

Sower of Good Seed

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- [0 : 0 0] I'd like you to turn once again to the chapter of Matthew chapter 13, reading at verse 24.
- Matthew 13, verse 24. And he put another parable before them, saying, The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, while his men were sleeping.
- His enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. Matthew was there in verse 24. Kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field.
- All these parables in Matthew chapter 13 are kingdom parables. Again and again, the Lord says the kingdom of heaven is like.
- And here we have this parable here, where he says the kingdom of heaven may be compared. We would think that whenever good was done in this world, that we would receive good back in return.
- [1 : 3 2] But that's obviously not the case. More often than not, when good is done, evil is returned for good. And nothing of spiritual significance has ever been achieved, really, in the world, in the spiritual world, without satanic opposition.
- In the world, there are those who oppose the scriptures as those who are human beings. Those whose lives are not in accord with God's words and God's commandments, and so they oppose the scriptures.
- They oppose what is taught in God's word. But there is an overarching wickedness and evil which surrounds all those who rebel against God and against Christ.
- Satan himself, because he is the chief enemy of souls. He is the one who brings us into subjection to himself and causes us to rebel against God and his commandments.
- We told him the epistle of John that if we love God, then we keep his commandments. Now the devil will do everything in his power to try and overcome that link.
- [2 : 5 4] We profess to love God, but yet he will encourage us again and again to disobey God's commandments. And we feel like we are like the Apostle Paul in Romans chapter 7. For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold unto sin.
- With my mind I serve the law of God, with my members I serve the law of sin. The things that I would do, I do not.
- The things that I would not do, those are the things I do. And Paul has to cry almost in desperation, who will deliver me from this body of death?
- Who will deliver me from the members of my body rebelling against the law of God? And you can cry out in exaltation, I thank God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- And so this battle continues throughout the endless ages, until we reach the time of the Lord's second coming. Not only the flesh warding against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, but also the powers of darkness, warding against everything that is good, trying to destroy the light, and all that light itself means to the Lord's people.

[4 : 17] That's why the Bible warns us that the devil is like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Not simply injure us, but completely destroy us as though we never existed. The Lord Jesus Christ, in his high priestly prayer, asks us as his Father to keep us keep, those whom you have given me through your holy name.

And we need to be kept, because we have this adversary. This adversary, the devil, who wants to totally destroy the witness of Christ. And so we are dependent for all our defenses upon God himself.

We're dependent because as the beneficiaries of justification, adoption and sanctification, God gives us certain benefits.

He gives us the assurance of his love. He gives us peace of conscience. He gives us joy in the Holy Spirit, increase of grace and perseverance. And these are benefits God gives to his people to enable them to walk in this world, to walk in the light, as God himself is that light.

[5 : 36] And to have fellowship with him and with one another. And since we have such an enemy, the Lord continually warns us against his strategy in these parables, all the way through Matthew chapter 13.

All the parables speak about the devil's influence over the Lord's people. Not influence eternally, but influence not to do good.

That warfare I was talking about there that Paul had in Romans chapter 7. The parable of the good seed and the tares is easy to understand because the Lord himself explains it to us.

If we go to, I think it's verse 37, we find here the Lord saying, The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, Jesus Christ himself.

The field is the world. The good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one.

[6 : 49] The enemy who sowed the weeds is the devil. The harvest at the close of the age and the reapers are the angels. And just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of this age.

So we have there an explanation of what this parable means. It's one thing to know what the Lord says the parable means.

It's something else to try and apply that to our own situation as to how we should relate to the meaning of this parable and how it relates to us in our everyday lives.

When we hear the field is the world, we have to remember that the kingdom of God isn't the world in general.

If you think back to the passage in John 3.16, For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him, the Son, shall not perish but have everlasting life.

[7 : 58] So it's the world that's being talked about here. The other cake is those who believe in the world. The believers in the world.

And as we go through this parable, we'll see how that context puts on flesh. And how we can understand what is being said here. So the world in this passage really means those who believe.

And as the Lord tells the story, he stresses what the devil does after the Son of Man plants his good seed in this world.

So what the devil does after he brings those who have not been believing in the world to be believers in the world. And what the devil does to try and make counterfeit believers by his actions.

So what the Lord is saying is this. The devil is going to raise up people so like Christians, but not Christians, that even the servants of righteousness, the ministers of God, will not be able to detect them.

[9 : 23] They will not be able to see what the true difference is. They will be known at the end of the age, but in the world in which we live, there will always be counterfeit Christians.

And so this parable suggests to us a few things.

But just to look again at this aspect of the devil raising up those so like Christians. He plants people in the church who eventually will deny the faith.

As John in this official chapter 2 I think says, They are not of us because they went out from us. And therefore we know that they are not of us.

Because the fruit of their lives is that they no longer believe. They no longer trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. They no longer worship. At one time they did.

[10 : 28] And we thought they were real bona fide Christians. But no longer. They went out from us because they were not of us. They were not born again. They were not believers.

They were coming into the church for some sort of benefit they thought would accrue to them by joining the church. In New Testament times that would not have been true.

Because anyone who joined the church then would have been persecuted. But in the past century, in some places, belonging to a church has its own benefits.

People treat you differently. You are looked upon as pillars of society. And as such you belong to a church. You join a membership and somehow people look on you in a different way.

But as such, perhaps your country. Perhaps as such, you are not really receiving and resting upon Christ alone for salvation. You are resting upon what you are, what you are doing, what you have done, and what you hope will accrue to your benefit.

[11 : 31] And by living an upright and moral life. So what was I saying here about the things that are suggested here? The devil is planting his servants among true Christians.

And so we must always be on our guard. That's why you have an eldership in the church, in Presbyterian churches.

Some people might want to come and join in membership. And the eldership will discuss among themselves.

They will discover what sort of lives people have been living. Whether they've been shown an interest in the church. And whether their lives actually demonstrate that interest.

Or whether it's just something that is being done for some conceived benefit. But the devil is planting his servants among the true church.

[12 : 40] And amongst the true Christians. And we shouldn't be surprised if the devil Seed appears in the most unexpected places.

We're told that the devil himself can appear as an angel of light. We're told that his servants As servants of righteousness, ministers.

There is a phrase that the Americans use That is very catchy and has its own truth. If you're looking for the devil Don't forget to look in the pulpit.

We know that in the case of Judas Iscariot. There was one of the Lord's closest associates. And yet he denied, he apostatized Or went away.

And so we see here That the devil is planting his servants Among true Christians To try and destroy The church of God Then secondly The mixed nature of the Christian church Is no reason Why we shouldn't Come in to the church of Christ Very often People looking on the outside And those perhaps who are Self-righteous Would say About coming in to join the church The church is full of hypocrites While the church is full of sinners Christ came Into this world Not to Seek the righteous But the unrighteous The ungodly And the sinner The accusation Accusation That the Pharisees leveled With the Lord Jesus Christ Was he's the friend Of publicans and sinners The outcast of society And one of the great

[14 : 37] Assurances That we are Beginning to travel the right road Is that We are convicted Of what we are We recognize Ourselves As sinning against God In thought In word In deed At one time It never bothered us We thought perhaps We were pillars of society We were doing everything right We were no worse Than anybody else And so We thought we would be acceptable Even in the church And yet the Lord says No We have to examine ourselves To see If we are of the faith Whether We are True Christians Now the fact that Some people might say They won't Join The church Because it's Full of hypocrites Is in fact Itself A judgmental And A hypocritical statement And We shouldn't At any time Lay Any credence To Such Statements There are deeper reasons

Why people Stay away from the church Why unbelievers Won't Join The church For selfish reasons They don't want to Deny themselves Any of the experiences That the world have That even when The gospel Might touch their souls Perhaps during communion Seasons As very often We are touched By the messages That we hear Yet For some reason We don't want to We don't find any benefit To ourselves And so we stay On the outside Looking For the fulfilment Of the here and now And not looking At the hereafter The here and now Is something That passes With the using I think it's Isaiah It talks about The fact that At the moment The grass Flourishes And that even It's cut down The psalmist Has it in those Same words If you go

Into A meadow In the spring In a few short months You will see The grass Full of flowers Everything Growing in Abundant In a very short Space of time In fact Here it would Take one Gale Salt spray On the Mather And it's gone And so Everything is For a short Time Within this world For a very short Time We're here One day And we're Gone The next You yourselves Have known Members of The congregation Being removed From you By death And storn away Day after day We see lights Going out In homes And families Bereft Of those Whom they loved So As we Try and Discover The deeper Reasons Why Unbelievers

Won't believe We have to Recognize it Ourselves That the Christian church Is not A perfect Church There's much In us That Carefully Clutively Would discover That We're not Foursquare We're not Above Suspicion We're not As those Whose Lives are Above Suspicion But Christ Came To call Sinners Rabbi Duncan One time At a communion Service Saw A woman Very convicted Of her own Sin And Wanting to Push the Elements Away From her And He said To her Take it Woman It's for Sinners And so For all Who are Sinners In Christ

For all Those who Love the Lord Jesus Christ For all Those who Are perhaps Still doubting And fearful It's for Sinners Sinners The table Is for Sinners Any who Love the Lord And are Fearful of Making Or taking That step Remember The table Is for Sinners Sinners And if You love The Lord That is Your place And we Pray that In these Days That lie Ahead The Lord Will bring You a Token for Good In your Own Souls That you Hear Different Questions As you Hear Different Sermons Different Voices Bringing To you The gospel With different Accents So you Will Hear And your Souls Will Live And then Just The third Thing These

[19 : 40] Parables Suggest Is that No one Should take Any comfort In their Sin Remember Again The passage Of the Lord's Table That we Are to Examine Ourselves To See the Fear of The faith We are To Examine Ourselves To whether We are Walking Circumspectly Whether we Are walking In accordance With the Law of God In accordance With the Precepts And that We have Learned The church Isn't Pure And we Can't Always Judge As careful As the Scrutiny Might be By the Elders of The church Which is Their task There will Always be Wheat And tears In the Church Of Christ But the Harvest Is coming And then the

Wheat will be Gathered Into the Barns And the Tears Will be Burnt The day Is coming When the Separation Will be Made And there Will be Sheep on The one Side And goats On the Earth But at A human Level That's not Our domain We are To encourage People to Seek the Lord While he Is to be Found and To call Upon him While he Is here And he's Never so Near as When he's Passing by In his Word When you Gather together Especially At communion Seasons When you Hear any Tokens Of good From those Who will Come to Preach to You So we Should continually Examine Ourselves Whether We're Of the Faith Whether We're Two Children Or not Making Our Calling And election Sure It struck

Me really As I was Reading This evening What The apostle There means By those Words Make your Calling And your Election Sure But if you Practice these Qualities You will Never Fall So what Does he Mean If you Practice These Qualities The qualities That he's Talking about Is Add to your Faith Virtue And virtue Knowledge And knowledge Self-control And self-control Steadfastness Steadfastness Godliness Godliness Brotherly Kindness Brotherly Kindness Love Faith Is only The first Step On the Road of Salvation It is A Bear Faith Brother James Says Show me Your Faith Without Your Works And I Will Show You My Faith

By My Works And He Quotes Two Instances Abraham Believed God And it Was Accounted To Him For Righteousness And The Harlot Rahab Who Hid Despised These Were Works Showing In Abraham's Case That He Believed And trusted In God And God Blessed Him For It And In Harlot Case There Was A Work That She Did She Did A Work To Prosper She Knew That God Was Going To Be Her God And She Wanted To Be On His Side And So She Developed That In What She Did And You're Calling And Election Shewers Is Adding To Your Faith Don't Let It Be A Bare Faith Make It A Faith That Is Continually Being Added To Grow In The Grace And In The Knowledge Of The Lord Jesus Christ And Then We Come To

These Next Two Parables That We Read There It's Very Interesting What's Happening Here The Parable Of The Mustard Seed And The Parable Of The Leaven And The Parable Of The Mustard Seed And The Parable Of The Leaven Are Actually In Between The Parable That The Lord Has Begun To Tell You About The Good Seed And The Enemy He Sowed Weeds And The Explanation Of So One Thing We Have To See Here Is That Throughout The Whole Chapter The Lord Is The Devil's Work In His Kingdom The Devil's Opposition To The Growth Of His Kingdom And These Two Parables Instead Of Examples Of Growth In The Lord's Kingdom You Talk About A Mustard Seed Which Is The Smallest And Becomes A Big Tree And Birds Come There It's Not As It Seems

[24 : 41] And We'll See That The Same With The Leaven The Leaven Which Is Once First Put Into Do Leavens The Whole Lump Again It's Not As It Seems And We'll See That As We Go Through It These Two Parables In Fact Explain Each Other There's An Ongoing Discussion Really About What They Mean Many See These Parables We Take The First One For Instance There With The We Take Both Of Them Together The Tree And Here's God Coming With His Blessing And He's Going Such A Blessing That The Mustard Seed Grows And Prospers And Everyone Comes And Nestles Under That Under Leaven As Well It Grows The Lord Begins The Work And It Grows More And More Others Will Say That's Not What Saying Here Others Will Say This Is Really The Work Of Evil Being Spread Through The Church By What The Devil Is Doing

And As You Already Guess I Prefer The Second Explanation Of What's Being Said Here It's The Devil Who's Working In The Church Why Should The Lord When He's Talking About The Work Of The Devil Of The Enemy Planting Seed Suddenly Bring In Two Parables Which Are In Total Opposition To What He's Trying To Teach Here In This Parable About The Good Seed And The Enemy Of Souls The Enemy Who Planted The Wheat Or The Tares Weeds Among The Wheat Many Say The Parables Describe Christianity's Expansion And Growth The Yeast Is Explained As The Lord Coming And Beginning His Work And The Whole World Is Transformed By That Work And We Know That Is Not The

Case Experimentally That's Just Not What Happens Others By Looking At The Context Of The Parables That I'm Trying To Do Here This Evening Say They Describe The Progress Of Evil In The World Not Good And So Looking At These Parables In Their Context Something Very Interesting Is Seen Here In The First Parable Of The Mustard Seed The Growth Of The Mustard Seed Into A Tree Is Abnormal It Grows Into A Bush A Mustard Seed Doesn't Grow Into A Tree And The People Who Were Hearing This Parable Being Told Would Know That If We Were Farmers If We Were Engaged In

Planting Mustard And Reaping It Or Whatever They Did With It In The Middle East The Mustard Seed Does Not Grow Into A Tree It Becomes A Bush And So We Hear Something Abnormal Is Happening And Something Else The Birds Who Rest In The Tree And The Branches Of That Tree Have Already Been Identified In This Chapter As The Agents Of The Devil Remember The Sower And The Soil Sower And The Seed The One That Falls On Stony Ground The Birds Come Immediately And Pluck Away That Which Has Been Planted The Devil The Devil Comes And The Service And Plucks Away Your Thoughts Bring Other Thoughts To Your Mind

And The Lord Even Says That In His Explanation Of The Parable The Parable Of The Sower Explained There In Verse 18 Onwards But Anyone Hears The Word Of God And Does Not Understand It The Evil One Comes The Birds And Snatches Away What Has Been Sown In The Heart This Is That Which Was Sown Along The Path So The Birds Have Already Been Identified As Workers Of Evil The Lord Is Going To Change That Whole Interpretation Around And Try To Make It Mean Something Else Here In These Two Parables And Then Also There Is The Connection Of The Parable Of Yeast Or Leaven The Parable Of Yeast Just Enforces The

[29 : 42] Presence Of Evil Why Do I Say That Well Throughout The Old Testament Yeast Or Leaven Is Thought Of Something To Be Avoided In The Festivals Of The Old Testament The Householder Was To Search Every Nook And Cranny Take A Candle Or Light And To Go Everywhere And Take Out The Leaven Out Of The House And Throw It Away Paul Talks About Purging Out The Old Leaven And Becoming A New Lump And Again It's Not Something That The Lord Is Going To Do He's Not To Contradict The Teaching Of The Old Testament To Say The Leaven Which Was Thought Of As Bad In The Old Good The Law Is Not Going To Do That In His Teaching He Always Follows Up The Old Testament With Enforcing What Is God There Come Not To Destroy The Law And The Prophets But To Fulfill Them

To Make Them Meaningful In Our Lives And The Explanation Of How We Should Live So At Feast Times And Those Times When They Were To Come Before The Lord The Leaven Was To Be Searched Out And Thrown Away And So It Is Almost Impossible To See The Lord Using A Traditional Symbol Of Evil And Meaning Something Good To Come Out Of It It Is Also Significant That These Two Parables The Mustard Seed And The Yeast Are Between The Parable Of The Good Seed And That Explanation As I Just Said The Parable Of The Good Seed And The Sower The Enemy Who Sowed The Weeds Shows

The Distinct Enmity Of The Evil One Against The Lord And His People As He Says The Ex The One Who Sows The Good Seed Is The Son Of Man The One Who Sows The Weeds Is The Devil And This Conflict Goes On So He's Saying Here This Conflict Will Continue Until The Second Coming And So Here We Have The Lord Trying To Teach Those Who Were There This Time One Of The Parables Remember There Seven And In This Three Are Taking To Care All Parables Of The Kingdom All Teaching Us How We Should Relate To That Kingdom How We Should Try To Make Progress In That Kingdom And Let's Just Finally As Christians We're Warned Not Only Against The Devil Mixing

With His Own People With The Church But Also The Blending Of Evil Into The Lives Of Believers Paul Tells Us To Depart From Every Appearance Of Evil And Yet Today The Evangelical Church And The More Exciting Branches Of Christianity I Started To Reach Out Into Activities And Styles Of Worship And Interest That Have Not Been Seen Down Through The Ages As That Which Is Conducive To Worshipping God In Spirit In Spirit And

Truth And So When Paul Depart From Every Appearance Of Evil He's Telling Us That The Church Can Become Secular Very Quickly Church That Dominated By The Precepts Of The World The World's Wisdom Not Seeking The Wisdom Of God From The Word Of God But The World's Wisdom We Seek Something Novel Something New Something Exciting The World's Theology Some Months Ago Now There Was A Discussion Taking Place In Edinburgh Between Someone From The Free Church And Someone From The Church Of Scotland And It Was About The Atonement And The Church Of Scotland Were Totally Denying The Atonement And Its Meaning For The Christian Life And The One From The Free Church Was Trying To Say Without The Atonement There Is No Christianity There Is No Hope You Are Developing A

[34 : 44] Message Of No Hope And That's What A Secular Church Is It Denies The Wisdom Of God And The Majesty Of God The Foolishness Of Preaching Is What A Secular Church Denies The Foolishness Of The Cross And It Also Uses The World's Agenda And The World's Methods To Achieve Growth And Increase Very Often We Confuse Growth With Spirituality And In Most Circumstances It's The Other Way Round Spirituality True Spirituality Separates The Wheat From The Chaff And We Don't Get Increase In Large Numbers Except At Times Of Revival When The Lord Is Working What We Usually Get Is A Finning Out Of

Those Who Are In Church Numbers Do Not Always Equate To Spirituality And So You've Got To Stop Looking To The World's Media And The World's Money And The World's Methods To Try And Grow Our Churches As Christians We're Warned To Be On Our Guard Against The Wiles Of The Devil Because Leaven And Yeast Once It Begins To Work Cannot Be Eradicated You Cannot Even Say It Cannot Be Easily Eradicated I'm Saying It Cannot Be Eradicated Once A Little Leaven Enters The Lump The Hole Will Eventually Be Leavened In Our Christian Lives There Is Hope As We're Told To

War Against The Flesh The Spirit War Against The Flesh And The Flesh Against The Spirit For The One Is Contrary To The Other Evil Will Continue To Work In The Church Until The Return Of The Lord At His Second Coming As Individuals We're Told To Examine Ourselves To Be In Our Guard To Be Prayerful And Watchful That's What The Disciples Were Told In The Garden Watch And Pray With Me That's What The Lord Wants Us To Watch And Pray So The Devil Is Active The Leaven Of The Pharisees And Helod Will Work But Individually We're Warned By Paul To Purge Out The Old Leaven From Our Lives Crucify The Flesh And The Deeds Of The Flesh And So Walk Holyly

Walk Justly Walk Walk With God Walk So That We Seek A Well Done Good And Faithful Servant From The Lips Of Our Lord God And As We Purge Out That Leaven Maybe Each One Of Us Become A New Love Without The Leaven Without That Which Would Bring Shame On The Lord's Name On The Lord's Cause And Although We're Warned In This World You Will Know Tribulation Christ Says But I Have Overcome The World Let Us Rest In Christ Let Us Know That He Is Our Lord Our Protector He Is The One Who Is

To Be Our Guide He Is The One Who Will Show Us The Way Let Us Then Walk In The Way And Be As His Children Of Grace Let Us Conclude Our Worship Singing God's Praise In Psalm 119 Psalm 119 Find That Page 402 Verse 33 119 Psalm 119 Teach Me O Lord The Perfect Way Of Thy Precepts Divine To Observe It To The End I Shall My Heart Incline To The End Of The Verse Marked 37 That Four Stanzas God's Praise Teach Me O Lord

[39 : 46] The Perfect Way Of Thy Precept Divine And To Observe It To The The End I Shall My Heart Declined To Understanding Unto Me So Keep Thy Lord Shall I Beth Them Thou

As Help Make Me Through All For For I delight therein My heart unto thy death's qualities And not to greed and blind Turn the love away my sight and eyes From pure humanity And in thy good and holy way

Be pleased to awaken me And now may grace, mercy and peace In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit One God who rests on you And abide in you now and always Amen