

STUDENT'S GUIDE

Discussion Questions: The Parable of the Weeds (Tares)

This parable is broken into two sections. The first section, Matthew 13:24-30, Jesus is explaining the parable to a crowd on the beach of the Sea of Galilee. There will be several metaphors and parables asked in this story and we'll either identify them or put them on hold until explained in the next section.

Description of the Kingdom of Heaven. Another parable He put forth to them saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field." There are three elements here, answer them if you know them. If not, we will come back.

1. Who is the man? _____
2. What does the good seed represent? _____
3. What does the field represent? _____

The sabotage. (Have someone read Matthew 13:25 outlined in blue): "but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way."

4. Who was the enemy? _____
5. Tares, are also known as weeds. But it has a specific name. Do you know the name?

The tares (weeds) grow among the grain. (Have someone read Matthew 13:26-27 outlined in orange) "But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'"

6. What do the weeds represent? _____

Jesus identifies the saboteur. (Have someone read Matthew 13:28 outlined in blue) "He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.'" _____

7. Under Roman law, was it a crime to sow weeds in another person's field? _____

The servant's solution: (Leader read Matthew 13:28 in gray only) "The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?'"

Jesus' answer on how to solve the weeds mixed in with the wheat dilemma. (Have someone read Matthew 13:29-30 outlined in green only) "But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers,'"

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8. What was the enemy's plan? _____

9. How does the farmer's solution combat the enemy's agenda? _____

10. Why does the farmer tell the servants to not gather up the weeds? _____

The harvest. (Have someone read Matthew 13:30 outlined in red and purple) **"First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."**

11. Who is responsible for the harvest? _____

12. Why do the reapers gather up the weeds first? _____

13. What happens to the weeds after they are bundled together? _____

14. After the reapers gather up the wheat, where does the reaper put the wheat? _____

Parable of the Weeds Explained

Have someone read Matthew 13:36-43.

Jesus explains the parable only to the disciples. (The leader reads Matthew 13:36) "Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.'"

Jesus explains who the man is, what does the field and good seed represent. (Have someone read Matthew 13:37-38 in black only) **"He answered and said to them: 'He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom,'"**

Refer back to question #1 _____

Refer back to question #2 _____

Refer back to question #3 _____

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15. **Who is the son of man?** The Son of Man is used 80 times in the New Testament. Jesus referred to himself as the "Son of Man" on many occasions.

Jesus identifies who the tares or weeds. (Have someone read Matthew 13:38 in orange only) "but the tares are the sons of the wicked one."

Refer back to question #6 _____

16. **Who are the sons of the wicked one?** _____

Jesus identifies who is the enemy. (Have someone read Matthew 13:39 in blue only) "The enemy who sowed them is the devil,"

Refer back to question #4 _____

17. **What is the parable here when the enemy sows his seed alongside the seed Jesus has planted?** _____

The inferred parable. Jesus does not explain this part of the parable. (Leader read Matthew 13:29-30 in the green only) "But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers.'"

18. **What would be the parable of the tares growing alongside the wheat? Explain the risk and benefit.** _____

The harvest explained. (Have someone read Matthew 13:39 in green only) "the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels."

19. **What does the harvest represent?** _____

20. **Who are the reapers?** _____

21. **Why did Jesus choose his angels over the servants to harvest and separate the weeds and the wheat?** _____

The tares burned in the fire. (Have someone read Matthew 13:40 in red) "Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age."

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22. Who do the tares represent? _____

The angels are sent out. (Have someone read Matthew 13:41 in green) **“The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness.”**

23. Who does the Son of man send out to be gather up first? _____

The furnace of fire. (Have someone read Matthew 13:42 in red) **“and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”**

24. What happens to those that offend and who practice lawlessness? _____

The righteous people. (Have someone read Matthew 13:43 in purple) **“Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”**

25. What happens to the righteous people? _____

26. What is the parable of the wheat being put into the barn? _____

