

The Two Sowers

by Horatius Bonar

Satan's secret work in sowing tares among the wheat is a constant threat to the church and must be resisted.

Scripture: Matthew 13:24

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Vigilance Against Deception"

Description

Horatius Bonar explores the parable of 'The Two Sowers,' emphasizing the battle between the Son of Man and the devil in the world, which is likened to a field where both wheat and tares grow. The enemy, representing the devil, sows tares among the wheat while men sleep, illustrating his stealth and cunning nature. Bonar highlights the confidence of the enemy in the vitality of his evil seed and the cursed soil that nurtures it, urging believers to remain vigilant against such deception. He warns of the relentless nature of the enemy's work and the need for Christians to resist and combat the devil's schemes. The sermon serves as a call to awareness and action in the spiritual warfare that surrounds us.

Transcript

"But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way."--Matthew 13:25.

There are two sowers in this parable, yet but one field; two kinds of seed, yet but one field. The one field is this world, called in verse 41, "his kingdom;" the sowers are the Son of man and the devil; the two seeds are the wheat and the tares. The field belongs to the Son of man; the enemy had no part in its proprietorship; he does his mischief by stealth and cunning; he climbs over the wall in the night while men sleep. He is the enemy of the Son of man; and his desire is twofold, (1) to choke the good seed, and (2) to fill the field with tares. He is the same enemy that stole into Paradise, and wrought ruin there. The parable exhibits him as full of (1) enmity, (2) cunning, (3) determination, (4) patience, (5) confidence. All these we find brought out in this simple and apparently very useless expression, "he went his way," or "left the place"--άπήλθεν. Why did he thus go his way?

I. He did not wish to be seen. He came by night, and he went by night. He came while men slept, and he went ere they awoke. He did not wish it to be known that he was there. He did not care for the fame of doing the thing; all he cared for was, that it should be done. How different from us! We care more about the honour of doing a thing than the work itself. How single-eyed is Satan in his evil! He does his work unknown. He steals quietly to his work and from his work, without sound of trumpet. Besides, he does not want to excite men's fears, or to alarm the servants of the Master by his visible presence. That would

defeat his object. Ah, it is with an invisible devil that we have to do; mighty, but unseen; the ruler of the darkness of this world,--himself loving the darkness,--dwelling and working in it. Surely we need to watch, whether in keeping our own vineyard or that of others.

II. He had done his work. It might be on a greater or a larger scale, that mattered not. He had done his work. It did not require repetition or re-sowing. The sower had done all that, as a sower, he could do. Sowing is not a process repeated daily; it is done once; he did not come night after night to sow and re-sow. He needed but one sowing-time; and so he went his way.

III. He had confidence in the seed. He knew of what kind it was, its vitality; its indestructibility. It could lie long in the ground before it sprung. It would not fail. It was the true seed of hell. It was sure to spring, sooner or later. So he went his way. Ah, what confidence does this exhibit in the vigour and vitality of error. Have we like confidence in the life and power of truth? Do we speak it as those who trust it?

IV. He had confidence in the soil. The soil had not been meant for error, but the curse was on it, and its fruitfulness had become fruitfulness in evil. In a cursed soil, his seed was sure to be nourished and grow. The seed was evil, and the soil was evil. No one knew these things better than this enemy, this sower of the tares. It was then, with confidence in the soil, that, having done his work, he went his way. The soil would not fail him; it would do its work.

V. He had confidence in the atmosphere. He is the prince of the power of the air; the ruler of the darkness of this world. It is on the air as much as on the soil that the harvest depends. He knows the peculiar elements with which this atmosphere is filled; how it is charged with all that fosters evil; how it will nourish the tares, so that they shall grow without fail, even though the wheat should die. And, accordingly, having done his work, he goes his way; he trusts to the evil air and the evil seed suiting each other.

VI. He had other work to do. He is not omnipresent nor omniscient. He goes up and down in the earth, walking to and fro in it, doing his work here and there. He does not abide in one place; he goes about to do work elsewhere; he visits place after place in succession; he never folds his hands nor shuts his eyes; he knows no night, and he needs no slumber. Incessant work, all round and round the globe; in every kingdom, in every church, in every soul. He has always something on hand; some new error; some new departure from the faith; some new snare; some new vanity; some new delusion to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect! Sometimes the prince of darkness, sometimes the angel of light; always the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air.

His first seed sown was in the ear and heart of our first parents, and what fruit of evil has it borne, what tares has it produced! Since that, he has been sowing constantly the tare-producing seed. So will he continue to do till the Lord comes to bind him.

Oh, what an enemy have we to fight with! What strength, what subtlety, what wiles, what perseverance. How he works! How he sows! Error upon error; a little seed at first, yet producing a vast harvest of error and sin; a race of evil-doers, evil-thinkers, evil-speakers, perverters of the truth, enemies of God; fields of tares;--so like the wheat, that man cannot discern the difference.

Resist the devil, work against him, for we are not ignorant of his devices.

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