

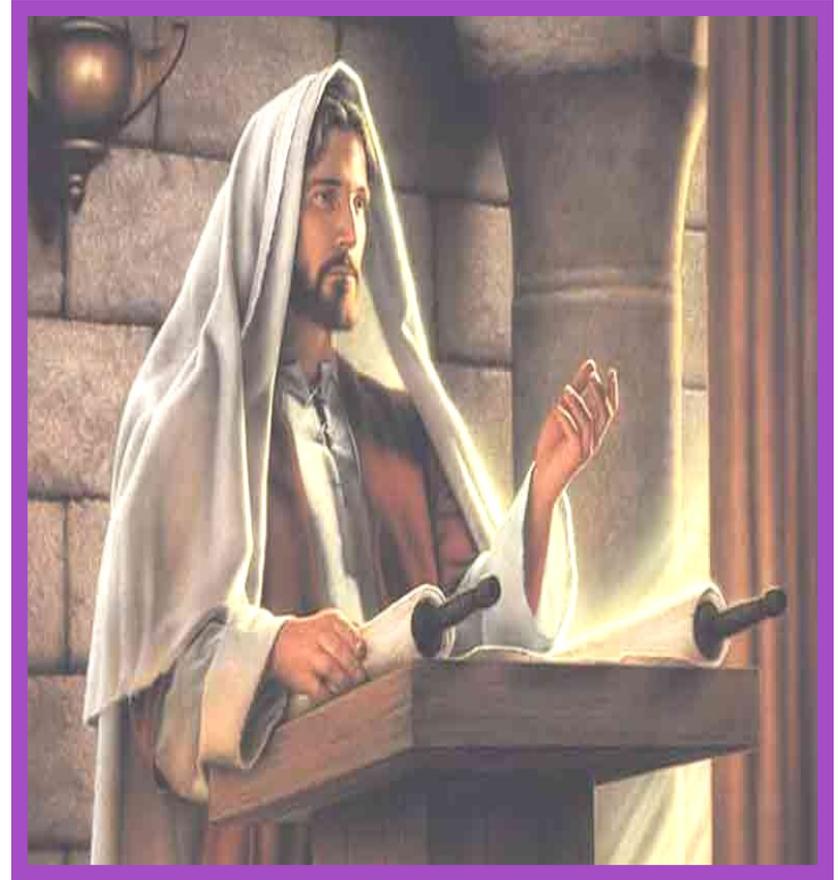
anxious that nothing that was evil should remain among the good. But it was said to us: *Suffer both to grow until the Harvest*, because such as you are liable to error. Listen: *Lest perhaps gathering up the cockle, you root up the wheat also with it...*The reapers will be coming, i.e., the angels, who will save the crop and destroy the tares... We too, if we finish our course, shall be like unto the angels: but now, though we are angry with the wicked, we are ourselves still men. We should remember this: *He that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed lest he fall* (1 Cor. x. 12)...

Turning then with contrite hearts to the Lord our God, the Father Almighty, let us as best we can give thanks with all our hearts beseeching Him that in His goodness He will graciously hearken to our prayers. By His power may evil be driven from our thoughts and actions, increase our faith, guide our minds, grant unto us His holy inspirations, and bring us to joy that is without end, through His Son Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.



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**SERMON ON
PARABLE OF THE SOWER OF GOOD SEED
FROM THE FATHER'S OF THE CHURCH
137 - 1**



JESUS, OUR FIRST PREACHER!

5TH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Based on the Divine Office-Douay-Rheims Version

Volume 1 - Pages 1417 (1962 edition)

Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew 8: 24-30

by: Saint Augustine, Bishop and Doctor

...The Lord relates another parable regarding the Sower, who sowed good seed in his field, and while men slept an enemy came and over sowed it with tares. While the tares were yet green they were not detected, but when the fruit of the good seed began to appear, then the tares revealed themselves. The master's servants were angry, seeing the weed standing thick amid the true grain, and they desired to uproot it at once, but were not permitted. It was said to them, *suffer both to grow until the harvest*. The Lord Christ also explained this parable, saying, that He was the Sower of the Good Seed, that the devil was the enemy, the sower of tares, the harvest was the end of time and His field the world.

Hear what He says: *In the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers: gather up first the cockle, and bind it into bundles to burn, but the wheat gather ye into my barn*. Why hasten then, zealous servants, He says? See you not that the tares stand in the midst of the good growth, and you wish to uproot the bad? Remain quiet, it is not yet the time of harvest. Let it come, and let it reveal to you the true wheat. Why need you be angry? Why are you impatient that the bad should now be mixed with the good? They may be among you in the field, but in My barn they shall not be with you.

...When one speaks in parables it is not an attempt to describe the properties of a thing, or some truth, but to convey a likeness of a truth... In parables and figures one

weak Christians. For is not Christ a Lamb? Is He not also a Lion? Among wild animals and domestic that which is a lamb is a lamb, and a lion is a lion. Christ is both. They are what they are by nature. Christ is both in figure.

...What is so widely dissimilar as Christ and the devil? Yet Christ is called a lion, and so also is the devil. Of Christ the Lion it is written: *Behold the Lion of the tribe of Juda* (Apoc. v. 5); and of the devil: *your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion goeth about seeking whom he may devour* (1 Pet. v. 8). Therefore the One is a Lion, and the other is a lion. The One is a Lion in strength, the other a lion in ferocity. The devil likewise is a serpent, *that old serpent* (Apoc. xii. 9). Are we bidden to imitate the devil when Our Shepherd said to us, *Be ye therefore wise as serpents and simple as doves* (Mt. xii. 16)?

... Smother not the good seed sown among you with our labor, with the cares and the greed of this world. For it is the Lord who sows, we are but His laborers... let the good fruit enter into My barn.

The tares in this parable are the sheep of the flock. O unworthy Christians! You that fill the Church and at the same time torment it by the wickedness of your lives. Correct your ways before the time of the harvest! Be not like those who said: *I have sinned, and what harm hath befallen me?* (Ecclus. v. 4). God has not lost His power but He requires of you repentance. This I say to the wicked, who are likewise Christians; this I say to the tares. For they are standing in the field: and it may be that they who today are tares may tomorrow become good wheat. And now I address myself to the wheat.

O you Christians whose lives are worthy. You weep...you mourn, few among the many. But the winter will pass, and the summer will come, and it will be harvest time. The Angels will come, who can divide the one from the other, and they will not err. We at this time are like to the servants, of whom it is written: *Wilt thou that we go and gather it up?* For we are