

“Where’d All These Weeds Come From!”—Matthew 13:24-30

The text for this sermon, the theme of which is, “Where’d All These Weeds Come From!”, is Matthew 13:24-30 → Jesus *put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?’ He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ So the servants said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ But he said, ‘No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, “Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.””* This is the text.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord (cf. 1Timothy 1:2). Amen.

I learned the importance of proper personal application of God’s

Word to daily living during my first few months in the ministry. You see, it was also my first time caring for a garden. The plants grew admirably, along with lots and lots of weeds. I remember trying to hoe and pull the weeds, unable to distinguish between the plants and the weeds. Needless to say, the task became overwhelming. Then I remembered the words of Jesus from this parable. However, my version went something like this: “Let them both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will separate the good stuff from the weeds and we’ll be good. What a great way to apply Jesus’ parable to gardening!” Unfortunately, when it was time to harvest, I couldn’t distinguish the plants from the weeds and in frustration simply mowed it all down. I guess I failed to consider some of Jesus’ other parables which talk about on-going care for the garden or vineyard, huh?

Either way, the applications of Jesus’ parables to our daily lives goes much deeper than simply our own individual circumstances. As with so many of His parables Jesus was teaching about life in His kingdom for His servants now and into eternity. As He states in verse 24 of our text this parable was used to describe *the kingdom of heaven*. Matthew also records His disciples asking for an explanation of this parable when they were alone together (cf. Matthew 13:36). According to His explanation, the parable’s meaning is rather simple:

- The **man** who sowed good seed is Jesus. (cf. Matthew 13:37).

- The **field** is *the world* (cf. Matthew 13:38).
- The **good seed** are *the sons of the kingdom* (i.e. believers in Jesus; Christians) (cf. Matthew 13:38).
- The **weeds** among the wheat are *the sons of the evil one* (i.e. unbelievers; non-Christians) (cf. Matthew 13:38).}
- The **enemy** who sowed the weeds is *the devil* (cf. Matthew 13:39).
- The **harvest** is *the end of the age* (i.e. the Last Day also referred to as Judgment Day) (cf. Matthew 13:39).
- The **reapers** are God's *angels* (cf. Matthew 13:39).
- The **weeds . . . to be burned** are those in God's kingdom who cause *sin and all lawlessness* (i.e. unbelievers). They will go *into the fiery furnace* (i.e. hell), a *place of eternal weeping and gnashing of teeth* in their suffering and anger (cf. Matthew 13:40-42).
- The **wheat in the barn** are those who are *righteous* (i.e. believers in Jesus—those declared righteous by faith in Christ (cf. Romans 3:21-26)). They will *shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father* (i.e. go to heaven) (Matthew 13:43).

The picture is: Jesus has established His Church on earth. The devil and his followers exist side by side with those who believe in Christ striving to cause all people to sin, cause sin and live in disobedience to God's Laws. On Judgment Day the verdict on each of them will be

delivered. The believers will receive eternal life in the presence of God's glory forever and the unbelievers will receive eternal suffering in hell. Some might sum it up by saying the good people will go to heaven and the bad people will go to hell. The dilemma is, since all people are sinners, who are the good guys and who are the bad guys? The other conundrum is that this is actually a description of *the kingdom of heaven*, a reference to Christ's Church on earth.

In the context of your world in this culture, you see many evidences of *the sons of the evil one* at work in lawlessness, breaking laws on both the civil and Biblical levels. While they may not consider themselves to be followers of the devil, Scripture describes anyone who doesn't believe in Jesus as the devil's offspring. Jesus says in Luke 11:23 → *Whoever is not with Me is against Me, and whoever does not gather with Me scatters*. Since every human being is conceived in sin (cf. Psalm 51:5), we all need the work of Jesus Who atoned for our sin. As you repent of your sins and trust in His atoning work alone for the forgiveness of your sins, such *faith is counted to you as righteousness* in God's sight (cf. Romans 4:5). Every person without such faith is enslaved to sin and the devil, even unaware he is so enslaved because he lives in what the Scriptures refer to as spiritual darkness (cf. Ephesians 4:18-19; 2:1-3).

However, Jesus is also describing His visible church here on earth in this parable. Not only do believers and unbelievers exist side by side

until the Day of Judgment in the world, but in the visible congregation as well. It's just that they all confess and look alike so it's difficult to distinguish those who **truly** recognize their sin and trust in the atoning work of Jesus for forgiveness and those who don't. Why? In the context of the Christian church in this culture the devil places his *sons* (i.e. people) in the form of . . .

- . . . false teachers and preachers. Paul describes such in 2 Corinthians 11:3-4 as someone who *comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one the apostles proclaimed, or . . . a different spirit . . . or . . . a different gospel*. This happens when you hear Christians agree that there are other ways to heaven along with Jesus; when you hear Christians speak about lifestyles, behaviors and attitudes, which God defines as sin in need of repentance and the atoning work of Jesus, as acceptable lifestyles, behaviors and attitudes; when you hear Christians speak about angels as if they are God with the attributes of omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence; and when you hear Christians speak as if everyone who dies immediately becomes perfect and goes to a better place. Such concepts are teachings through which the devil works to lead you *astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ*. Paul goes on to describe those who disseminate such teachings as *false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ*, following the

lead of satan who *disguises himself as an angel of light* (cf. 2 Corinthians 11:13-14).

- The other way the devil places his *sons* (i.e. people) in the Christian congregation is as hypocrites. It is actually pictured in Jesus' parable of the weeds. Verse 26 of our text says: *When the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also*. If Jesus was referring to a weed called darnel, they wouldn't recognize it among the wheat until it headed out with grain since they look alike during growth. It's a good picture of hypocrisy. Jesus condemned hypocrisy many times. It is speaking and acting in a manner which confesses a belief in Jesus but does not really believe in the Person & Work of Jesus for forgiveness of sin, new life and salvation. Since we cannot know people's heart we will not know who is or isn't a hypocrite. We can only deal with what is confessed with the mouth and the behavior visibly placed before us.

The parable is meant to make you take spiritual inventory of your heart and life. Have you expounded unscriptural concepts? Have you ever fallen into the sin of hypocrisy? Have you ever caved into the sinful world's ways of thinking and behaving? Have you acted more like weeds than wheat? *The sons of the kingdom*—the baptized children of God who look only to the atoning work of Jesus for them—will be willing to freely confess such failures in all these areas. They will cling to His

forgiveness of them and, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, recognize from where the weeds come: the devil and your own sinful nature. They will recognize those weeds in light of the pure gospel of Jesus and look to Him, Who will plucked them out of their lives forever on the Last Day. He lived, died, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven to prepare a place for you with the absence of weeds—*all causes of sin and all law-breakers* (cf. Matthew 13:41). *Righteous* through faith in Christ you have the privilege of shining *like the sun in the kingdom of your Father* (cf. Matthew 13:43).

About eight years after my first gardening experience my 6 year old son and I were on our hands and knees in the garden pulling the weeds. He asked: “Dad, where do weeds come from?” I told him the account of God creating Adam and Eve and putting them into the perfect garden . . . **with no weeds!** Then I told him about how they disobeyed God’s command and from that day on they had to deal with weeds. “Son, weeds come from sin.” After my explanation I heard him pulling weeds saying, “Let’s pull this sin out of our garden.” And come to think it, when dealing with your weeds, on your knees is a pretty good place to be when it’s accompanied by confession of sins and the proclamation of forgiveness of your sins in the atoning work of Jesus alone. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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