



Reflection on Matthew 13:24-30

“Weeds Among the Wheat”

By Luke Brooks, Youth Director

One of my favorites of Jesus’ parables is the one about the “Weeds Among the Wheat.” It’s found in the Gospel of Matthew and definitely worth re-reading:

Jesus told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared. “The owner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’ ““An enemy did this,’ he replied. “The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’

“No,’ he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.”

Admittedly it’s a bizarre parable — wheat and weeds, both allowed to grow together. Now, we might interpret the wheat to mean the good, the righteous, the virtuous — whether that’s people, or actions, or circumstances or whatever. And I suppose the weeds symbolize the bad, the unrighteous and the non-virtuous. So why on earth would Jesus suggest that both should grow together until the harvest? Wouldn’t it be much better if the weeds were just plucked up and tossed into the flames, so the wheat was free to grow without interference? Well, it might be quicker, but not necessarily better in the long run.

To be sure, Jesus isn’t saying that we should *desire* bad things in life. That’d be illogical. However, I do think

he’s suggesting that weeds can be an opportunity for wheat, that badness can provide the occasion for goodness to sprout. After all, without sinners there are no saints, without inequality there is no charity, without wrongdoing there is no occasion for reaching out in forgiveness and mercy. I reckon that Jesus’ words are especially relevant during the current pandemic.

COVID is like a weed and of course we’d like to see it burnt to the ground. Rightly so. But a good question to ask ourselves is: “What opportunities are being opened up to me right now?” What acts of love and kindness are available to me that perhaps weren’t available before?” Maybe there’s a lonely neighbor desperate for a listening ear. Maybe there’s an elderly relative who’d love to talk to me on Zoom. Maybe I’ve been given some extra time for family walks, cozy dinners, or meaningful conversations. Maybe I’m around the house more and can offer to do some extra chores to help mom and dad.

Friends, we should continue to pray that things return to normal soon, but when we find ourselves in the weeds, let’s ask God to continue showing us how to be good wheat!

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