



## [Matthew 13:24-30](#)

(24) Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who 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 grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. (27) 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?" (28) He said to them, "An enemy has done this." The servants said to him, "Do you want us then to go and gather them up?" (29) But he said, "No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. (30) Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."""

## [Matthew 13:37-40](#)

(37) He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. (38) The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked *one*. (39) The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. (40) Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age.

*New King James Version*

Christ's parable contains at least two warnings that are important to how we deal with possible tares within God's church. First, we need to be aware that tares—false members—area reality. Counterfeit members *do* exist and are at work within God's church; Christ Himself says so. The fact that they are present requires that we be on our guard, not allowing ourselves to be led astray. For example, do we measure our actions by the actions of others? What if that person by whom we measure ourselves is a tare? Instead, [Jesus Christ](#) is the one and only perfect model, as shown by Scripture ([Romans 8:29](#)). Paul says that if we measure ourselves among ourselves, we are not wise ([II](#)

[Corinthians 10:12](#))

In addition to counterfeit brethren, tares could also be [false ministers](#), even false apostles (see II Corinthians 11:13-15). False church leaders, teaching false doctrines that spread spiritual havoc, are a dire threat. Tares in the church spread destructive attitudes and ideas that can influence true brethren toward negativity, suspicion, cynicism, sarcasm, and doubt. Christ warns us of such deception in [Matthew 24:24](#), "For false christs and [false prophets](#) will rise and show great [signs and wonders](#) to deceive, if possible, even the elect." Knowing that tares are in the church, we must be vigilant, clinging to the [truth](#) lest we be deceived.

Second, Christ's parable warns us not only to take great care to avoid the false instruction and attitudes of the tares, but also to be mindful about how we treat young, immature "wheat" that we may mistake for tares. We must be slow to judge, remembering that church members are not all equally converted. Though they may be [pure in heart](#), even the wheat may not always act properly. Likewise, some brethren may always act properly, may always seem to do the right thing, but their hearts remain unconverted or even corrupted.

[God](#) knows who belongs to Him and who does not ([II Timothy 2:19](#)), and He allows both to grow together. The interaction between wheat and tares, the true and the false, provides a constant test: How patient are we in our relationships with others? James sets the standard in [James 5:9](#), exhorting, "Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!"

In order to endure to the end, we must develop the patient attitude described by James. We must grow to be thick-skinned, not easily offended in our dealings with young wheat or tares, never taking insults or affronts personally. When we deal with those coming to [conversion](#), we all must be long-suffering, patient, having a great deal of [love](#) for one another. We must never contend with brethren, as the Scripture frequently admonishes ([I Corinthians 3:3](#), [Philippians 2:3](#)).

Some may display their faults externally, while others hide their sins ([I Timothy 5:24](#)). It is easy to say about the former, "He is not living as he should," while missing a corrupt heart in the latter. However, God works with His children on an individual basis; He works with us one-on-one. Each of us has his unique trials and is experiencing tests unlike others, whether it be the loss of health, a job, a home, or a friend. Through His personal relationship with each of us, God is refining us into the mature wheat that He wants to reap at His harvest.

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for Matthew 13:24-30 (<http://www.theberean.org>)  
— Ted E. Bowling

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