

The Tares against the Wheat

Matthew 13:24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: **25** While men slept, **his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat**, and went his way... **28** He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, **Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?** **29** But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. **30** **Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.** Jesus explained to us the way in which Satan will attack the church, to stop the work of God. It is by "Christians" who are false. But it is very important that every Christian understands our situation. **God commands all saved people to gather together in fellowship.** (Hebrews 10:25 *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together...*) **But if a new believer goes to a church, he may be entering the arms of a person who is a tare, not a true brother in the faith.** Scripture indicates **that we go to church to receive spiritual exhortation,** (Heb 10:25... *but exhorting one another*). Don't get angry when a sermon makes you uncomfortable. God commands sermons that change our lives spiritual. But the verse clearly has the concept of worshipping God **WITH OTHER BELIEVERS**, that is, in a church. **Fellowship among the saved is essential to a church**, and this fellowship with other saved people is a spiritual activity that is commanded by God. So, understand the principle very well. **It is a sin not to attend and participate every week in your church.** Likewise, it should **only be a church of good biblical doctrine and practice as commanded by God.** But we need to be wise about correctly identifying who we should relate to within the church.

Apart from this, there are whole churches that are run by false prophets, with bad doctrine, and spiritual poison. But **how do we identify the true Christian who can help us spiritually?** The false prophet and the unconverted "Christian" (one of the tares) both identify themselves as "saved" and even "spiritual," and they proclaim that they are the most spiritual of all even though their conduct and discernment does not match this statement.

A Person can Know the Work of God

1 John 2:6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also **so to walk, even as he** (Christ) **walked.**

1 Peter 2:21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, **leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.** The very simple answer is that **if one learns very well what the character of Jesus is like**, which is the same character of God, and so, **whoever does not behave like Jesus, we reject them as the ones we imitate, the ones we follow.** **1 Corinthians 11:1** Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. We are very susceptible to the examples of others. If a person wants to be an informal "leader" in the church but does not behave like Jesus, we should not let them impress us. We don't put "weight" on them or what they say or do. They look like fraudulent Christians, tares. As in **Matthew 13, it is most destructive to try to separate those who are truly saved from those who are deceived (tares) or those who would deceive (false prophet).** Ultimately, it doesn't matter if a person identifies himself as a brother in the church or not, if he is not Christ-like in character, he is not going to help others in their spiritual lives. Ignore him and what he does and says, and you follow Christ with those who likewise follow Christ in good faith and practice. You need to follow the example of Jesus, not others who ignore the moral character of Jesus.

2 Timothy 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts: but **follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.** While no one can know another person's heart except that person and God, everyone sees their life and hears their words. There are people who proclaim to be "Christians" and to be "our brothers", but their words and deeds do not edify anyone spiritually. They destroy by their behavior. They are deceitful.

Wolves in Sheep's Clothing

Matthew 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you **in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.** In other words, Jesus warned us to **look at their character**, and how their character develops in deeds and sayings, and how their whole life supports the concept of Jesus Christ our example, or is the opposite of Christ in deed, words, and attitude (character). Those that we want fellowship with is because the person says and acts in character like Jesus morally.

Matthew 7:20 Wherefore **by their fruits ye shall know them.** (By their fruit, you will see the fruit of the Holy Spirit and their conduct is in them or not.) It is important to recognize that Jesus gave us the key to identify and protect ourselves from them, and **this key is their character and their fruit.**

Hebrews 13:7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: **whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.** (their life's fruit) It is very important that **first**, we know the character of Jesus, the attributes of God. **Second**, we must use this knowledge to distinguish among all those who claim to be our brethren, to see Christ in them, in their words, deeds, and character, and **to reject the influence of those who are not like Christ, who are tares.** Throughout the history in which you have known someone, consider what has been the result of their conduct and imitate their faith. Although this commandment is especially for those who are our pastors, it is also applied to those who are "informal spiritual leaders" among the church. The word translated here ("pastors") is not ποιμήν poimén, the normal word for pastor of a church, but in **Hebrews 13:7** is ἡγέομαι jegéomai, a form of the verb "to lead." **But what is the spiritual fruit of their life, of their ministry? That is the critical element in judging them, of evaluating them, and of esteeming or following them.** A leader destroys the church if he behaves like a dictator, and does not behave like the example of Jesus Christ, the good shepherd.

"Church" is for our Good

1 Corinthians 14:26 How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. **Let all things be done unto edifying.** The obvious issue should be that God commands us to congregate **FOR OUR OWN SPIRITUAL GOOD. Anything that does not edify should be avoided in the church.** That is, if someone sings out of pride of their own talent, to boast about it, or someone uses a public time of thanksgiving to boast about themselves, their achievements, their family, their economic status, boasting about their own selves, this person is acting badly. Don't let them influence you.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and **admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.** The activities of a church are commanded **jointly**, with other Christian brethren of the same good faith and practice. But this has a condition that the church and its members **are truly saved, with good doctrine and biblical practice, who will edify one another.** According to **2 Timothy 2:22**, they must call on the Lord "out of a pure heart," that is, **that they sincerely worship God, not by venting their bad character.** This will be that they really want to obey God, and will be seen

to act like Jesus, in the moral character of God, not otherwise.

Ephesians 4:32 *And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.* Part of being accepted by God is when He sees the divine attributes in us, and this is seen by how you treat other people. So, of necessity, **we must have a relationship with other people so that God sees this.** This, God did through the church community.

The Tares Destroy Love

John 13:35 *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.* **1 John 4:7** *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.* God advises us that we can rely on the element of love between us as an identification that someone is the wheat, and not the tares. In the meantime, love covers offenses (**1 Peter 4:8** *And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins*), the opposite of this behavior destroys love (**Galatians 5:15** *But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.*) Many Christians sit in the scoffer's chair (**Psalms 1:1**) **to criticize everything.** Gossip is an attack in the cowardly way (behind your back) to destroy a person in the sight of others. (**Leviticus 19:16** *Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the LORD.* **17** *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.* **18** *Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.*) The plan of Satan is to discredit the brethren that could help you by means of blaspheming them. If a person that could be useful for God one day, goes to a church and grows in the fellowship and exhortation of brethren, then Satan wants to stop that from happening. **Satan then destroys the church** (which is the saved people, not the building) **through the satanic character of division, hatred, and aggression toward one another.** **Galatians 5:26** *Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.* Because of love, we support one another. **1 Corinthians 13:4** *Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up* (inflates the ego), **5** *Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil.* It is wrong when people come to the church to get mad and fight with others. For the tare, this is exactly what they want. For the good Christian,

he seeks edification and love, in seeking to receive good, and in seeking to give or be a blessing to others.

The factors, which destroy a church "from within itself," are **pride, heresy** (divisions, differences of belief and practice), **legalism** which is another type of arrogance over others, **distrust** (based on betrayal) instead of unity. **Ephesians 4:2** *With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.* It is very important that we understand the importance of unity among the church, that we feel the same thing, and we all pull for the same goals.

Shared Church Goals

(1) The principal goal is that we live our Christianity **guiding others to the Savior by our good testimony and our dedicated lives to God.** We live the moral principles we see and understand from our Bibles. Our purpose on earth is to serve God. Moreover, than just seeing others saved, we want to edify our brethren so that they are blessed. This is the key to **unity.** A person seeks success in making other brethren to have happy lives in the will of God. This is by exhortation (preaching), edification and prayer. The humility of one's own self is totally the opposite of arrogance and boasting. **(2) That we do not promote ourselves nor our own benefit.** (**1 Corinthians 13:4** *love... does not vaunteth itself*) Boasting will always cause division (heresy) and envy. **(3) We live the truth of Scripture,** seeking to always live **the principles of God,** to promote them by living them in our own lives. In the church and outside, there are false prophets that promote whatever thing that is against God or to distort the truth. We fight against them and in favor of promoting the truth of God. This promoting of the principles of God is founded in what we understand in Scripture, and living what we understand in fellowship with brethren of the same faith. We must congregate (attend faithfully and participate).

How to Destroy a Church

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Matthew 16:18 *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock* (that rock is that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ, the Savior) **I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**

Galatians 1:6 *I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*

Jesus created the church for His purposes. This church represents the kingdom of God on earth. Through the church, God does His divine work, which is the salvation of the souls of men (those who respond to His gospel invitation). But the church is based on the gospel, and **if you change salvation, the gospel, you have already destroyed the church.** The essence of the church is **saved people,** who are saved and are growing in their faith and their sanctification, and who are committed to obeying God and fulfilling the task that God gives to the church. But it is certain that Satan tries to destroy God's work as much as he can.