

designated as tares, are to be brought to faith in Christ and saved.

God could simply instantly bring this age to an end if He chose. He could take out His own and cast the evil-doers into eternal suffering, putting an end to this present age. He could have done that two-thousand years ago, or six thousand years ago, but He chose not to do so.

There is another important reason why God chooses to leave the field as it is, for a time. It is His purpose to grow good wheat. He desires to produce those who will enjoy Him through all eternity, those who are to live with Him, through all eternity. That is His purpose.

The purpose of the Christian ministry is not merely the salvation of souls, in the common sense of getting people simply to declare their acceptance of Christ. It goes beyond that. The purpose of the Christian ministry is to help in the production of the good wheat that God wants for His own through all eternity.

One cannot have good wheat unless it begins, so the leading of souls to Christ is a very very vital part of the work of the ministry. Yet it is not by any means the whole of it. It is very very important that those who come to know Christ are not simply left after having heard a little truth; left for the sun to come up and scorch it away, because there is no root, or left for the birds to pluck it away, or left to be choked out by thorns. It is very important that the good seed that is sown should have a chance to grow and develop. It needs to be watered and cared for. It is God's will that the ministry should try to help the good wheat.

It is not God's will that we should tear the tares out of the world, but that we should try our best to bring the Word of God to them. We do not know who are the tares; those who are most opposed may be the very ones who through God's will may yet be saved.

We are commanded to spread the truth just as widely as possible. We are to sow beside all waters, but we are not to be satisfied simply with sowing. We must nourish the tender plants and help them to grow in the knowledge of His Word.

In the parable our Lord states very specifically that the field is the world. There are many who interpret it as if He had said, The field is the church, but