

QUEST FOR CAMELOT "KINGDOM OCCUPATION" MATTHEW 13:24-30; 36-43

This Week's Core Competency

Hope – I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ. Hebrews 6:19-20, *We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.*

Although most Christians think "heaven" when they think "hope," the believer's hope in Christ entails much more. Thinking "heaven" when thinking "hope," is like travelers thinking "airport" on their way to "Hawaii." Hope entails all that God has in store when "the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Mt 13:43). True, "to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (2Co 5:8 KJV) is hopeful, but it's only the beginning. Any believer who dies before Christ returns goes to be with the Lord, but after the Lord returns, the righteous will inherit the kingdom (Jas 2:5; Col 1:12, 13) and ultimately the new earth (Rev 21:1-4) where they will spend eternity.

In the unfolding of God's plan, judgment precedes Christ's kingdom rule. In his interpretation of the parable of the weeds in Matthew 13, Jesus says: "The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the

The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.

– Luke 1:32-33

fiery furnace, where 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" (vv. 41-43). Then in Matthew 24, he reiterates that judgment will follow hard on his return, prior to his rule over Israel and the Gentiles. He says: "At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other" (vv. 30-31). In the following chapter, he describes two judgments, the judgment on Israel (25:1-28) and the judgment on the nations (25:31-46), which determine who will gain entrance into his kingdom.

One commentator's brief overview of the kingdom in John's preaching is enlightening. He writes:

"The prophets had predicted that Messiah would rule the Gentiles, and Daniel had said that all peoples would serve (or worship) the Son of Man (Dan 7:14). Herod interpreted the news in light of messianic prophecy and felt politically threatened by Jesus. Every indication points to the fact that the kingship discussed in Matthew 2 in reference to Jesus is precisely that which was set forth, described, and anticipated by the Old Testament prophets.

"A highpoint in the early identification of Jesus as the Christ, and one which appears in each of the Gospels, is Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River. Here we have the testimony of the Prophet John, the voice of God the Father from heaven, and the descending Holy Spirit. The preaching of John the Baptist had focused on a call to repentance due to the proximity of the Christ and the nearness of the kingdom (Matt. 3:1-12; Mark 1:2-8; Luke 3:1-18; John 1:6-28). John

cont. pg. 2

denied being himself the Christ and spoke of one who was coming. That one, then, is presented as Jesus. When Jesus was baptized by John, God spoke from heaven affirming Jesus in the language of the Davidic covenant: 'My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased' (Matt. 3:17; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22). John testified that the whole event verified to him that Jesus was truly the Christ (John 1:29-34).

"John's understanding of the kingdom, which he preached as near (Matt. 3:2), was consistent with the teaching of Old Testament prophecy. Like the earlier prophets, he expected the kingdom to come in a revelation of judgment and wrath. Consequently, he preached repentance, alerting his hearers that 'the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire' (Matt. 3:10). He warned that the Christ (who was coming after him) would 'baptize . . . with . . . fire . . . His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire' (Matt. 3:11-12).

"In this prophecy, John was employing literary features from Malachi's prediction of the coming Day of the Lord; "For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze," says the Lord of hosts, "so that it will leave them neither root nor branch" (Mal. 4:1). We recall that the prophets believed that the coming Messiah would strike the earth and punish the wicked. Similarly, John foresees [sic] the Christ as the One who will execute the judgment of the Day of the Lord. In summary, the kingdom itself is understood in the terms of Old Testament prophecy. Its coming would be marked by judgment, a Day of the Lord. Its extent would be worldwide, with Gentiles submitting themselves to the Christ. It would be a political and spiritually enlivened kingdom in which the promises of blessing to all people, including Israel's nation promises, are secured. And all of this would take place through a king who would fulfill the promises to David in both political power and intimacy with God—Jesus of Nazareth" (Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism*, 233-34).

The parable of the weeds reveals that the "revelation of judgment and wrath" that John the Baptist considered imminent will only come when the Son of Man returns after an indefinite period of time during which the message of the kingdom is preached worldwide (vv. 37-38).

day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43

24 Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. 25 But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. 26 When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

27 "The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?'

28 "An enemy did this,' he replied. "The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?'

29 "No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.'"

36 Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field."

37 He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man.

38 The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, 39 and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

40 "As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. 41 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. 42 They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- * Underline "kingdom of heaven" in v. 24, "kingdom" in v. 38, "his kingdom" in v. 41, and "kingdom of their Father" in v. 43.
- * Box "like" indicating *comparison* in vv. 24, 43.
- * Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 25.

- * Circle "weeds" throughout.
- * Circle "the world" in v. 38.
- * Bracket "sons of the kingdom" in v. 38.
- * Bracket "sons of the evil one" in v. 38.
- * Circle "the devil" in v. 39.

- * Circle "harvest" in v. 39.
- * Underline "end of the age" in v. 39.
- * Box "so" indicating *comparison* in v. 40.

- * Bracket "out of his kingdom" in v. 41.
- * Circle "fiery furnace" in v. 42.
- * Highlight v. 43b.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. To whom does "them" refer in verse 24?
2. Stories are built around *characters*, *setting*, and *plot*. Identify the *characters* in Jesus' parable of the weeds.
3. Identify the *setting* for the plot in the parable.
4. Identify the *actions* of the characters in the parable.
5. For whom does Jesus interpret the parable and where?
6. "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man." How so?
7. Identify the "sons of the kingdom" and "sons of the evil one."
8. Explain what is signified by "the harvest" described in verses 40-42.
9. What does this *add* to the revelation of the parable of the soils regarding the present age?
10. **Discussion:** Talk about the hope of the Christian based on this parable.

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of its message to clarify your understanding of the passage.

The parable of the weeds in Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43 clearly complements the parable of the soils in verses 1-23. Whereas the parable of the soils describes the present age in terms of four different soils (i.e., a path, rocky places, among thorns, good soil), interpreted to mean four different responses to the one message of the kingdom, the parable of the weeds describes the present age in terms of two different seeds (i.e., wheat seed and weed seed), interpreted to mean the same response to two different messages, one true and the other false. One commentator explains: "What the parable of the sower described in terms of four categories of soil with the same kind of seed in each, the parable of the wheat and weeds speaks of in terms of two different kinds of seed sown by two different individuals, a farmer and his enemy" (Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, NAC, 219).

Every story has *characters*, *setting*, and *plot*—something happens, involving someone, somewhere. *Characters* in Jesus' parable include: "a man" (v. 24), "his enemy" (v. 25), "the owner's servants" (vv. 27), and "the harvesters" (v. 30). The *setting* of the parable is simply the owner's "field" (vv. 24, 27). The *plot* unfolds as follows: 1) the owner sows good seed in his field; 2) his enemy sows weeds among the wheat; 3) the owner's servants notify him of the weeds and ask if he wants them pulled up; 4) the owner tells them to let wheat and weeds grow together until the harvest; 5) when he will tell the harvesters to burn the weeds and gather the wheat into his barn.

Jesus interprets the parable for his disciples, who come to him in "the house" (cf., 13:1), likely Peter's home in Capernaum (see 8:14). Jesus identifies

himself, the Son of Man, as "the one who sowed the good seed." He identifies "the field" as the world, not the church. He identifies "the good seed" as those who belong to the kingdom by virtue of believing the Son of Man's message. He identifies "the weeds" as those who belong to the evil one by virtue of believing the message of the devil, the Son of Man's enemy. He identifies "the harvest" as the end of the inter-advent age, an allusion to judgment that will accompany the Christ's coming to consummate the kingdom. Finally, he identifies "the harvesters" as angels who will execute the Son of Man's judgment.

The message of this parable is ironically one of both judgment and hope—judgment for the sons of the evil one, who cause sin and do evil, and hope for the sons of the kingdom, who "will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

In the words of one commentator, the parable reveals: "We will not see the uprooting or elimination of evil until the end of this age. There will be a mixed nature in the world, which will continue in a form that seems counterintuitive to contemporary notions of God's reigning kingdom. Jesus does not give a full theodicy with the parable, only a rock-solid basis for hope. Evil derives from the evil one, not from God. We should expect spiritual warfare throughout this age as we live in an environment contaminated by evil. But there looms on the horizon of history certain rescue for Jesus' disciples and certain judgment for those who are aligned with the evil one" (Michael J. Wilkins, *The NIV Application Commentary: Matthew*, 503).

The Message of the Passage

Don't be surprised that you face evil in the present age, for the sons of the evil one will not be judged nor the sons of the kingdom "shine like the sun" until the Son of Man returns.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you through his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on the three "living questions" below to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your answers to the following *living* questions:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

“Kingdom Occupation”
(Use the space below for Sunday’s message notes)

notes STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 24 **kingdom . . . is like** "Matthew relates seven parables, beginning with the parable of the sower . . . The other six are divided into two groups of three, separated by an explanation of the parable of the weeds. Each of the last six is introduced by 'the kingdom of heaven is like'" (Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 334). The expression, "kingdom of heaven," has its roots in the book of Daniel, which declares that "the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people" (2:44). The "kingdom of heaven" is that very kingdom. One commentator explains: "The phrase 'of heaven' does not mean that it is a mystical or spiritual kingdom, as opposed to a physical, earthly kingdom. It means that this kingdom is sent from God who is in heaven" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Matthew," 2016 ed., 78, www.soniclight.com). "Kingdom of heaven" (v. 24), "kingdom" (v. 38), "his kingdom" (v. 41), and "kingdom of their Father" (v. 43) refer to one and the same kingdom.

v. 25 **weeds** "The weeds (*zizania*) are more literally *darnel*, often at first indistinguishable from wheat" (Blomberg, 219). "This is a weedy rye grass with poisonous seeds, which in early states of growth looks like wheat but can be distinguished easily at harvest time" (Wilkins, 482). "Darnel was called 'tares' or 'weeds' in the New Testament. It looks identical to what until the grain ripens, when it becomes black instead of yellow (see Matthew 13:24-30). The grains are bitter and cause dizziness and sickness if eaten" (Ralph Gower, *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*, 100).

v. 38 **the world** "Notice particularly that the field is not the church. The identification of the field as the church was common in the writings of some early church fathers and in those of some Reformers, and it is quite popular with many modern critical, evangelical, and even dispensational scholars. I think it is incorrect, since the kingdom predicted in the Old Testament is distinctly different from the church" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on Matthew," 2016 ed., 236, www.soniclight.com). "The church will be a visible institution throughout this age in service of the kingdom, but Jesus does not equate the two . . . To interpret these as characteristic of the church's activity produces many misconceptions and misapplications" (Wilkins, 485). "The parable deals with eschatological expectations, not ecclesiological deterioration" (D. A. Carson, "Matthew," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, rev. ed., 9:317; see also Morris, 351).

v. 38 **sons of . . .** Cf., "people of . . ." (NET, NIV(c)2011); "people who belong to . . ." (GNT, NLT). "'Sons of' again appears in the sense of people who belong to something" (Blomberg, 222). In one case, "sons of the kingdom" are clearly "the ones who have been receptive to the preaching of the message of the kingdom and have become Jesus' disciples" (i.e., wheat); in the other case, "sons of the evil one" are clearly "the unbelievers of Jesus' day and all those throughout this age who reject the gospel message" (i.e., weeds) (Wilkins, 486). Some claim that "the wheat (good seed) and 'the tares' represent true and *professing-only believers*" (236, italics added). However, the *contrast* is between two different messages (i.e., types of "seed") and those who believe the different messages, not between those who believe and those who merely profess to believe the same message.

v. 39 **harvest** "The harvest was a standard metaphor for judgment, and angels regularly figure as God's helpers in Jewish portrayals of Judgment Day" (Blomberg, 222).

v. 39 **end of the age** "The 'end of the age' refers to the end of the present age, that will culminate in Jesus' Second Coming and a judgment of living unbelievers (cf. vv. 40, 49; 24:3)" (Constable, 237).

v. 41 **everything . . . all** *Things* that cause sin as well as *people* who do lawless things. Or perhaps just people who do both. "These people are described, literally, as everyone who causes sin and does evil (v. 41—not two separate categories as the NIV seems to suggest)" (Blomberg, 223).

v. 42 **fiery furnace** Cf., 3:12; 25:41, 46. "Judgment of the sons of the evil one will commence in the fiery furnace (cf. 3:11; 5:22), where there will be 'weeping and gnashing of teeth' (13:42; cf. 8:12). These are Jesus' typical expressions of eternal judgment" (Wilkins, 486). "In words reminiscent of Daniel 3:6 Jesus speaks of the fate of the lawless ones. The angels will *cast them into the blazing furnace* (lit. 'furnace of fire'), which fits in with other passages using the imagery of fire for the final destination of the wicked. In that place (there) there will be misery, symbolized by the specification of *weeping and grinding of teeth*. This expression occurs 6 times in Matthew, once in Luke, and nowhere else in the New Testament" (Morris, 357-58).

v. 43 **kingdom . . . Father** "The kingdom of their Father' is probably a synonym for the kingdom of the Son (v. 41), in the sense that the kingdom belongs to both the Father and the Son. However, when the messianic (millennial) kingdom ends, the rule of the Son and the Father will continue forever in the new heaven and the new earth (Rev. 21-22). The Messiah's reign on this earth will be the first phase of His reign, that will continue on the new earth forever" (Constable, 237).

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

In our quest to raise kingdom-minded kids, there are certain disciplines we need to help our kids develop in their lives. We are very intentional about teaching our kids to take care of themselves physically. We show them how to bathe their bodies. We teach them how to set the timer for two minutes and brush their teeth. We show them how to make good food choices and make sure they get plenty of active play time. In addition to these things, we need to help our kids develop spiritual disciplines that will help them develop into mature believers. There are many creative things we can do to help our kids in their spiritual journey. (1) Model prayer for them. Let them hear you pray out loud. Pray with them. Make sure they recognize when prayers have been answered. (2) Help them develop a routine of Bible reading. Set up a quiet time station on their bedside table or desk. Help them choose passages to read or get them a devotional book. (3) Take them to worship with you. Let them see you praising God. Listen to worship music in the car and at home. Give thanks for a beautiful sunrise or a soaking rain. (4) Be generous and teach your kids to be generous. Be willing to meet the needs of others. Serve with them. We have the great honor of training our kids in righteousness and teaching them to be kingdom kids!

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Mt 13:24-30; 36-43

1. What happened in the farmer's field?
2. Who sowed the weeds?
3. According to verse 43, what will the righteous do?

What Do You Think

While it is true that, as believers, we are known by our fruit, only God knows our heart. How do the people around you know that you love Jesus? In what ways can you shine like the sun?

What R U Going To Do

Our memory verse for this series is Psalm 47:7-8. It describes a beautiful majestic picture of God. Write the verse and illustrate it on a large piece of paper. Hang it in your room and keep memorizing!

Core Comp

Identity in Christ - I believe I am special because I am a child of God.

Memory Verse

Psalm 47:7 - *For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a psalm of praise.*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized my verse _____, completed Scrolls _____, brought Bible _____, brought a friend _____.

Series Discipleship Challenge located in KidPix Store.

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians*

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

Tom Bulick (M.A. in Educational Leadership, Eastern Michigan University, Th.M. in Old Testament, and Ph.D. in Bible Exposition, Dallas Theological Seminary). For more than forty years, Tom has served as pastor, faculty member, and administrator. Tom was Vice President for Student Life and Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Trinity Western University (Vancouver, B.C.) for twelve years before accepting the position of Spiritual Formation Pastor at Pantego Bible Church. He and his wife Ruth have been married forty-six years and have one son, Zach.

Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



8001 Anderson Blvd.
Ft. Worth, TX 76120
1-866-PANTEGO
Fax 817-275-6403
www.pantego.org

The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is tbulick@pantego.org.