

## Lutheran Confessions

### A CHRISTIAN EXHORTATION TO THE LIVONIANS CONCERNING PUBLIC WORSHIP AND CONCORD - June 17, 1525

At the same time, I also ask the people to have patience and not to be astonished if differences in teaching and practice are caused by factions and sects. For who can stop the devil and his legions? **Remember that tares always grow amidst the good seed, as every field of God's work shows and Christ confirms, Matthew 13 [:24–30].** Again, no threshing floor can have only clean corn, but there must be also hulls and straw. And St. Paul says, "In a house there are not only vessels for noble use, but also vessels for ignoble uses" [II Tim. 9:20]. Some are for eating and drinking, others for carrying and cleaning out rubbish and filth. Thus among Christians there must also be factions and heretics who pervert faith and love and confuse the people.

Now if a servant should become disturbed because he found that not all the cups in the house were of silver, but that there were also chamber pots and garbage cans, and he could not endure this discovery, what would happen? Who can keep house without unclean vessels? The same thing is true in Christendom. We cannot expect only to find noble vessels, but we must tolerate the ignoble ones as well, as St. Paul says, "There must be factions among you" [I Cor. 11:19]. **And indeed, my dear friends, from the very fact that you discover factions and disunity among you, you can tell that God gave to you the true Word and knowledge of Christ.** For when you were under the pope, Satan certainly left you in peace, and though you might have had none but false teachers, he did not cause much dissension among you. But now that the true seed of God's Word is with you, he cannot bear it; he must sow his seed there too, even as he does here among us through the enthusiasts. **God also tests you thereby to discover if you will stand fast.**

Nevertheless, both you and your preachers should diligently seek to promote unity and **to hinder this work of the devil**, because God appoints the devil to do this in order to give us occasion to prove our unity and in order to reveal those that have stood the test. For in spite of all our efforts, enough factions and disunity will remain.

## Put it into Practice

*These questions have been put together to help you as you extend and apply tonight's Scripture to your life.*

### Prayer

O Lord, we implore You to keep Your Church and household continually in Your true religion that they who do lean upon the hope of Your heavenly grace may evermore be defended by Your mighty power; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **AMEN**  
*(Collect for The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany)*

### Word of God: St. Matthew 13:24-43 (on back)

### Questions to Ponder in Prayer

1. St. Matthew seems to group several agriculture parables together in chapter 13. Note: The interpretation of the seed in one is not the same interpretation in another parable.
2. All of the parable speak about the kingdom of heaven. What is it? (Rom 14:17, Jn 18:36)
3. According to Christ's own interpretation, the Sower in Mt 13:24-30 is Jesus Himself! Jesus is sowing sons=believers(good seed) in the world. Where do we find the church? (Jn 17:15-19)
4. Where does the devil sew his sons=unbelievers? v.25
5. Jesus doesn't desire immediately uprooting of weeds. What is Jesus' great concern? (v.29)
6. Does this refusal to uproot the weeds mean that there is to be no discipline or excommunication in the church? (v.38) Where is the field?
7. What happens at the judgment? God knows the difference.
8. **Mustard seed parable:** Who is the least of all the seeds? Mt 25:40-45, Mt 2:6, Lk 7:28
9. What do we learn about the growth of the church? Jn 12:23-26
10. **Hidden yeast parable:** Here, yeast is that which grows the loaf and makes it good. The woman is the church, which preaches Law and Gospel. What is hidden? Rom 14:17
11. What is it that is slowly, but finally "worked through?"
12. **Why does Jesus speak in parables?** For believers? For unbelievers? Mt 13:13, Mk 4:11-12

### 6:30 PM "Learn by Heart"

*Through simple repetition those present will inwardly digest...*

Hymn TLH #116, stanza 5  
Confession, Questions One and Two  
1 Corinthians 11:19

### 7:00 PM "Catechesis"

+ Opening Verses  
"O Lord, open my lips..." p.224

+ Ascription of Praise  
"Praise to you, O Christ. Alleluia." p.225

### Reading

St. Matthew 13:24-43 (back)

### Hymn

"To The Name of Our Salvation"(Insert)

### Catechesis on... (back)

St. Matthew 13:24-43  
Liturgy  
Catechism

--prayer based on reading

+ Responsive Prayer for Catechesis  
(insert)

Ten Commandments

Lord's Prayer

Apostles' Creed

Psalm 1

Collect of the Day

Prayers based on the text

The Collect for Peace

Benedicamus

Benediction

## Catechesis on St. Matthew 13:24-43

<sup>24</sup> Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; <sup>25</sup> but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. <sup>26</sup> But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. <sup>27</sup> So the servants of the owner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ <sup>28</sup> He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The servants said to him, ‘Do you want us then to go and gather them up?’ <sup>29</sup> But he said, ‘No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. <sup>30</sup> Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, ‘First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

<sup>31</sup> Another parable He put forth to them, saying: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, <sup>32</sup> which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.”

<sup>33</sup> Another parable He spoke to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.”

<sup>34</sup> All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, <sup>35</sup> that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:

“I will open My mouth in parables;

I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world.”

<sup>36</sup> Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying,

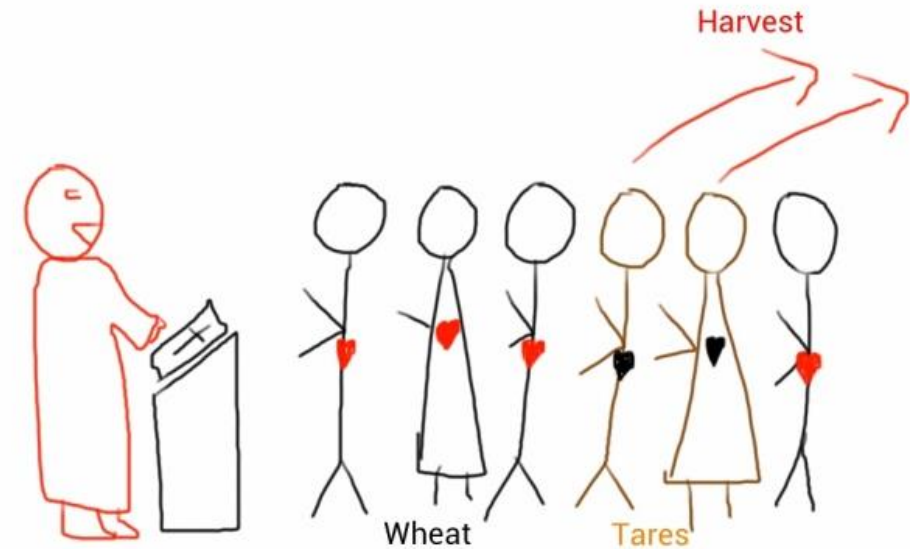
“Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.” <sup>37</sup> He answered and said to them: “He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup> The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. <sup>39</sup> The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. <sup>40</sup> Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. <sup>41</sup> The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, <sup>42</sup> and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup> Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!” (NKJV)

### The Church - Mingled

#### Apology to Augsburg Confession, VII and VIII

The Eighth Article is sufficient to exculpate us. For we grant that in this life hypocrites and wicked men have been mingled with the Church, and that they are members of the Church according to the outward fellowship of the signs of the Church, *i.e.*, of Word, profession, and Sacraments, especially if they have not been excommunicated.... **5]** But the Church is not only the fellowship of outward objects and rites, as other governments, but it is originally a fellowship of faith and of the Holy Ghost in hearts. [The Christian Church consists not alone in fellowship of outward signs, but it consists especially in inward communion of eternal blessings in the heart, as of the Holy Ghost, of faith, of the fear and love of God]; which fellowship nevertheless has outward marks so that it can be recognized, namely, the pure doctrine of the Gospel, and the administration of the Sacraments in accordance with the Gospel of Christ.

## CATECHESIS ON ST. MATTHEW 13:24-30, 36-43



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## The True Church - Separated

### **Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope**

41] This being the case, all Christians ought to beware of becoming partakers of the godless doctrine, blasphemies, and unjust cruelty of the Pope. **On this account they ought to desert and execrate the Pope with his adherents as the kingdom of Antichrist;** just as Christ has commanded, Matt. 7, 15: Beware of false prophets. And Paul commands that godless teachers should be avoided and execrated as cursed, Gal. 1, 8; Titus 3, 10. And he says, 2 Cor. 6, 14: Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what communion hath light with darkness?

42] To dissent from the agreement of so many nations and **to be called schismatics is a grave matter.** But divine authority commands all not to be allies and defenders of impiety and unjust cruelty.

On this account **our consciences are sufficiently excused;** for the errors of the kingdom of the Pope are manifest. And Scripture with its entire voice exclaims that these errors are a teaching of demons and of Antichrist. 43] The idolatry in the profanation of the masses is manifest, which, besides other faults [besides being altogether useless] are shamelessly applied to most shameful gain [and trafficking]. 44] The doctrine of repentance has been utterly corrupted by the Pope and his adherents. For they teach that sins are remitted because of the worth of our works. Then they bid us doubt whether the remission takes place. They nowhere teach that sins are remitted freely for Christ's sake, and that by this faith we obtain remission of sins.

Thus they obscure the glory of Christ, and deprive consciences of firm consolation, and abolish true divine services, namely, the exercises of faith struggling with [unbelief and] despair [concerning the promise of the Gospel].

