

ARE YOU WHEAT OR CHAFF? #1

I want to ask you a question this morning: Are you wheat or chaff? You may think it odd for me to ask this question of you, you might even become very offended, and say, "He has a big nerve!" This question is not for corn merchants and farmers.

If you think so you are very mistaken. It is meant for every man, woman, and child in the world. Among others, it is meant for you. This question: Are you wheat or chaff, is drawn from a verse of Scripture, Matthew 3:12: "His winnowing fan (shovel, fork) is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear out *and* clean His threshing floor, and gather *and* store His wheat in His barn; but the chaff He will burn up with fire that cannot be put out."

We read here the words of John the Baptist. John's words are a prophecy about our Lord Jesus Christ, and a prophecy, which has not yet been fulfilled. These words of John the Baptist are a prophecy, which we shall all see fulfilled one day, and God alone knows how soon.

I want us all to pay very close attention this morning, and consider the great truths that this verse contains. I want you to study these words carefully, and listen to what I have to say, for I want to unfold them and set them before you in order.

Who knows, maybe this valuable text this very morning, may awaken you, the sleeping and foolish "virgin" and touch your soul so they may be saved (from the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. Let us read Matthew 25:1-13). Who knows, my question may help to make this day the happiest day in your life?

Are you wheat or chaff? So listen, before you leave this service, and go back home to eat, to play, to sleep, to watch TV, to sport around, to attend to your business or family. Listen, before you plunge once more into some course of useless idleness and folly.

Listen to the one who loves your soul, and desires desperately to help to save it, and draw your soul nearer to Christ. Who knows what a day may bring forth? Who can tell whether or not you will live to see tomorrow?

So be still, and listen to me a few minutes, while I show you something out of the Word of God. The first thing I want to show you is this: the world is divided into two great classes of people. Yes, there are ONLY two classes of people in the whole world, in the sight of God.

Both are mentioned in our text this morning, Matthew 3:12---. Notice please, that there are those who are called "the wheat", and there are those who are called "the chaff." Now viewed with the eye of man, the earth contains many different sorts of inhabitants.

But viewed with the eye of God, it only contains TWO! Man's eye looks at the outward appearance: this is all he thinks. The Eye of God looks at the

heart: this is the only part of which God takes into account.

And tried by the state of their hearts, there are but TWO CLASSES into which people can be divided: they are either WHEAT or CHAFF.

Do you have any idea who the wheat are in this world? Well, the wheat means all men and women who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ -- all who are led by the Holy Spirit -- all who have felt themselves sinners, and fled for refuge to the salvation offered in the Gospel.

The "wheat" are all repented sinners, who have been converted and born again, and have surrendered all to the Lord, their will for His Will! They are all who love the Lord Jesus, live to the Lord Jesus, serve and obey the Lord Jesus and make Him their Lord and Master!

They are all who have taken Christ for their only confidence, and the Bible for their only guide. In addition, the "wheat" are those who regard sin as their deadliest enemy, and look to Heaven as their ONLY home.

All such persons, of EVERY church, name, nation, people, and tongue; of every rank, station, condition, and degree; all such are God's WHEAT. Show me men and women of this kind anywhere, and I know what they are!

I do not know if they agree with me in all things, but I see in them the handiwork of the King of kings, and I ask no more. I do not know from where they have come, and I do not know where they found their religion. But I do know one thing: I know where they are GOING! And that is enough for me. They are the children of my Father in Heaven; they are part of His wheat. All of these believers, though sinful, and vile, and unworthy in their own eyes, are the precious part of mankind.

They are sons and daughters of God the Father; they are the delight of God the Son; they are the habitation of God the Spirit. The Father beholds no iniquity in them; they are the members of His Dear Son's Body.

In union with Christ, God sees them, and is well pleased. The Lord Jesus discerns in them the fruit of His own travail and work upon the Cross and is well satisfied. The Holy Ghost regards them as spiritual temples, which He Himself has reared, and rejoices over them.

In a word, they are the "WHEAT" of the earth! Now, brothers and sisters let me ask another question: "Who are the "chaff" in the world? Listen to me once more, and I will tell you this also. The "chaff" means all men and women who have no saving faith in Christ, and no sanctification of the Spirit, whosoever they may be!

Some of them perhaps are infidels, and some are formal or nominal Christians. Some are sneering Sadducees, and some are self-righteous Pharisees. Some of them make a point of keeping up a kind of Sunday religion, and others are utterly careless of everything except their own pleasure and the world.

But all of them are alike, when they have the two great marks already mentioned -- no faith and no sanctification, all such people are "chaff." Many are just plain churchmen and women who think of nothing but outward ceremonies, others are the out and out sinners and "foolish" virgins.

They bring no glory to God the Father. They do not honor the Son, and they are, therefore considered "chaff."

They neglect that mighty salvation, which countless millions of angels admire. They disobey that Word which was graciously written for their learning, the Holy Scriptures. They do not listen to the voice of Him who condescended to leave Heaven and die for their sins on a cruel Cross!

They pay no tribute of service and affection to Him who gave them life, and breadth, and all things. Therefore God takes no pleasure in them. He pities them of course, but He reckons them no better than "chaff."

Yes: you may have rare intellectual gifts, you may have graduated from school with high honors, even took college courses, you may sway kingdoms by your counsel, you may move millions by your pen, or keep crowds in breathless attention by your tongue. But if you have never submitted yourself to the yoke of Christ, and never honored His Gospel by heartfelt reception of it, you are nothing in His Sight.

You twist His order and arrangement, and live as if time was of more importance than eternity, and body better than soul. The chaff dares to neglect God's greatest gift, His own incarnate Son. The chaff is cold about that subject which fills all Heaven with hallelujahs!

So long as this is the case, you belong to the worthless part of mankind. You are the "CHAFF" of the earth! Please, let this thought be graven deeply in your mind, whatever else you forget in this service this morning: Remember this: there are only TWO kinds of people in the world. There are the WHEAT, and there are the CHAFF. What are you?

There are many nations in Europe, for instance, and many countries in Africa. Each differs from the rest. Each has its own language, its own laws, and its own peculiar customs. But God's Eye divides Europe and Africa into just two great parties: the WHEAT and the CHAFF.

There are many classes of people here in the United States. There are what we call "society people", and there are the common laborer; there are the farmers and the shopkeepers; there are the masters and the servants; the rich and the poor; there are white and black, Jews and Chinese. But God's Eye only takes account of two orders: the WHEAT and the CHAFF.

There are many and various minds in every congregation that meets for religious worship. I am speaking of ALL churches, everywhere in the world. I am speaking of Baptist, Lutheran, Presbyterian and Methodist, Jehovah Witness, Mormon, and Adventist Churches. I am speaking of Faith Tabernacle and First Century Gospel churches.

In each of these churches, every single congregation, there are some who attend for a mere form, and some who really desire to meet Christ: some who come there to please others, and some who come to please God.

There are some in every church who bring their hearts with them, and are not soon tired, and some who leave their hearts behind them, and think the whole service is weary work. But the Eye of Jesus only sees TWO DIVISIONS in the congregation: the WHEAT and the CHAFF. Are you Wheat?

When the United Nations convene in New York or the NATO nations of Europe get together and have a meeting, of all those nations, from England, France, Netherlands, Germany, etc., it is a variety of languages and peoples, but the Eye of the Lord only sees two companies at such a meeting, the wheat and the chaff!

When the African nations meet together to talk over political, economic and financial problems that they face, they are a very diversified people, blacks of many tribes and backgrounds, but the Lord only sees two companies among them, the wheat and the chaff!

Now, I know very well that the world dislikes this way of dividing professing Christians. The world tries hard to explain that there are THREE kinds of people, and not TWO. To be very good, and very strict does not suit the world: They cannot, and will not be saints.

But we are speaking of the many who profess to lean towards Christianity, call themselves Christians, and to them, to have no religion at all, does not suit them, it would not be respectable.

"THANK God," they will say, "we are not so bad as that." But to have religion enough to be saved, and yet not go into extremes, to be sufficiently good, and yet not be peculiar, to have a quiet, easy-going, moderate kind of Christianity, and go comfortably to Heaven after all.

This is the world's favorite idea. To them there are not just the good and the bad, not just the saved and the unsaved, not just the wheat and the chaff. Oh no, they have a third group, a safe middle class, and in this middle class the MAJORITY of men convince themselves they will be found.

Let me tell you this morning, I denounce this notion of a MIDDLE-CLASS because it is an immense and soul-ruining delusion, that's what it is! I warn you strongly not to be carried away by this delusion. It is as vain an invention as the Pope's purgatory.

It is a refuge of lies, a castle in the air, a vast unreality, and an empty dream. This middle class is a class of Christians NO WHERE spoken of in the Bible. There were two classes in the day of Noah's flood; those who were inside the ark, and those who were on the outside, that is all that I find, just these two classes: those inside, and those outside!

In the parable of the Gospel net, there were just two kinds: those who were called the good fish, and those who were called the bad. In the parable of the 10 virgins, there were just TWO classes: those who were called the wise, and those called the foolish.

In the account of the Judgment Day, there are just two classes: the sheep and the goats; two sides of the throne; the right hand and the left; two abodes when the last sentence has been passed: Heaven and Hell.

In the same way, so there are but two classes in the visible Church here on earth: those who are in the state of nature, and those who are in the state of Grace; those who are in the narrow way, and those who are in the broad way; those who have faith, and those who have no faith; those who have been converted, and those who have not been converted.

Do not listen to the lies of Satan about there being three classes: there is no MIDDLE class. It is either those who are with Christ, or those who are against Him; those who gather with Him, and those who scatter abroad; those who are wheat and those who are chaff. Into these TWO classes the whole professing Church of Christ may be divided. Beside these two classes, there is NONE! Now do you see why there is a great need for self-inquiry? Do you know what you are?

The Bible asks: "Are you among the wheat, or among the chaff?" Neutrality is impossible. You are either in one class, or in the other. Which is it of the two? You may say you go to church! Maybe not every Sunday, but you attend every now and then, fine. You attend the Communion service and partake of the Bread and Wine at the Lord's Table? You like good people; Christian believers. Great! You can distinguish between good preaching and bad. You think Christianity is good, and support it.

All of these things are good: they are all very good. It is more than can be said of many. But do you want to know something? You have not answered my earlier question. Are you wheat or chaff? Have you been truly born again? Are you a new creature?

Have you put off the old man, and put on the new? Have you ever felt your sins, and repented of them? Are you looking simply to Christ for pardon and Eternal Life? Do you love Christ? Do you serve Christ? Do you loathe heart-sins, and fight against them?

Do you long for perfect holiness, and follow hard after it? Have you come out from the world? Do you delight in reading and studying the Scriptures? Do you love your Bible above any reading matter? Do you wrestle in prayer? Do you love Christ's people? Do you try to be good to the world?

Are you vile in your own eyes, and willing to take the lowest place? Are you a Christian in your business, at the office, at your place of employment, in school, in public, in your car, and at your home? Are you a Christian just on

Sundays?

Oh, think, think, think on these things, and then perhaps you will be better able to tell the state of your soul? I beseech each one here this morning to not turn away from my question, however, unpleasant it may be.

Answer it, though it may prick your conscience, and cut you to the heart. Answer it, though it may prove you in the wrong, and expose your fearful danger. Are you wheat or chaff?

We are always glad to give Scriptural advice and counsel to those who desire to write us about their problems, and to remember their requests for prayer in our services.

In addition, we publish sermons on other subjects, which take up in detail teaching on how to deal with God successfully and be delivered out of all our troubles. We will gladly send them to those who desire them for their own use or for others.

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