

16.3.25 am

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Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 01] Good morning, everyone. A warm welcome to the service this morning. I think I'm maybe a bit louder than usual today, so I might need a wee bit of turning down.

Welcome to those who are visiting. It's good to see a number of visitors with us. And for those who are visiting, as well as those who come week by week, just a reminder, there's tea and there's coffee at the end of the service. So please be encouraged to stay behind for a time of fellowship if you're able. The notices have been on the screen. There are many of them. So as usual, I won't go through all the notices. I'll just highlight a couple of these.

First of all, to say that there'll be no Friday clubs this coming Friday, no Jam Connect rooted. And the reason for that is Kyle and Sarah's wedding, which we look forward to. The wedding is on Friday at one. And Joanna said that everyone in the congregation, you're all welcome to come along to that if you're able to. So pray for them as a family. Pray for Kyle as he prepares to be married. Pray for Taffy as he prepares his speech. And for all who will listen to it.

The services next Sunday will be taken in the morning. I'll lead the service and the minister who will take part and do the majority of the wedding service on Friday, Sarah's minister, Dr. Corey Brock, who's in St. Columbus. He'll teach in the morning service and I'll take the evening service. God willing. On the table at the foyer as you head out of the church, there's various items which have been left after the clear up. If you could please check to see if any of these you can reclaim. At the end of the week, we'll probably put the items which remain into temporary storage and then they'll be given to charity or removed after that. The other notice is to highlight the fact that there is a ladies conference this coming Saturday, women's conference this

Saturday. And I'm going to ask Anna McRae if she's here to come and just say a wee word about that, please. Yeah, we're having a women's conference next Saturday and we're delighted that Mary Smith, who's actually David's sister, is coming from Aberdeen to speak at the conference.

[2 : 37] So if you've not signed up, we'd love to have you. If it's something you've maybe not been to before, we can assure you you'll get a warm welcome and you'll enjoy the day. Mary's going to be speaking on Revelation, so she'll do two sessions and we're also delighted that Shona, I don't know if Shona's here today, but Shona Davidson is going to give her testimony as well. And there's a bookstore, Storing Christian Bookshop as well. So we'd love to have you speak to me at the end or drop me a message. There was an email address as well that's on the screen. So yeah, next Saturday, 10 o'clock. Okay?

Thank you. Thank you, Anna. I expect I'll be in the kitchen washing the dishes. It'll just be like old times. These, I think, are all the notices and I'm going to hand over now to Scott to take the first part of the service, please.

that we give thanks for all that we receive through Christ Jesus. And even all these benefits that we cannot count nor number.

We praise you for everything you have done for us. We ask that you'd watch us as we draw near to you. Watch over us. Protect our minds, our hearts, our thoughts.

[8 : 49] that we would be looking to Jesus the author and founder of our salvation. That we would not be distracted by things of this world nor concerns of this world.

But for this moment Lord we pray that we would have a focus upon what you have done for us and what we receive through you. Lord we pray for the gospel as it goes out.

We pray for those who preach your word today. We pray that you would encourage them. We pray that your words would go right into the depths and hearts and minds and souls of your people.

That they may be persuaded to embrace Jesus Christ as their saviour. To trust upon him. That your spirit would blow like the wind working in hearts and lives even when we do not see it.

Lord we pray bring forth great fruit that we may see the effects of your spirit at work today. Lord we pray as David will preach to us here today.

[9 : 59] We pray for him as he preaches in Cunloch later this evening. We pray that you would bless that word there as your people gather this morning around your sacrament. So Lord we pray also that you would bless each of us as we gather in all that we do to share the gospel.

We want with the deepest desire that people would come to you. That you would open their eyes and unblock their ears. That they would know they need Christ as their saviour.

So help us in our own lives to be light in darkness. To be witnesses for you in this world. And in all that we do for your name and for your glory.

That it would be that we would see a fruit for us. Whether it's in Sunday school or kids clubs. We pray that you would bless our efforts.

And that we would be trusting in you to guide us in all the words that we speak. We pray for everyone here. We pray for those online. We pray for those who are laid aside in sickness.

[11 : 10] We ask that you would draw near to them and be their comfort. We pray for Kyle and Sarah as they prepare to be married on Friday. We pray that you would bless them together in their lives.

And that they would go forth trusting in you each and every day. Lord we pray draw near to us whether young or old this morning. Speak to us we pray.

Guide us. Guard us. protect us. Be our loving father over us. That shows us and direct us in every step of life.

And we ask all these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. I'll just say a word to the younger ones if you'd like to come down to the front. Gather around the front here.

I've got something to show you. Amen. Come here.

[12 : 15] The grown-ups can come. Do you know what I thought here? Kaki's.

Kaki's. Kaki's are probably the important things that we look after. Yeah. Yeah. I wonder if any of you as mums or dads have ever lost kaki's before.

Have you ever lost a kaki's before? Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. We know that we know. Yeah. Yeah. One day that...

My cousin told me and she once dropped her mama and her dad's car came in in the sink.

In the sink. Oh, in the water. Oh, no. Was it broken? Yeah. I don't know. I don't know. They don't like going in the water.

[13 : 12] My dad. My dad tells me everything is... Yeah. A very important thing because I lost a kaki one day, didn't I, Lily? I lost a kaki.

I couldn't find it. I was out in the garden looking for it. Couldn't find it anywhere. Because without them the car would move. The car wouldn't do anything. We need the key to start. I don't know. So I thought my van only has one key.

So I thought because I said quite important things I thought well I'd better get another key in case this one goes missing. And then I'll be stuck. And it cost me a lot of money.

And we need to go outside and say yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah. We had a key lost one day and I was told it was... I was told it went outside. I was out in the leaves looking for it.

It turned up inside behind the radiator. It was being zolked in the radiator. Anyway, that's another story. So I got another key. I found somewhere for expensive things.

[14 : 15] We need to look after it. I got another key. I found somewhere you can go on the computer you can take a photo of the key. A photo of it and then the man will make a key exactly the same. So keys have their own they've only worked in one car and they're all cut and they've all got a pad around it so they work only in one car.

Excuse me. Oh. That's a lot of sound. My mommy and my daddy's keys we have lots of soft keys and my mom has lots of soft stuff on her work and they put them in the bed but they don't have the same key.

They're all the same keys and they're all different keys. Different keys. Different keys. All different types of keys and I get it. I got two keys here.

One works and I thought well I better get another one and I sent a photo away. He made a cake and I came back. Nice. It looks like exactly the same doesn't it?

It looks got exactly the same pattern on it but you know what? Right. It looks like it's not the same. No, no, no. It's pretty much the same. They're all different but the new one won't work.

[15 : 27] It looks exactly the same but it won't work because it needs to be paired up with the cat. It needs to be linked to the cat.

Okay? So it's like a wee chip inside it and we can see that's like it's heart. Okay? And that needs to talk to the cat.

It'll go into the cat but it won't start. It looks exactly the same but it won't start the cat. But won't it be a bit more shiny than you?

Well, the new one is actually shiny and it looks better. It's not. It's going to look. It's going to look. And the new one looks better but it doesn't work.

It's useless. It doesn't work. Until the heart of it is changed. The heart of it needs to be changed to talk to the cat. Okay?

[16 : 27] Have I done it yet? I haven't done it yet. No. But when the heart is changed once the heart is changed it'll work.

Okay? And that's the most important thing about us two. it looks good. It looks like it will work.

The most important thing is the heart is our heart has changed to talk to Jesus. Our heart has changed to be like Jesus.

Okay? Inside we can come to church we can do all the right things we can look we can look good and look like we're doing all the right things but the most important thing is that our heart is changed.

Our heart is changed. There are words in Romans that tell us do not be like the world but be transformed by a renewing of your mind.

[17 : 29] Like changing yourself to be like Jesus. Changing yourself to talk to Jesus. Okay? And keys are precious things.

And when we talk to Jesus we're pleasures to him too. And when we learn to listen to him and talk to him he'll direct us and he'll instruct and he'll show us what we should do in our lives.

And we will be really precious to Jesus if we change our hearts and we look to him. Okay? And be really precious to him.

And he will look after us. He will look after us and we'll never be lost if we change our hearts. Okay? That's the most important thing. Not what we look like on our side.

Not what we do. Come to church it's important. The most important thing is a heart of shape. Okay? Be like Jesus.

[18 : 36] Talk to Jesus when we pray. You ask him to help us each and every day. Yes? I talk to God instead of Jesus.

When we talk to God we're talking to Jesus as well in a way. When we pray we pray to Jesus and we talk to God as well.

Same time. God. So that's grace that we're all talking to Jesus and talking to God. So let's say a prayer to you. And Father in heaven we thank you that you will change our hearts and that we can come and talk to you.

Help us Lord not be concerned about what we do and what all the actions that we do are important but Lord we pray the most important thing is you change our hearts that we will listen to you, that we will talk to you and that we will be precious to you.

So help us as we go to Sundays to help us to listen and to learn all about what Jesus has done for us and help us to pray to send you. We are in Jesus name.

[19 : 49] Amen. So we'll stand now and we'll sing a second item of praise. I'll be blessed the Lord, O my soul. Blessed the Lord, O my soul, O my soul, worship his holy name.

Sing like never before, O my soul, I'll worship your holy name.

The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning, it's time to sing your song again. Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me.

Let me be singing when the evening comes. Bless the Lord, O my soul, O my soul, worship his holy name.

Sing like never before, O my soul, I'll worship your holy name.

[21 : 22] You're rich in love and your soul to anger. Your name is great and your heart is kind.

For all your goodness I will keep on singing. Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find. Rest the Lord, O my soul, O my soul, worship his holy name.

Sing like never before, O my soul, I'll worship your holy name.

And on that day when my strength is fading, the end goes near and my time has come.

[22 : 19] Still my soul will sing your phrase unending. Ten thousand years of them forever more.

Rest the Lord, O my soul, O my soul, worship his holy name. sing like never before, O my soul, I'll worship your holy name.

worship your holy name. your holy Thank you.

Thank you.

That would be gratefully received. Thank you. Matthew chapter 13, and we're reading from verse 24 through to verse 43.

[24 : 27] This is God's word.

He said nothing to them without a parable.

This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet. I will open my mouth in parables. I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world. Then he left the crowds and went into the house, and his disciples came to him, saying, Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.

He answered, The one who sows the good seed is the son of man. The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil.

The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so it will be at the end of the age. The son of man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all lawbreakers, and throw them into the fiery furnace.

[26 : 51] In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father. He who has ears, let him hear.

Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us. We're going to sing again now to God's praise. We'll sing from Psalm 103 once more, and we'll sing verses 8 to verse 10 in Gaelic.

I'll just read these verses in English. The Lord our God is merciful, and he is gracious, long-suffering, and slow to wrath, and mercy plenteous.

He will not chide continually, nor keep his anger still. With us he dealt not as we sinned, nor did requite our ill. These two verses of Psalm 103, and we remain seated to sing in Gaelic.

The Lord our God is merciful, and he is gracious, long-suffering, and desires to prosper.

[28 : 07] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[30 : 39] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. If I could encourage you now, please, to turn back to the passage that we read in Matthew chapter 13.

And we will pray as we come back to it. Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for who you are.

We thank you that, as we have sang, that you are the Lord, our God. Even though you are the one who is greater than anything we can comprehend, you are our creator, you are our sustainer.

And yet we thank you that we can call you our Lord and our Savior. We thank you for the mercy and for the grace that is shown to us in Jesus.

We thank you that, as we ask for that grace, as we cry out, as one of all did, saying, Lord, have mercy on me, the sinner, we thank you that that prayer is heard.

[32 : 05] And when it is prayed from our hearts, we are promised that we are forgiven our sin, we are justified. We thank you for your plenteous mercy. And we recognize that this is available to us because you have not treated us as our sins deserved, because you have actually treated your Son as our sins deserved.

We thank you that he took our sin upon his shoulder. We thank you that he went to the cross and laid down his life.

He died to pay the penalty for our sin. We thank you that we have eternal life as we believe in him. And so we pray that you would be working in our hearts.

And as we consider this parable this morning, we ask that you would open our eyes and unblock our ears and soften our hearts that we may receive the grace that is offered to us in Christ.

So be at work, Lord, we pray here amongst us. We pray for the children in Sunday school and those who are in creche, that they would grow up knowing you, Lord, and trusting you.

[33 : 16] We pray for the congregations around us who open the word of God. And we pray that wherever Christ crucified is preached, that the word would be blessed and that the church of Jesus would be built up more and more, that more and more would come to know the Lord Jesus.

We pray for Scott as he continues to be trained to go into the work of ministry. And we ask that you would bless him and that you would lead him and guide him.

We pray for Fiona also. And as we look forward to the due date for the wee one this coming Saturday, we pray that your hand of protection would be over her and the child that she carries.

We thank you, Lord, that we can take all our cares and concerns, all that we look forward to you, to you in prayer. And so we pray, Lord, that you would bless them and your hand would be upon them as a family.

We pray for Gordon and Gillian also as they go for interview tomorrow and Tuesday as they respond to the call that they feel towards ministry.

[34 : 23] We ask, Lord, that you would guide them and lead them. And as we have been called, we pray, the harvest is plentiful, the labourers are few in this country where the gospel is increasingly scarcely heard.

And so we pray that you would send more workers into the harvest field and help us, we pray, to be good seed, to be those who will carry the message of Jesus to all those that you put around us.

So hear our prayers and help us as we gather now around your word. And we ask all this in Jesus' name and for Jesus' sake. Amen. Amen. Matthew chapter 13.

And we are picking up today where we left off before. And we're in verse 24 and following. And really what I want to do today is just look at the one parable we read actually three parables, three stories, but I want to look today just at the one parable and then next Sunday evening it will be hopefully we'll come back and look at the other parables in the bigger picture.

But we find Jesus here in this section that we read and he's in teaching mode. He is telling stories. He's telling parables.

[35 : 47] Parables. We thought about that last or two weeks ago now. A parable is an earthly story with a heavenly or a spiritual meaning. And Jesus began with the parable of the sower, which we looked at already.

A parable that gets underneath the skin, that gets down to heart level. It's like an x-ray scan of our hearts. And now continuing on that same theme of sowing and growing, Jesus tells the parable of the weeds as it's titled in the ESV.

We may also recognize this as the parable of the wheat and the tares. Sometimes it's called that. And immediately as we approach this parable, there's a sense of foreboding.

Because you don't have to be an expert gardener to know that weeds are not good. Weeds do damage.

Weeds over... They overrun a patch of ground. They're hard to control. Weeds choke out the plants that we actually want to see grow.

[36 : 59] So as we come to this parable, we're in a kind of state of alert as we look for the lessons that Jesus is teaching.

So what do we see in terms of lessons to this parable? Well, five points, if I can get through them in the time that we have. The first thing we see in this parable is the sowing of the gospel.

The sowing, the good seed of the gospel that is sowed. The second thing, I'll give you the headings just in case I don't get through all this. The second thing we'll see is the sabotage of the enemy. So the sowing goes forth, but there's a sabotage, there's an act of sabotage which is clear to see.

The third thing we'll think about is the sons of who. Whose sons are we? Because we see two family lines in this parable that Jesus shares with us.

There's a separation, point number four, that is warned. And there's very sobering words as we're warned about the separation that is going to come to pass at the end of time.

[38 : 09] And the final thing is the salvation offer. The salvation offer that continually is going forth from Jesus.

So first of all, we see here the sowing of the gospel. Verse 24. Jesus put another parable before them, saying, The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field.

So this parable, it begins a lot like the last one. We see a man who is sowing good seed in his field.

And that was something that was continually seen in that world. They didn't just pop out to the local shop for their food. What they ate, they first had to grow. And so before anything could grow, the seed had to be planted.

And so we see this man who is sowing good seed in his field. So that's the first part of the story.

[39 : 19] And then we can jump now to verse 36 and following for the explanation because Jesus in this particular parable is hugely helpful because we have both the story and the explanation.

We're not left wondering, wondering what this means. The disciples are sensible enough to come to Jesus and say, we're not sure what this means. Can you please explain it? And so we have the explanation as well as the story.

So the disciples in verse 36, then Jesus left the crowds and went into the house and his disciples came to him saying, explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.

He answered, the one who sows the good seed is the son of man, the field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom.

So we have the story and now Jesus, he gives the disciples the code, the key, to use Scott's illustration, to understanding the story.

[40 : 23] Remember last week or two weeks ago we thought about the secrets of the kingdom of heaven that are being revealed to some through the parables and are hidden from others through the parables. So as the disciples come to Jesus and say, can you please explain what this means?

Jesus gives them the key and he explains step by step what the parable means. And so we see the sower and who is the sower? Well, we're told in verse 37 that the sower is the son of man.

Who is the son of man? The son of man is Jesus. That's the title he used for himself. It goes back to Daniel 7. It's the title of the Messiah who was to come. The sower is Jesus.

So that's the first part of the key. That's the first explanation. What about the good seed? Well, the good seed are, to put it in our language, they're Christians.

They're disciples of Jesus. They are, verse 38, sons of the kingdom. Hendrickson, the commentator, calls the good seed those who gladly own Jesus as their lord and king.

[41 : 36] So the son of man is the sower. The good seed are the disciples of Jesus, not just the twelve, but much wider than that. All those who are following Jesus, all those who own him as lord and king.

And what about the field? Well, verse 38, Jesus tells us very plainly, the field is the world. His field, his world.

So what is this parable all about? Well, it's about getting the good news of Jesus out into all the world.

That's what this is about. The best preacher who ever lived was Jesus. He is the master sower and he used his people on that first day as he preached, he used an odd bunch of disciples as the good seed to scatter the message of the gospel throughout the field of his world.

One commentator says this, the field is the world. The subject of the parable and the presence, the subject of the parable is the presence of the kingdom of God in the world.

[43 : 02] The subject of the parable is not the presence of unbelievers in the church. Too often, says Legg, the commentator, this parable has been used to assert that the church of Jesus Christ will always be mixed, the sons of the kingdom alongside the sons of the evil one.

However, Jesus did not say that the field is the church. He said that the field is the world. So what Jesus is doing in this parable is he is teaching his disciples to be good seed.

Jesus is preparing his disciples to be commissioned to go out into all the world to be good seed, to tell people the good news about Jesus.

And that commission would come very plainly and clearly in Matthew 28. So this is preparation. This is a preface verse to Matthew chapter 28. The disciples were to be used in the sowing of the gospel.

They were the good seed that would be sent out into the field of his world. They were to tell the good news, the good news about the life of Jesus, that perfect, sinless life that was lived righteously, the life that you and I can't live, that was lived for us.

[44 : 28] They were commissioned to tell people the good news about the death of Jesus as a sacrifice for us.

The good news about the resurrection of Jesus and the promise of eternal life if we believe in him.

And in terms of the application for us, it's very straightforward and yet it comes with real challenge. The commission that the disciples were being given, it still stands.

This commission, this task has been passed on to every disciple. If you and I are followers of Jesus, we are called to be good seed.

We are called to go out into all the villages and all the workplaces and all the families and all the nations, all the communities and tell people the good news about Jesus.

[45 : 46] Hendrickson, the commentator, says, the field is the world, the gospel must be proclaimed everywhere. So let me just ask the question of you as I've asked it of myself in this week.

Who are you and I speaking to about Jesus? You know, we can go on our phones and we can open up text messages or WhatsApp and we can see live chats.

We can see chats that are ongoing, they're developing. we're in conversation with people. Who are we in conversation with about Jesus?

Specific question, personal question. Think about names, think about people. what chats, what conversations are currently live in our experience where we are telling people about Jesus?

Not the church. People will talk all day about the church and their preferences of the church. Not denominations and which denominations we like and which denominations we don't like.

[47 : 04] People will talk all year about that. who are we telling about Jesus? Are you and I fellow sowers with Jesus?

Are we good seed? The sowing of the gospel. The second point is the sabotage of the enemy. So we see the sower, he's going out, he's, he is sowing the good seed with that expectation of harvest.

But, verse 25, while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also.

And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds? He said to them, an enemy has done this.

So there's the story of sabotage. Not carelessness, but sabotage. The sower's men are sleeping and whilst they were sleeping, an enemy comes and he sows weeds among the wheat and then he leaves before anyone wakes up and sees what has been done.

[48 : 29] And as the sower's men then wait for the harvest, they are dismayed to see when the time for harvest comes that not only is there grain, but there's also weeds.

So that's the story. Sabotage of the enemy. And again, we can fast forward to verse 38 and verse 39 for the explanation, for the key.

Jesus says to his disciples in response to their question, what does this all mean? Jesus says, the weeds are the sons of the evil one and the enemy who sowed them is the devil.

So using Jesus' code, his key, we learn that the weeds are the sons of the evil one, verse 38, meaning the weeds are those who are not Christians.

The weeds are those who are not with Jesus. The weeds are those who, to use Hendrickson's words, do not gladly own Jesus as their lord and king.

[49 : 37] And the enemy who sows them into the world with that bad seed, with that bad message, with that anti-gospel, is the devil.

So behind the sabotage is the devil. So what's this all about? Well, this is all about spiritual warfare and opposition.

And it's good for us to be reminded of that. And especially when we've had a weekend of blessing, especially after a communion weekend, I'm always on red alert because I know the devil will be active.

At the table, we gather around, we remember the Lord's death until he comes, and we know something of the joy of the Lord. We know something of the peace and the blessing of Jesus and owning Jesus as our Lord and our Savior.

But as we rise from the table and head out from Sunday into Monday, what can we expect? Well, we can expect what many have actually experienced, even in the course of this week.

[50 : 58] We can expect the enemy to be active. I read this week, I hadn't actually read it before, that the devil, the word devil, comes from the Greek word that means to throw.

And so, we can expect, after a period of blessing, we can expect the devil to throw trouble our way.

We can expect to see attempts at spiritual sabotage. Ephesians chapter 6, Paul says, I'm paraphrasing here, he says, we're in a battle.

Sometimes we forget that as we're Christians. If you're a Christian, you're in a battle. If you're thinking about entrusting your life to the Lord Jesus, don't think it's going to be calm and smooth and easy, plain sailing, you're entering a battle.

Paul says, we're in a battle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

[52 : 22] So, we need to actually learn from the servants in verse 25 and not go to sleep, but stay awake, watch, and pray.

Put on the armor of God that we may be able to stand against the sabotage of the enemy. So, we see the sowing of the gospel.

That's what this parable is all about, and yet we see the assault, the sabotage of the enemy. The third thing we can note here in this parable is the question, the third point is a question.

The sons of who? Whose sons are we? In the islands, we make it our business to know who is a son of who.

There are many conversations. I remember the last, not the last communion, but the communion before. David Strain, who was from America, was over. We were having some food, and there was a number of people around, and the conversation, everybody in the room was trying to make connections with everybody else.

[53 : 34] So where are you from, and who do you know, and who are your people, and how are you related to this one, and that one, and the next one? And he kind of sat back, disconnected from it all, and he said, this is the most Hebridean conversation I've ever heard in my life, because we have great interest in family connections.

And in this parable, we can note here that there are only two families. families. Jesus is talking about his field, his world, the whole world, and yet there's only two family lines.

There are, as we look at verse 38 here, there are the sons of the kingdom, and there are the sons of the evil one. Or to put it in more modern language, there are those who are with Jesus and against Satan, and there are those who are against Jesus and therefore with Satan.

It's very stark, but it's very clearly what Jesus is teaching. It connects actually with the previous chapter, Matthew chapter 12 and verse 30.

Jesus says very plainly, whoever is not with me is against me. There's only two paths, there's only two ways, there's only two family lines that we can be connected with.

[54 : 59] We like a whole lot of grey, don't we? But Jesus paints a picture here in black and white. We like a whole lot of nuance when we're thinking about these kind of things, but Jesus speaks very plainly and clearly, and Jesus through this parable, asks you and I, who are we sons and daughters of?

He asks us, which family do you belong to? The Lord's table actually illustrates this in a very visual way.

A table is set, and there's only two places you can sit, one of two places you can sit. You can sit at it and take the bread and take the wine and profess faith in Jesus and own him as Lord and King, or you can sit outside of it.

And sitting outside of it sometimes means sitting at sides, sometimes it means sitting at home. table, you're still outside of it. And when we are outside of the table, we make another profession, we profess no faith in Jesus.

We profess that we do not own him as Lord and King. But there's only two places, that's the point. There's no neutral option, there's no in-between state.

[56 : 51] We're either in or we're out. And the table gives us the opportunity to profess whose sons and daughters we are.

And then as we rise from the table, as we have done over these last few days, our lives should back up and be consistent with the profession that we make.

So, from the place that we sit on the Lord's day to the way that we walk on Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday, as people look in at us, they should be able to see that we are sons and daughters of the kingdom.

The sons of who? That's the third point. Fourth point is the separation that is warned. So, as we continue in the story at verse 28, we see the servants and they're dismayed to see all this weed that is growing.

So, the servants said to him, then do you want us to go and gather them? They're seeing the weeds, and so the servants said, do you want us to go and gather them?

[58 : 14] But he said, no, less than gathering the weeds, you root up the wheat along with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.

So, again, there's the story. It's not complicated. The servants are looking for the wheat harvest, but now as they look out their window, they see a whole lot of mess.

weeds. There's weeds sprouting out, they're threatening to take over everything. And we sense the frustration as these servants say, well, do you want us to go and rip them all out?

But the wise farmer says, no, you'll just do damage if you try that. Leave it to harvest time. Then it's all going to get pulled up.

And the weeds and the wheat will be separated into bundles. Weeds for burning and wheat will have a place in my barn.

[59 : 21] That's the story. And we go to verse 39 for the explanation that Jesus gives to his disciples. And Jesus explains in verse 39, the harvest is the close of the age and the reapers are angels.

just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so it will be, says Jesus, at the close of the age. The Son of Man will send his angels and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all lawbreakers and throw them into the fiery furnace.

In that place there will be weeping! and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father.

So there's the picture once more. And again, it's not hard to understand. It's very black and white, it's very clear. We see a picture that is painted of the end of time.

And at the end of time, there will be a harvest. There will be a gathering up. And as part of that gathering up, as part of that harvest, there will be a separation.

[60 : 53] So what does the separation look like? Well, we see first of all, all those who do not repent. All those who in this life did not confess their sin.

All those who went through their lives determining, I will be king. I will do what I want to do. All those who do not bow to Jesus as king.

Those whom Jesus calls sons of the evil one. the warning that Jesus gives is that they will be gathered up out of his kingdom and thrown into a place where there is suffering for sin.

sin. And the picture that is given to us by Jesus is a picture of fire and weeping and gnashing of teeth.

It's a terrifying picture. It's not my picture, it's Jesus' picture. sin. So in the separation we see those on the one hand who don't repent, sons of the evil one.

[62 : 14] And then on the other hand we see those who are righteous. How are they righteous? Well, because they've received the righteousness of Jesus. They've trusted Jesus.

Remember, on the cross, on the cross, if we are trusting Jesus, our sin is transferred to him and his righteousness is transferred to us.

So when we're trusting in Jesus, we become righteous because of all that he has done. And so we see those who are righteous because they have received the righteousness of Jesus, because they have trusted Jesus.

And Jesus says, they will shine like the sun, which means that they will be like Jesus. they are the sons of the kingdom.

They will be gathered up and have a home in the kingdom of their father, which is a beautiful picture.

[63 : 16] So we have a terrifying picture. We have a beautiful picture. And it speaks to us about separation. And these pictures are so clear, and they are so sharp, and they are so powerful, because this is a warning.

If a fire was to break out in this building, and the alarm was to sound, there wouldn't be the whisper of a fire. There wouldn't be a whisper and a gentle melody.

There's a blaring siren, so that we'll hear it, because it's a warning. And this picture that Jesus gives us in this parable, it's a warning.

Maybe for someone here it's a final warning. There will be a separation. The Lord's table shows a clear separation, but for those who determined last week that they were outside of the table, there is still time to repent.

There is still time to come to Jesus. For those who are saying this morning, I will be Lord, I will be king of my life, I will not confess my sin, the good news is there is still time to repent, there is still time to change.

[64 : 44] But at the close of the age, verse 39, it will be too late to change. On that day where we see Jesus come, with the angels that he has sent out as reapers, it will be too late to change.

The separation that is effected on that day will not be temporary, it will be eternal. And those who are with Jesus, those who know God as Father, they will go to heaven.

And those who do not, those who are not with Jesus, those who by default have Satan as their father, they will go to hell.

It's very clear. one commentator green says, all this is very unacceptable to people today. We do not treat evil with great seriousness, and many do not even believe in a future life, a heaven and a hell, where the great separation will be finalized, but it is an undeniable part of the teaching of Jesus.

are we going to claim to know more about it than he? It's very clear.

[66 : 25] do you and I think that we know better than Jesus, in terms of this teacher? Do we know better, do we have a clearer picture than the one who has come from eternity into time?

To seek us and to save us from what he knows is beyond time, there is a separation. that is warned. And finally, there is salvation offered.

Because the final words in verse 43 are, he who has ears, let him hear. And we must not miss that statement, because it's an offer statement.

Jesus has told a story at a very clear, disturbing story. He has given a very clear explanation. He has spoken of the amazing hope of those who are with him, and he has warned of the awful judgment for those who are against him.

And if we have been given ears to hear this, if we have been given eyes to see the truth that Jesus proclaims, if we have been given hearts that are open to the gospel message that Jesus is preaching, then we are not to harden our hearts, but we are to hear what he has said.

[68 : 15] we are to heed and act upon what he has said. We are to believe the word that Jesus speaks.

We are to confess the sin that is in each one of us. and whilst there is still time, we are to receive the salvation that Jesus promises to all who will come to him.

Let us close this service as we respond in the final hymn. Hymn number 683.

I hear thy welcome voice that calls me Lord to thee for cleansing in thy precious blood that flowed on Calvary. And then the chorus is I am coming Lord, coming now to thee.

Wash me, cleanse me in the blood that flowed on Calvary. Let's stand in a moment to sing to God's praise. Lord, sing to Let us God's sing to God's Let us God's Let us praise.

[69 : 45] I hear thy welcome voice that holds me, to thee, for cleansing in thy precious blood that hold on Calvary.

I am coming, Lord, coming now to thee.

Wash me, let's me in the blood that load on Calvary. If Jesus calls me on to perfect faith and love, to perfect hope and and for earth and heaven above, I am coming, Lord, coming now to me, wash me, me the blood that hold on Calvary.

of glory. It is Jesus to confirm the blessed one within, by adding place to welcome grace, where reign the heart of sin.

I am coming, Lord, coming out to thee, wash me, cleanse in blood that hold on Calvary.

[71 : 53] ■■■■■! Here we need in grace.

For hail the gift of Christ our Lord. Our strength and righteousness. I am coming, Lord.

Coming now to Thee. Wash me, cleanse me in the blood. That flowed on Calvary.

And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forevermore. Amen.