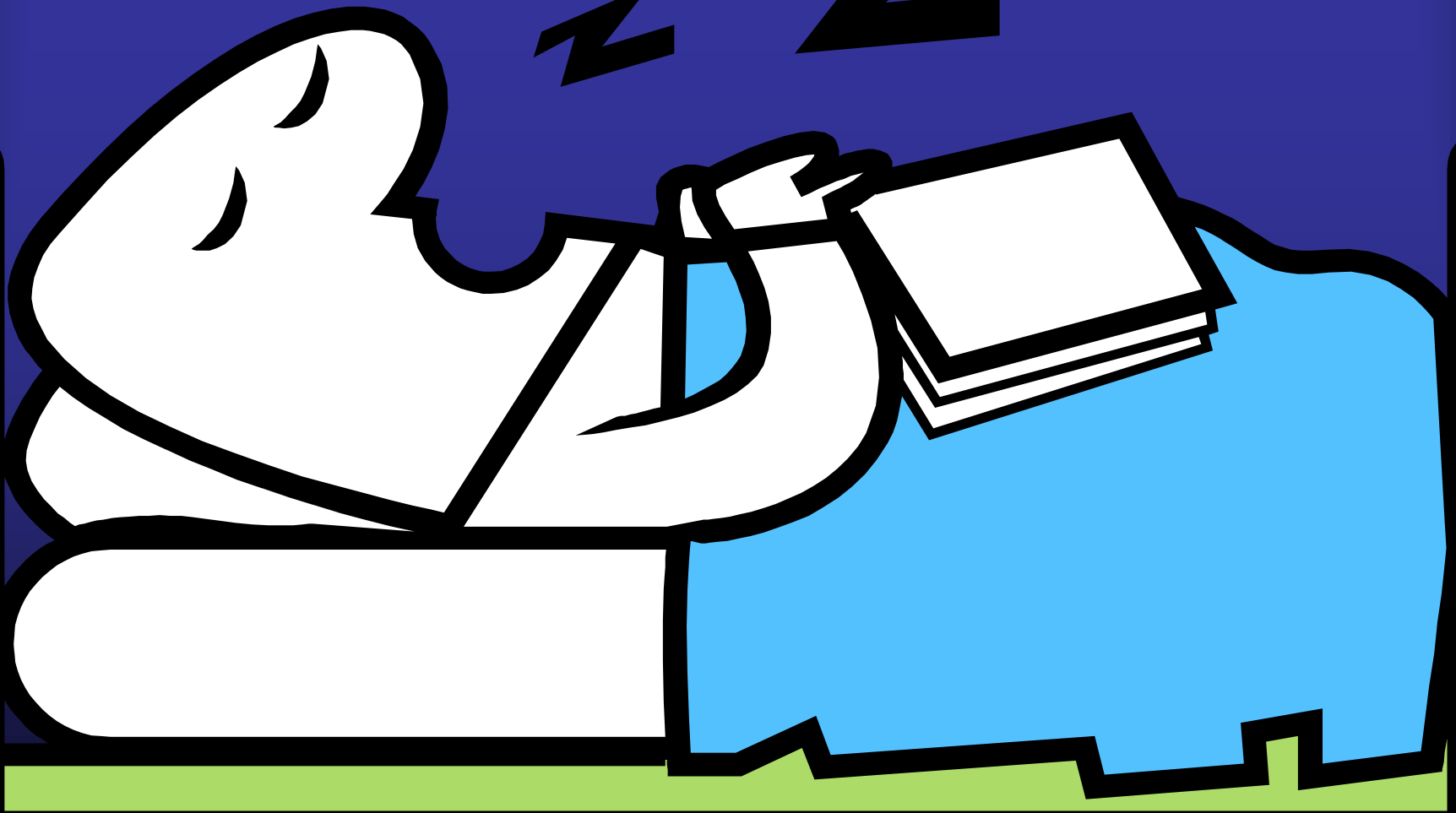


A Sermon on Sleeping



Matthew 13:24-30

Parable of the Tares

- Matt. 13:24-30 - “Another parable He put forth to them, saying: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; 25 but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. 26 But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. 27 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?’ 28 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?’ 29 But he said, ‘No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. 30 ‘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.’”

Parable of the Tares

- This parable is used by some to excuse tolerance of sin and error in the church.
 - Not the point of Jesus' explanation.

Parable of the Tares

- Matt. 13:37-43 - “He answered and said to them: ‘He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. 38 The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. 39 The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. 40 Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. 41 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, 42 and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!’”

Parable of the Tares

- Sower is the Son of Man.
- Good seed are the sons of the kingdom.
- Field is the world, not the church.
- Tares are sons of the evil one.
- Enemy who sowed tares is the Devil.
- Harvest is end of the world.
- Though we must purge sin in the church (1Cor. 5), God will judge the world at the end.

“While Men Slept” -- How Sin and Error Gained A Foothold

- True with regard to daily life: burglaries, vandalism, fires.
- True with regard to problems for nations:
 - Babylon overtaken during night by Medes,
 - During night is common time for a putsch,
 - Attack on Pearl Harbor while most slept in.

“While Men Slept” -- How Sin and Error Gained A Foothold

- Sleep is metaphor for neglect.
 - Matt. 26:36-45 - The prayer vigil of Jesus

Matt. 26:36-45 - 'Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, 'Sit here while I go and pray over there.' 37 And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. 38 Then He said to them, 'My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.' 39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.' 40 Then He came to the disciples and found them asleep, and said to Peter, 'What? Could you not watch with Me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' 42 Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done.' 43 And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy. 44 So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. 45 Then He came to His disciples and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.'"

“While Men Slept” -- How Sin and Error Gained A Foothold

- Sleep is metaphor for neglect.
 - Luke 12:35-39 - “Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; 36 and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding, that when he comes and knocks they may open to him immediately. 37 Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them. 38 And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. 39 But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.”

“While Men Slept” -- How Sin and Error Gained A Foothold

- Sleep is metaphor for neglect.
 - Isa. 56:10 - “His watchmen are blind, They are all ignorant; They are all dumb dogs, They cannot bark; Sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.”

“While Men Slept” -- How Sin and Error Gained A Foothold

- Spiritually, evil gains access when all sleep.
- Sleeping, plus failure to prepare, leads to tragedy.
 - Matt. 25:1-13 - The parable of the bridegroom
 - Vss. 3-8 - “Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. 6 And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' 7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 "And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'”

The Need For Wakefulness

- 1Cor. 15:34 - “Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.”
- Eph. 5:7-15 - (vss. 13-15) “But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. 14 Therefore He says: Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light. 15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise.”

The Need For Wakefulness

- Rom. 13:11-13 - “And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.”

Be Sober In Thought

- 1Peter 5:8 - “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”
- 1Tim. 3:2 - “A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach.”
- Titus 2:2 - “That the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience”
- Titus 2:12 - “Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age.”
- 1Peter 1:13 - “Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Be Watchful And Alert

- 1Thes. 5:1-7 - “But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 3 For when they say, Peace and safety! then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. 5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.”

Be Watchful And Alert

- One is seldom surprised by that for which he watches.
 - Acts 20:28-31 - “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. 29 For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. 31 Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.”
 - 1Cor. 16:13 - “Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong.”

A Sermon on Sleeping

- “You must stay vigilant. You must take care of yourselves and not rely on the whims of great men to decide your destiny, for that is when you will be deceived—not with a threat but with a treat.” (*Benjamin Ellefson*)
- “We must be vigilant, but mostly of ourselves. What my time taught me is that the ultimate life-and-death struggle is with ourselves. Foreign invaders might kill my body, but I can kill my spirit by sleeping.” (*Viet Thanh Nguyen*)