) In a different parable, the seed was the Word of God, but not in this one. In this parable, the seed are the ones upon whom the Word of God has already done its job. It has already created faith in the heart, which then makes them the seed which Jesus plants in the world. Notice that Jesus does not keep the seed to Himself, but allows it to be planted throughout the world. He knows that the Gospel message has done its work, and made good seed, so His sons are scattered throughout this world to grow and act as Jesus intends for us to do day by day. Jesus intended for His children to live in a perfect world which He created for them.

But that is not the end of the parable, for not only was there good seed, but also bad seed was sown. **“While everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away.”** (25) The enemy is identified as the devil, who wants to destroy anything that Jesus considers to be precious. So secretly, by night, he sows his seed, his followers, who will now live together with the believers. At first, they all look alike. There does not seem to be any way to tell the difference until they produce fruit and actions that identify them as sons of the devil, or unbelievers.

So this describes the situation in which we find ourselves in this world. Believers who want to follow the commands which are pleasing to our heavenly Father must live side by side with those who hate God and want to do things which will please the devil. Satan knew what he was doing in seeking to make life difficult for the sons of the kingdom of heaven. It is not easy to live your life of faith in this wicked world, for many people will resent us for wanting to put our faith into actions. Just look at the reactions of the people of this world when we tell them that abortion is wrong, that divorce is sinful, that homosexuality is condemned by God, that we are not to end a person's life who may happen to suffering. The sons of the devil mock and ridicule us as being insensitive, old fashioned, out of touch with reality, and forcing our own opinions on others. Such is our lot in this life because of the bad seed which has been sown and is present in the world in which we live.

But Jesus does not want us to eliminate others by means of the government. Listen again to the parable: **“The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’ ‘No,’ he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them.’** (29) If the children of God seek to eradicate unbelievers by force, then some of the believers are going to get rooted out as well. Jesus does not want this to happen, and He wants His sons in this world to have the opportunity to proclaim the gospel message to all, so He says that we are going to live side by side in this world. Note that this does not mean that we approve of the actions of the sinners, or that we are to allow them to lead us to sin. But we will live together in this life.

This can happen because Jesus does have a separation planned. **“Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned, then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.”** (30) We shall live side by side in this world, but that will not be forever. For when the end comes, Jesus will instruct His angels to separate the believers from the unbelievers. The unbelievers will be burned in fire forever in hell. They will no longer be able to affect the sons of the kingdom. They will be judged and sentenced to live forever with their master, the devil, in the punishment prepared for him. **“There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth”** in eternal torment.

But the sons of God will receive their reward, for they will be taken into the eternal mansions of heaven to live with Jesus forever. We shall receive the eternal reward promised us from the beginning. We can be absolutely sure of that. **“Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”** (43) That is our reward granted to us through faith in Jesus.

**“He who has ears, let him hear.”** This is what is going to happen. If you have ears, listen to this. Right now it may look like the wicked in this world are having the time of their lives, and that they are able to live with impunity. It may appear that they are having all of the fun, and we get no benefit as we believe in Jesus. Even if that were the case, and I do not believe that it is, even then we still will get the better end of the deal when Jesus returns for the final harvest. We will receive the goal of our faith, the crown of eternal life. And nothing can be better than that.

Remember that in this parable, Jesus is speaking about His children living in the world. We are not to try to eradicate unbelievers in this world. However, Jesus also gives us different instructions about what is to happen within His Church. If someone is caught in a sin, as brothers, we are to try to bring such a person to repentance. If we fail in that, we are to set him outside of our fellowship and allow him to live in the world, but separate from us. Those injunctions from our Savior are not being spoken of here as Jesus speaks of us living along side unbelievers in the world.

So no matter what may happen to us in this world, we are to live in peace with those around us. We may try to impede the coarse outbreaks of sin through the laws of our nation, but no law is going to be able to change the hearts of people. The only thing that can do that is the gospel message. So if we want to change the world in which we are living to make it a better place, all that we can do is to continue to reach out with the love of Jesus, telling all others of Jesus' love for all and the free forgiveness which He is offering. Jesus sows good seed. We are that seed sown into the world. May we continue to live and grow as He would have us as His good seed.