

Do You See? Matthew 13v18-43

Happiness can be contagious. The gospel, the amazing news about what God is doing, is that God intends to share his joy and radiance with us. *Can we sometimes be blind to the fact that God is the opposite of stingy?*

1) Being in Heaven (13v41-43)

The Lord is bringing us safely into his kingdom as we trust him. *Do you see what it's like (v43)?* It's personal. We're there in the presence and glory of the one who is Father to us. We're radiant, flourishing and happy, made like Jesus ("righteous"). It's the kingdom of the Father, and of the Son (41). Christ will ensure that everything that spoils and causes sin, and everyone who opposes him and his ways, is removed. Being in heaven will be being in a radiant, restored, life-giving place of beauty that reflects Jesus, its King. *How much do you long to live in that kind of reality? How does Jesus making us wise about the reality of his Kingdom affect what we treasure?*

2) Heaven Meeting Earth (13v18-40)

Jesus calls his kingdom the "kingdom of heaven" in Matthew to remind us that we also live in the presence of other, non-heavenly kingdoms. We live in the midst of systems and power structures (earthly kingdoms) which are opposed to Jesus (v22). And so, there's a struggle and battle going on, there's spiritual opposition (v19-21, v25-28). As a result, we need spiritual wisdom and discernment, we need eyes open to see the glory and life of Christ's kingdom in our midst. Heaven is, Jesus says in Matthew's gospel, already meeting earth (e.g., v24 in the Greek). *Do you see it?*

Wonderfully, in the age of the Kingdom and of the Spirit, heaven is already open to us, through faith. The kingdom of heaven has arrived and its King is present! In the parable of "the weeds" (the specific weed is darnel), kingdom life (wheat) is springing up in abundance, despite spiritual opposition. We need to be alert and discerning, and to celebrate the true life & fruit Christ is producing. Like the yeast (v33), the kingdom is already present and powerful (even though the world will often not notice). The kingdom starts from small seeds in individual hearts and communities, like a mustard seed, but flourishes when we plant and seek its growth. Even full-grown mustard plants lack ultimate glory, but they are obviously alive and flourishing.

Jesus, the Son of Man, is already ruling over the world (his field, v36-43). He is the source of spiritual life (sowing good seed) and he establishes people in his kingdom. He sets the limits on spiritual opposition (v28-30) and decides how things will be set right at the end of the age (v30). The picture of the field is mixed. There is much kingdom growth and there is opposition. Ultimately, those who oppose Jesus will be destroyed, and the loss and suffering will be unimaginably great (v30, v41-42). *If you hear Christ calling you today, turn, enter his kingdom and follow him.*

Jesus gives us wisdom to see what really matters. At the end of the age, his angels will gather in all who know and love him, and the kingdom will blossom. The life and beauty of that kingdom is already pouring in—heaven is open. *Are we seeing its glory and what is possible?*

