

How do You Know Who is for Real?

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[0:00] Please take your Bibles and go to Matthew's Gospel, Matthew chapter 13.

If you're visiting with us and you need a Bible, you would find one, you should find one, a chair in front of you down at the bottom, there's little racks there, pull that Bible out, go to the back, they renumber the New Testament, so if you go to the back and find page 11, you'll find Matthew 13, Matthew's Gospel, first Gospel, Matthew chapter 13, which was the first Gospel written, Matthew's Gospel, chapter 13, we're gonna start reading in verse 24, 24 to 52, a large chunk, it all kind of goes together though, so that's why I wanted to do this chunk together, Matthew chapter 13, starting in verse 24, to verse 52, verse 24, he presented another parable to them saying, the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed Darnell, tares, weeds, also among the wheats and went away, but when the wheat sprang up and produced fruits, then the Darnell became evident also, the slaves of the land who came and said to him, sir, did you not sow good seed in your field, how then does it have Darnell?

And he said to them, an enemy has done this. And the slaves said to him, do you want us then as we go to gather them up? But he said, no, lest while you are gathering up the Darnell you may root up the wheat with them.

Allow both to grow together until the harvest and in time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, first gather up the Darnell and bind them in bundles to burn them up, but gather the wheat into my barn. Verse 31, he presented another parable to them saying, the kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field and this is smaller than all seeds but when it is full grown it is larger than the garden plants and becomes a tree.

[2:33] So the birds of the air come and nest in its branches. He spoke another parable to them, the kingdom of heaven is like leaven which a woman took hid in three pecks of meal until the whole was leavened.

All these things Jesus spoke to the multitudes in parables. He did not speak to them without a parable so that the word through the prophets might be fulfilled saying, I will open my mouth in parables, I will proclaim hidden things since the foundation of the world.

Verse 36, then he leaving the multitudes he went into the house and his disciples came to him saying, explain to us the parable of the darnel of the field and answering them he said, the one who sows the good seed is the son of man and the field is the world and the good seed these are the sons of the kingdom and the darnel are the sons of the evil one and the enemy who sowed them is the devil and the harvest is the end of the age and the reapers are angels.

Verse 40, therefore just as the darnel are gathered up and burned with fire so shall it be at the end of the age the son of man will send forth his angels and they will gather out of his kingdom all stumbling blocks and those who do lawlessness and will cast them into the furnace of fire and that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth and the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father he who has ears let him hear the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure found in the field which a man finding it he hid it and from joy over it going he sells all that he has and buys that field verse 45 again the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls and finding one pearl of great value going he sold all that he had and bought it 47 again the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea and gathering of every kind and it being full they drew it up onto the beach sitting down they gathered the good into containers but the bad they threw away so it will be at the end of the age the angel shall come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous and will cast them into the furnace of fire there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth have you understood all these things they said to him yes and he said to them therefore every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a

household who brings forth out of his treasure new and old this past week I found out a dear brother in Christ found what he thinks may be a real Rolex watch I'll come find out he took it over to somebody and it's fake so did you know that Rolex watches are the most counterfeited watches in the world I didn't even know that we googled four simple ways how do you spot a fake Rolex watch and one website says four simple ways to spot a fake Rolex watch because Google knows everything right so that's why we googled it check the second that was a joke check the second hand the weights is it really weighty a finely crafted winder does it have that does it have a cyclops lens it magnifies the date although I think the watch had that and it was still a fake so but at the end of the day there's another website that I looked at the end of the day if you find something like that you take it to a jeweler or a reputable dealer funny thing though in that one of these websites even a reputable dealer he might have been faked out so they might have deceived him so it's like you kind of don't really know is this real or not right this triggered my thinking and how much it coincides with these parables remember [6:52] Jesus is giving these parables as a response to the mixed responses this is Jesus' response to all the different responses to him until the end of the age we still have these same responses rejection the stony ground the thorns and then the good soil those four responses we still have them even today but at the end of the day at the end of time really fake followers will be separated from genuine Christ followers so when we look at this passage bow down and worship Jesus the Messiah King of Israel the driving force of Matthew's gospel today the question is but how do you know who's for real how do you know who's for real we talked about this a couple weeks ago only one in four will bow down to

Jesus well how do you know that person is for real how do you know how do you know who's a genuine faith worshiper of Christ I mean I hate to break it to you but you can't read people's hearts you can't nobody can well Jesus actually gives a couple ways where you can tell fake from true true gospel kingdom disciples will increase they will stop at nothing to gain Jesus and they will understand the truth and tell others but really at the end of time the false disciples will be separated from the true ones that's the ultimate test is the end of time and that's why Jesus gives the parable of the tares or the darnell and gives this explanation and then also of the net because at the end of time the false will be separated from the true again these parables they spoke about the progress of God's kingdom now on earth now and as it progresses today even to its future glories so we don't simply relegate these parables to some future event or just to Jesus time these are responses that are happening to the gospel now so all these parables all the parables that Jesus told here in Matthew 13 they unravel these mixed responses to him and his kingdom message from chapters 11 and 12 so get this in the context that's why

Jesus is speaking these parables this is how this is why people responding to him this way this is what's happening and these responses will continue all the way till judgment day some will be counterfeits some will be genuine Jesus gives us some ways to tell kingdom growth is real and huge though at first it's subtle and has only humble beginnings those who sacrificially abandon everything to bow down to Jesus the king will be greatly rewarded because Jesus is of great value and following him is priceless I have that here but in the end it will be revealed who is fake and real in the end because among these mixed responses some will be counterfeits planted by the evil one himself I mean why do you think

Paul said this in Acts chapter 13 to the elders okay these are to the shepherds he says even from among yourselves wolves will rise up wait what friends it's true we must be mindful of the evil one he is doing his work out there right but he wants to destroy us he wants to destroy this church he wants to destroy any church that's going to be lifting up and praising the Lord Jesus Christ and he will stop at nothing to do that even if he has to plant amongst us weeds that look like wheat these true ones will follow Jesus no matter what though but in the end at the end of time all will be made known that's a good thing huh

God knows what he's doing and by the way before we go into this last with these parables don't read too much into the parables like for instance why was Jesus sleeping with the parable Darnell why was he sleeping how did the devil so weaves without Jesus knowing it don't read too much into the parable like that a mustard seed it wasn't the smallest what was at that time in that culture a treasure we talked about the hidden treasure that's kind of dishonest why didn't the guy go tell the owner about it don't read too much into the parables like that take it for what they're worth the point that Jesus is trying to make which we'll look at today so the question back to the question how do

you know who is for real number one gospel kingdom disciples the gospel kingdom and his disciples will increase look at the first after the parable of the dandelion of the weeds we'll look at that later and we'll look at the net later but I want to start out in verse 31 to verse 33 first a parable of the mustard seed and then leaven verse 31 another parable the kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took sowed in his field this is smaller than all seeds but when it's full grown it's larger than the garden plants it becomes a tree a mustard seed was a small herb seed commonly planted in the area at that time it was insignificant yes I know there's other seeds that are smaller than that but in

[13 : 35] Palestine at that time that was what he's talking about and it will grow into one of the largest of shrubs as a matter of fact it could be as big as a tree some were up 8 to 12 feet high so that the birds could nest in its branches so what's the point it starts small but then it grows though it had tiny beginnings it would grow into something so much greater what looked to be tiny would be extensive look at the next parable of leaven he spoke another parable the kingdom of heaven is like leaven woman took hidden three pecks of meal so here's a little bit of leaven it would permeate a big chunk of dough and three pecks of measure of meal this was probably equivalent to feeding 150 people so it's like you're going to make bread for my house invite us over to your house for dinner make sure you have three pecks of meal of bread because they just eat bread like there's no tomorrow have another piece of bread there's four slapping that butter on we had this much butter now we have that much butter how does that happen

I don't know that's how much he's talking about and then he says until it was the whole was leavened just a little bit and it goes like that so what's the point although the kingdom seems small at the time it looks insignificant it seemed like no one was trusting Jesus it would indeed bear fruit gospel kingdom disciples will come they will increase one writer put it like this quote what is humble now will be glorious it's deceptively subtle it seems insignificant yet there will be significant growth of God's kingdom so when things seem bleak be rest assured

God knows what he's doing he's still on his throne he's establishing his kingdom and people will respond and trust him as we pray thy kingdom come it seems bleak you're trying to figure out God what are you doing you don't say this but I know you think it God are you crazy why in the world are you doing you think it don't you don't you deny it I think it do God that's just crazy how in the world this is it's almost blasphemy for me to say this is it not blasphemy how what when things look bleak when it seems so insignificant God knows what he's doing he's still on the throne he's establishing his kingdom people respond and trust

Christ they'll respond to the gospel the little the song little is much when God is in it I thought of that song just for you Daniel when God is at work in his kingdom it will bring great growth all in his own timing though you know it's so interesting too what appropriate symbols for Jesus God's humble servant chapter 12 verse 18 who does not come to make a name for himself but cares for the broken hearted chapter 12 verse 20 and would soon come riding into Jerusalem on a donkey not on a stallion not on a Mustang on a donkey and dying on the cross for sinners because it looks like God has failed it looks like there's no success it looks like

God has lost because there's Jesus hanging on the cross but it's actually just the opposite what seems subtle and insignificant it will increase so that's that's way that you know it's for real and genuine it's one way the king and his kingdom were despised and rejected Jesus would die and God's kingdom would grow significantly and worldwide as it has today right which is why we should not underestimate God and his power to save don't underestimate God and his power gospel kingdom disciples will increase number two gospel kingdom disciples want Jesus they want him this is the parable of the treasure and the pearl go to verse 44 the kingdom of heaven now he's speaking this to his disciples the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field a man finding it he hid it

[19 : 28] Jesus gave this parable to describe the great value of the kingdom so it means to be a disciple of Christ and tell sacrifice and when that sacrifice is made it means that person takes the kingdom and his values seriously and notice it's not out of drudgery it's out of joy it says and from joy over it he going he sells all that he has and buys that field this person takes the kingdom and his values so seriously not because I have to whatever no it's out of joy he's going to sell everything he's going to buy that field because he wants that treasure this treasure is so valuable and truly priceless that it is worth selling everything you have to get it that's

Jesus that's the gospel it's not because I have to become a Christian whatever no it's yes yes yes yes I want to become a Christian yes I want to follow Jesus you got me that's one way how you know who's for real notice the next one the costly pearl again it's like a merchant seeking fine pearls this time he's seeking it the other guy wasn't seeking the treasure this guy was seeking pearls looking for the pearls seeking fine pearls and upon finding one pearl of great value going he stole all that he had and bought it notice how the parables coincide with each other notice how it actually coincides with the mustard seed and leaven again the point is the sacrificial pursuit to achieve the pearl of huge value God's king and his kingdom is a hidden treasure and a highly valuable pearl once a person sees that they will stop at nothing to get it they want

Jesus they come to the place where they say I can't live my life without him so much so she or he would sacrifice anything and everything to have him see this is what it means to be a disciple of Jesus a Christ follower a true genuine Christian you will stop at nothing to have Jesus nothing you are willing even to leave family and job behind so you can get Jesus and even though following the king is a ginormous sacrifice remember he sells everything he has it brings such great joy happiness and amazing satisfaction so if you're here and you're not a Christian don't let any other concern stand in your way you should become a

Christian today you should trust Christ today what are you waiting for come to Jesus trust him today receive Christ he will save you he will forgive you of all your sins that's why Jesus died so one writer puts it like this no cost is too great when it is a matter of gaining the kingdom end quote that's a great way to put it great way to put it and really of gaining the king of the kingdom though the kingdom may start out deceptively subtle in the end God is establishing it to be a part of the kingdom takes great sacrifice but to have Christ as your king is so worth it gospel kingdom disciples will increase you'll see that happening they want Jesus this is how you know these people for real here's another way number three gospel kingdom disciples understand the truth and they tell others they're going to speak that to others as we have here in verse 51 to 52 after he gives all these parables

Jesus asked the disciples they understood these things they had asked him before explain to us the parable of the tares of the weeds referring to the parables of the kingdom and its meaning notice they say yes and then he gives this last parable in this series of parables he calls them disciples of the kingdom every scribe has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven so what's he doing here what's he saying and then what does he mean when he says a head of a household who sends out of his treasure new and old let's break it down first he's referring to their ministries their ministries would entail teaching people the message of the king and his kingdom drawing upon Jesus teaching new and the old the Old Testament both first notice discipleship to

[25:12] Jesus to be a genuine follower Christian entails recognizing Jesus as the revealer of the father and submitting to his reign his reign which he inaugurated by coming he began the kingdom this is what it means to be a disciple a disciple a scribe of the kingdom one willingly and joyfully bows down and worships him as king and then in turn proclaims that message of the kingdom to others that's why he says every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom is like a head of a household who sends out of his treasure new and old the new is Jesus teaching and the old teaching is the law and the prophets this goes back to Matthew chapter 5 remember what Jesus said I didn't come to abolish the law and the prophets I didn't come to destroy them why did he come to fulfill it

Jesus gave the real meaning of the law and the prophets because it's wrapped up in him Jesus gave the true interpretation of the law and the prophets he didn't come to destroy the law and the prophets Jesus gave its true ultimate interpretation as fulfilled of the law and the prophets so these scribes those who become disciples of the kingdom and his kingdom send out of themselves notice he says treasure he means the heart a solid deep understanding of the kingdom and they tell others the newness of Jesus and the old Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament and he hears the teaching of Jesus how do you know the gospel kingdom is for real how do you know these people are for real because they understand the truth and they're going to tell it to others that's what Jesus is saying here the new are what

Jesus taught the old things are the things that are seen now through the lens of Christ so you have gospel kingdom disciples that will increase they're going to want Jesus they're going to understand the truth they're going to tell others but here's the ultimate way number four false disciples will ultimately be revealed and removed from the true disciples that's why you have the parable of the

weeds and the parable of the net notice verse 24 the kingdom of heaven may be compared man sowed good seed in his field he's a land owner sowed this good seed an enemy sowed weeds it's known as darnel there in Palestine the first century and the darnel were indistinguishable at first from the wheat notice here at the end of verse what is it verse 26 sprang up they bore grain literally produced fruit as the heads of grain began to form for the wheat the weeds aren't doing that it looked like wheat they looked like they're the real thing they looked like it was what the land owner planted but as it began to bore fruit no it's not notice slaves in verse 27 sir did you not so good see the enemy has done this do you want us to gather no no no he says in verse 29 you might root up the wheat with them they realize it they want you want us to pull it to destroy that wheat let both grow and then at the harvest time the darn ale will be gathered and then burned up this portrayed the eschatological judgment at the end of time where counterfeit

Jesus followers would finally be separated from the true followers they look like they're the real thing now notice how Jesus gives the interpretation in verse 36 left the multitudes went into the house his disciples said what in the world was that all about can you explain this to us we did not understand so notice he unpacked the meaning of each persons in the story from verse 37 to 39 the sower Jesus sowed the good seed the sons of the kingdom in the field which is the world the enemy which is the devil and he sowed the darnell they are the sons of the devil harvest is the end of the age and the reapers are angels and now as you get who is who in the story verse 40 just as the darnell are gathered up and burned with fire so shall it be the end of the age the son of man will send forth his angels they'll gather out of his kingdom all stumbling blocks and those who do lawlessness when the end of the world happens the angels will separate the people of the devil from the people of

God the people of the devil notice he calls them stumbling blocks lawless ones they'll be gathered removed out of the kingdom and thrown into the furnace of fire at the end of time people either belong to Jesus or to Satan either people are characterized in relationship to the kingdom of Satan or people are characterized in relationship to the kingdom of the son of man eternal hell torment is eerily described notice he says verse 42 in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth either because of anger or because of great pain or both that phrase describing hell weeping and gnashing of teeth you have it six times in

[32 : 22] Matthew's gospel a place of complete sadness and pain in the final state no joy stop pause think about that think about that Paul's not saying this Peter's not saying this David's not saying this

Jesus said this may you think of a person that you know who does not know Jesus right now and pray for them because that will be their destiny if they do not embrace the king and his kingdom but God's people Jesus true disciples he says in verse 43 they be gathered into the kingdom they will shine brightly like the sun and notice how he describes the kingdom in the kingdom of their father notice the one who will rule over us it's the father he's the one who will rule us in his fatherly love his perfect fatherly love only two groups and two destinies at the end of time

Jesus the revealer of the father he would reveal himself and the father and the devil would try to imitate that but the truth will be revealed this is the ultimate test the finalization of who's false and who's true disciples of Jesus faith worshipers of Christ will enjoy the reward of the future kingdom for being his faithful disciples and the evil will be judged God will vindicate himself and his children that's why it's worth it for you to become a Christian today because in the end you will either be shining like the sun in the kingdom of the father or you'll be in a place where there's weeping and gnashing of teeth that's a motivation to respond notice the parable of the net similar to the parable of the

Darnell judgment day is the picture the net was a large fishing net with weights notice gathering of every kind all kinds of fish were gathered hundreds of fish would be gathered and they hauled it in with great effort sitting down at the beach and they sorted it out the good would be kept the bad would be thrown out and notice how Jesus gave the meaning verse 49 so it will be at the end of the age the angels shall come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous and as those wicked they will cast them throw them into the furnace of fire there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth there's a second time Jesus mentions that the angels the fishermen would separate the wicked those who the kingdom the bad fish from the righteous those who embrace the kingdom the good fish and the bad will be thrown into fire where there's constant eternal suffering and notice as well how the net did not discriminate when it caught the fish neither should

Jesus disciples discriminate as they catch fish because the gospel is for all it's not up to us to sort it out God does that here we see the somber reality of false disciples of Jesus they will be ultimately revealed it's so somber it's just a kind of weighty on you and yet I save these verses to the end because we didn't look at verses 34 and 35 did we verse 34 and 35 you see this the faithfulness of God God's faithfulness all these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables and he did not speak to them without a parable so that the word through the prophet might be fulfilled saying and he quotes from psalm 78 verse 2

[38 : 19] I will open my mouth in parables I will proclaim hidden things since the foundation of the world so when Jesus spoke parables he would do this how he would teach them how he would speak to them and it's this teaching speaking in parables that fulfilled the prophecy of psalm 78 verse 2 Jesus concealed God's truth with parables what does psalm 78 have to do with Jesus speaking parables in the midst of Israel's unbelief Jesus use of these parables stress God's faithfulness to them through the kingdom mission of the king his mission was a display of the promises of God and how he was faithful to keep his promises he would redeem his people as in former days psalm 78 days

Israel's hearts were hardened to truth Asaph he's the author of psalm 78 he recounted the unbelief of Israel go home tonight if you would or this week read psalm 78 you kind of go this is a horrible psalm you're like this is sad because it's like Israel's unbelief unbelief unbelief unbelief they're like and you're reading you're like oh my goodness this is horrible this is such a sad psalm but it wasn't so much about the unbelief of Israel in psalm 78 psalm 78 is really the story of God's ever present faithfulness to his people and how much they deserved his discipline God brought his shepherd and redeemed his people by his gracious steadfast faithful love see friends in

Asaph's day he recounted something that was new which in Jesus day had become old and yet what Jesus disciples learned from Jesus is new as they continued the mission of teaching all the nations trust in the king bow down to him which is not necessarily old it's actually the same thing even today God is faithful and holy and true we are sinners who rebel and yet he shows God shows amazing grace and steadfast love the key to this whole situation is Jesus the response to Jesus will you truly bow to Jesus it's been the same ever since from the time of Adam to even today what's in the middle is the cross of Christ God is faithful faithful to judge but faithful to save you see the faithfulness of

God mind you the Lord knows those who are his 2 Timothy chapter 2 3 2 those who belong to him and he will faithfully redeem them those who bow down to Christ who sell everything and give up everything to have him as their king see this is why we read together as a church as a congregation Psalm 78 and then the next song was how rich a treasure we possess that's why we did that so you see the faithfulness of God we are rebellious and yet what a treasure we possess in Jesus Christ our Lord so then you're reminding yourself of the gospel of Christ and then the next song what's the next song that you sung all to you Jesus you're all to us right you're everything to me that's why we did that it's a reminder to us that we want to stop at nothing to have

Jesus as our Savior how do you know who is a genuine faith worshiper of Christ Jesus true gospel kingdom disciples will increase they'll stop at nothing to gain Jesus and they'll understand the truth and tell others but at the end of time the false disciples will be separated from the true ones that's all said and done and even though you see those realities you see those things and then you see the reality and the somber reminder that there will be judgment for those who do not follow Christ don't forget this God will always be faithful to redeem his people for his own glory always would you pray with me thy kingdom come we want your kingdom to increase and blossom and flow in our individual lives oh

[44 : 29] Jesus we remind ourselves that you are the priceless pearl the valuable treasure we want you you've given us grace by the spirit to understand your truth and we're we're going to tell others we pray for your grace that we would remain faithful and yet we thank you that you are faithful you will always be faithful faithful to be gracious to us faithful to be kind to us you're such a good

God I encourage you to let your mind think and ponder on these things maybe at this time you want to pray for individuals that you know that don't know Jesus that their destiny is towards the weeping and gnashing of teeth maybe you want to remind yourself and ask the Lord to help you to value him above everything and everyone else he would be more of your treasure different ways you can pray different ways you can ponder let your mind dwell on these things your time of giving will do all that we'll sing let this be your time between you and the

Lord to reflect on his truth that it would permeate your treasure your heart a heart the heart is
Chorus Chorus Chorus Chorus Chorus Chorus Chorus Chorus