

11-24-2024 Sunday Sermon Message
Devotional of the Week: Psalm 91:1-16
Text: Matthew 13:24-30

Title: **The Best Thanksgiving to God on Thanksgiving Day**

Farmers select the best seeds from the harvest and sow them in their fields. At harvest time, the best fruits are brought into the barn, and the chaff is burned with fire. In today's text, Jesus speaks of barley and poisoned barley in parables. Barley is wheat, and poisonous barley looks like barley, but it is chaff.

When Jesus speaks of the kingdom of heaven in parables, he speaks of himself as a man who sows good seed in a field. But he says that his enemy, the Devil, has sown poisonous barley among the grain. Jesus tells us to let both barley and poisonous barley grow together until the harvest. When the harvest time comes, he tells the reapers, first to gather the barley and bundle it into sheaves for shearing, and then to gather the grain into my storehouse.

John the Baptist testified of what Jesus would do at the end of the world:

"With a rudder in his hand, he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing floor, and he will gather the wheat and put it into the storehouse, and he will burn the chaff with unquenchable fire.(Matthew 3:12)

Christ Jesus made the hearts of the people of the world a field and sowed them in the hearts of those who heard the gospel of Christ, which he preached through His chosen apostle Paul. He wants to save those who wholeheartedly believe and accept this gospel and turn it into wheat:

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation unto all who believe. First to the Jews, and also to the Greeks...And now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which ye have received and in which ye stand. If ye have held fast to the gospel which I have preached and have not believed in vain, then

through the gospel ye have also been saved. What I have received, I have delivered unto you first, that Christ died for our sins and was buried, and rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures, and was shown to Cephas, and afterwards to the twelve...For you have been saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves, but the gift of God, not of works, so that no one should boast.(Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 15: 1-5, Ephesians 2:8-9)

However, for the past two thousand years, God's enemy, the devil, has been constantly sowing poisonous barley in people's hearts, altering the drum that Christ Jesus gave to Paul and giving it to him. In response, the Apostle Paul warned the Saints in Galatia against those who preached a different gospel:

"I wonder that ye should so soon depart from Him who called you into the grace of Christ and follow another gospel. There is no other gospel, but there are certain who are disturbing you, and they are trying to change the gospel of Christ. But if not only us, but also an angel from heaven, should preach any other drumming than that which we have preached to you, he shall be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again that whosoever preaches any other gospel than that which ye have received, he shall be accursed.(Galatians 1:6-9)

The Apostle Paul warned us about how preaching a different gospel in his day would turn people into barley instead of barley:

"I fear that your hearts should in any way depart from the simplicity which is in Christ, as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning. If anyone comes and preaches another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or receives another spirit which you have not received, or preaches another gospel which you have not received, you well tolerate him.(II Corinthians 11:3-4)

Barley (wheat) and poison barley (chaff) both look similar on the outside. However, Christians

who believe the gospel of Christ and are born again by the Holy Spirit can discern poisonous barley. Today, we see barley and poison barley sitting together in churches, worshipping, and performing all kinds of religious activities. There are also many denominations that have received a different gospel and have sprung up because of different doctrines. Not only that, but many heretical sects are planting a different gospel in people's hearts, leading them to curses. In the last days, when the end of the world is near, we see that all religions are uniting into one and bringing God's curse upon themselves.

This Sunday, churches are busy celebrating Thanksgiving and other events. But most importantly, are they barley? Or do you have to check if it's poisonous barley (chaff)? In other words, before we give thanks for the visible physical harvest, we must realize deeply whether we can become wheat before God and enter the heavenly storehouse on the day of the harvest of the wheat by Christ Jesus.

The Apostle Paul testified to Titus, who was waiting for the harvest to be harvested in heaven, about the thanksgiving they had received:

"He taught us, that we might reject ungodliness and worldly passions, and that we might walk in this world with prudence, righteousness, and godliness, and that he might hold back his blessed hope, the glorious revealing of the great God, the Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and cleanse us for himself, that we might be a peculiar people, zealous for good works.(Titus 2:12-14)

Before Jesus died, he told his apostles about the heavenly harvest in the fullness of time:

"Let not your heart be troubled; Since you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many mansions. Otherwise I would have told you. I am going to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, you also may be.(John 14:1-3)

The Apostle Paul testified about the work of Christians who believed in the gospel of Christ and became the bride of Christ and children of God, when they were harvested into the heavenly barn:

" For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

¹⁸ Wherefore comfort one another with these words."(1 Thessalonians 4:16-18)

The Apostle Paul also testified about how Christians are mysteriously transformed into the harvest of the heavenly New Jerusalem:

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

⁵¹ Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

⁵⁴ So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

⁵⁵ O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁵⁸ Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."(1 Corinthians 15:50-58)

Jesus said to Christians who were blessed with a heavenly harvest of wheat:

"Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few;

³⁸ Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."(Matthew 9:37-38) Amen! Hallelujah!