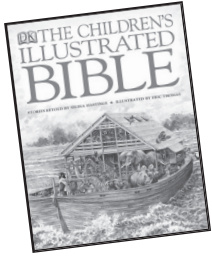


Ordinary Time, Proper 11



The Children's Illustrated Bible
page 241

Jesus told a parable of the wheat and tares. A sower sowed good seed in his field. While he was sleeping, an enemy came and sowed weeds in the field.

When the sower saw them growing together, he said, "Let both grow together. Later, we will harvest the wheat separate from the weeds." The wheat are the people who listen to Jesus' teachings and follow them, and the weeds are those who don't.

The weeds will not be able to live with the wheat if they will not follow Jesus' teachings.

—Matthew 13:24–30,36–43 adapted

☐ Wheat and Tares

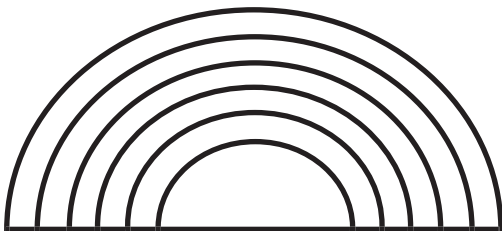
Invite kids to dramatize the parable of the wheat and tares from Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43. Count off kids alternately as a Wheat or a Tare. Coach the Wheat on how to grow up strong and healthy, waving in the wind, reaching up to the sunshine, growing happily alongside each other. Coach the Tares to be "terrible weeds," unpleasant and grumpy, pushing and shoving their way toward the sunlight, not caring whose soil they take over. Give each Wheat a stalk of wheat and each Tare a weed of some kind to hold in front of them (be careful of allergies). Ask youth or adult helpers to be the Good Sower, and the Enemy. Tell kids to follow the narration as you read the Parable of the Wheats and Tares on the KidsPage. Discuss after reading:

1. Have kids identify who is discriminated against (anyone who is different). Why do we mistreat those who are different from us?
2. Did you like being a Wheat or a Tare? Why or why not?
3. Who did Jesus say the Tares were? Who were the Wheats?
4. What promise did Jesus make to the Wheats, those who followed him?
5. Do you ever act like a Tare or know someone who does? How does it feel?
6. What does it mean to inherit something? How can the kingdom of heaven be like an inheritance?

☐ Rainbow Art

Rainbows can be seen all over the world, usually after a shower of rain. Each child can create their own rainbow on sturdy paper or cardboard. Include all of the colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet). Now go on a scavenger hunt (outside if weather permits), and find one thing in nature to match each color of the rainbow. Kids may glue these

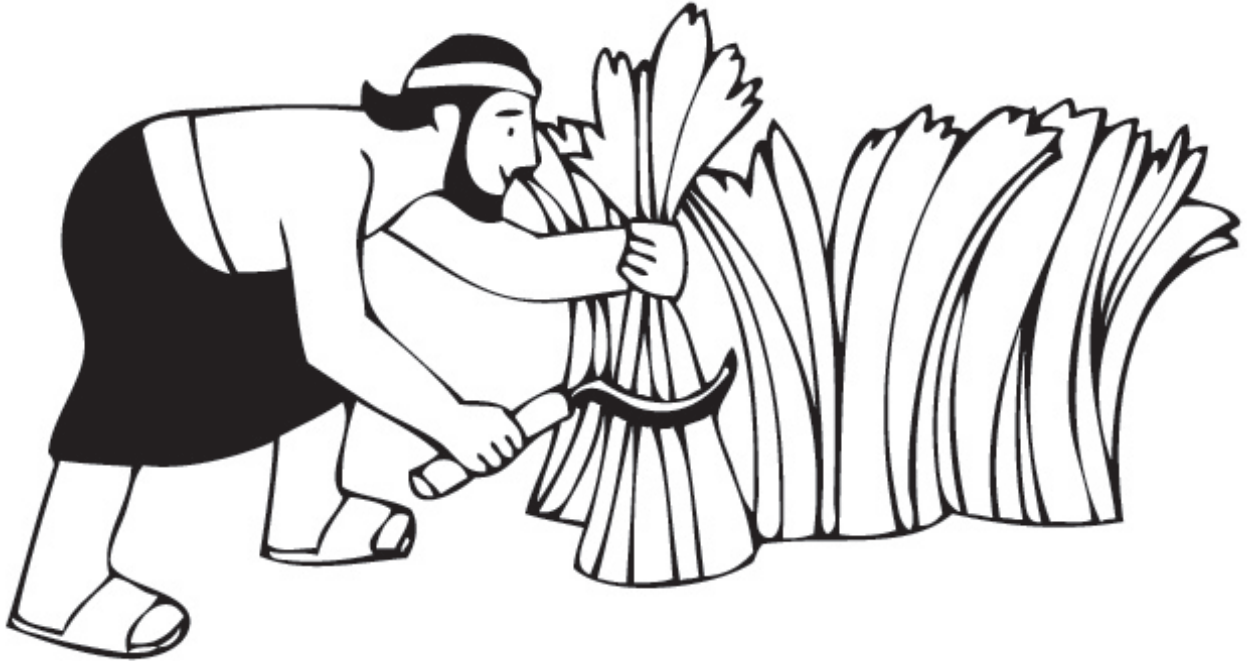
items onto the matching color on their rainbow, or bring them back to class to create a large rainbow mural. Kids will be surprised by the number of different colored things God has created that match the colors of the rainbow.



☐ Nature Walk

Sometimes it's difficult to find things that are mixed in with other objects, like the tares and the wheat. For this activity, use clear jars with lids and birdseed. Have kids go for a nature walk appreciating all of the wondrous things God has made. Give each one a jar to collect small objects in. Have each child collect about ten items, anything from a rock to a bottle cap. After everyone has their objects, fill the jars with birdseed. Put lids on the jars and have the children trade jars with someone else. Ask them to see if they can identify the objects collected. While outside, you may wish to have kids help "weed" the church yard or flowerbed, or make plans to do this on a congregation workday.

An enjoyable book telling about God's natural blessings is *God's Quiet Things* by Nancy Sweetland, illustrated by Rick Stevens. See Resources, page III.



Parable of the Wheat and Tares

- Jesus:** The kingdom of heaven is like a good sower who sowed good seed in his field. (Sower places the wheat seeds in position. Kids crouch down to simulate seeds.)
- But in the night, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat. (Enemy places tares in between each wheat seed. They also crouch down.) So as the wheat grew happy and healthy, the tares also grew beside them. (Both seeds grow up: weeds showing their healthy growth, tares showing bad behaviors.)
- Reapers:** Master, there are terrible tares in the wheat fields! Do you want us to dig them up?
- Sower:** No, because the wheat will be dug up with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest.
- Jesus:** The wheat and tares continued to grow.
- Sower:** (to reapers) Collect the tares first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat in my barn. (Reapers go into field to gather the tares, wrap them together with tissue paper, then pull them to the edge of the stage. Reapers then gather the wheat, and happily escort them to the barn.)
- Jesus:** This is what the parable means: I am the good sower. The wheat are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are those who wish to do hurtful things to others. When I come again, the tares will not inherit the kingdom, but the wheat, my good followers, will come with me to the kingdom.

—Matthew 13:24–43 adapted

Connect the dots to draw a tare:

