



Matthew 13:24-43

# LIFE AS A KINGDOM CITIZEN TODAY

We can, on the basis of this parable, divide the world into two classes—those who are genuinely born of God and those who are genuinely bogus. We can also conclude that the two classes are initially indistinguishable. Very often it is impossible to see any difference between an emerging son of God and a good ol' boy who belongs to the devil... But it seems to me that among all possible applications, Jesus was surely making one: Don't be a tare-upper! There's a great danger in damning others. We should rather get on with the business of helping the Son of Man sow and leave the final judgments to Him. Certainly there are occasions when we must vigorously "contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints" (Jude 3) and "refute those who oppose it" (Titus 1:9), but we should not be preoccupied with contention. And woe to us if we welcome it. How much time we've wasted and how much harm we've done because we have not ears to hear!

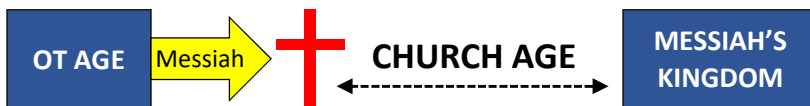
—David H. Roper, *Our Daily Bread*

The common expectation of the Jewish people was that the Messiah would come, defeat Israel's enemies, and usher in God's kingdom of righteousness on earth. Jesus the Messiah did come. But instead of being received by the nation, He was rejected. This rejection was prophesied in the OT but often ignored (cf. Isaiah 53). But now, in Matthew 13, Jesus is revealing what the kingdom will look like in the interim—in the time between His first and His second comings.

## JEWISH EXPECTATION



## GOD'S PLAN



In this present age, those who trust in Jesus the Messiah are indwelt by the Spirit and immediately made "kingdom citizens." However, the kingdom on earth is still to come. Jesus' parables describe life as a kingdom citizen in a world that is cursed and under Satan's power.

## THE INTERPRETIVE KEY (13:37-43):

- THE SOWER: THE SON OF MAN (JESUS)
- THE FIELD: THE WORLD
- THE WHEAT: THE SONS OF THE KINGDOM
- THE TARES: THE SONS OF THE WICKED ONE
- THE ENEMY: THE DEVIL
- THE HARVEST: THE END OF THE AGE
- THE REAPERS: THE ANGELS

*The parables in Matthew 13 focus on the phase of God's kingdom program that extends from the time of Israel's rejection of Jesus in His earthly ministry to the time of judgment at His second coming.*

—Mark Bailey

*What the OT had not revealed was that an entire age would intervene between the offer of the kingdom by the Messiah and Israel's rejection of the King and enjoyment of full kingdom blessings.*

—J. Dwight Pentecost

*Jesus literally said, "The kingdom of heaven has become like..." [the aorist passive tense]. This is very significant because it indicates a change in the kingdom program.*

—Thomas Constable

*Jesus' kingdom parables are secret and new chiefly because they bring together various pieces of previous revelation into new perspectives. Thus Messiah is Son of David but also Suffering Servant. Jesus is the royal King...but also the stricken Shepherd... Who clearly foresaw that both streams would merge in one person?*

—D. A. Carson

## SEVEN TRUTHS TO KNOW FOR THIS PRESENT AGE:

1. Believers will live \_\_\_\_\_ with unbelievers.
2. Those who look like believers in Jesus Christ may actually be \_\_\_\_\_ and those who look like unbelievers may actually be \_\_\_\_\_.
3. It is not our job to determine who is \_\_\_\_\_ and who is \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Though seemingly small and insignificant at the beginning, Christ's kingdom will grow to an \_\_\_\_\_ size.
5. Though Christ's kingdom will grow and impact the world, it will also face the challenge of inward \_\_\_\_\_.
6. At the end of the age, Jesus the Messiah will weed out all those who have refused to receive Him and cast them into \_\_\_\_\_.
7. At the end of the age, Jesus the Messiah will reign on earth with all the \_\_\_\_\_ (those who have received His righteousness) in an eternal kingdom of beauty and glory.

**Tares.** Greek, *zizanon*, "darnel; a weed (*Lolium temulentum*) that bears an uncanny resemblance to wheat, sometimes called *false wheat*. Darnel is considered poisonous; ingesting the weed causes feelings of drunkenness and can prove fatal. (NET Bible)

*Roman law dealt specifically with the crime of sowing darnel in a wheat field as an act of revenge.*  
—R. T. France

*Whatever and whenever God blesses, Satan curses. What God creates, Satan counterfeits.*  
—Sam Storms

*Christians are not qualified to infallibly distinguish between true and false believers. Every time the church has presumed to do that it has produced an ungodly blood-bath. In the present age, believers are not God's instruments of judgment and destruction but of truth and grace. Toward unbelievers we are not to have hearts of condemnation but of compassion.*  
—John MacArthur, Jr.

*In 13:33, the meal represented that which is good, as it was made from wheat and not from tares. The professing church, however, is permeated by evil doctrine, externalism, unbelief, and worldliness, which tend to inflate the church and make it larger in appearance, even as the leaven inflates the dough but actually adds nothing of real worth.*  
—John Walvoord

*If evildoers experience God's terror it will not be because they have done evil, but because they have resisted to the end the powerful lure of the open arms of the crucified Messiah.* —Miroslav Volf