

Weeds and Wheat

Introduction:

- Like last week, this weeks scripture /text talks about planting, growing, and the eventual harvest.
- In today's scripture Matthew records Jesus talking to some people about one of my favorite subjects – Heaven (Or more precisely The Kingdom of Heaven)

P1 Matthew 13:24-30 ()

- V-24 (*Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field)*
 - When it comes to heaven there are two questions on most people's minds. What will heaven be like, and when are we going.) – Tell the story of the – every one who wants to go to heaven stand up!)
 - This story (or parable) does not seem to answer either of these two questions (And therein lies an important point. Christ/God offers what we need, not necessarily what we want or even think we need)
 - It seems that it is more about getting INTO heaven than it is about what heaven will be like.
 - But note ---→Jesus said that THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN is like..... He didn't say that Heaven is like.
- V-25 (*But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away)*
 - That sounds like just plain meanness. Certainly nothing good was going to come of this action and there is all sorts of potential for bad things. Embarrassment, because of the weeds there is less wheat and the farmer may not be able to pay his bills, and it might be bad enough that the farmers family goes hungry.
 - I don't know about you but in my mind there is ABSOLUTLY no doubt who Jesus is talking about here.
 - Satan would certainly be pleased with any of those outcomes when it comes to the spiritual growth of God's people.
- V-26 (*When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared)*
 - Before we go much further I think it is important to make one point. Weeds will be weeds. There is nothing that we or they can do to change that. They are what they are. Weeds are not in and of themselves evil. They are what they are. In many cases what makes a weed a weed is simply a matter of where it is growing, or how you perceive it. (Catnip is a good example)
 - Along the same lines wheat will be wheat and that is all there is to it. We plant it. It grows. There is a harvest and all is good. Or is it? What if that wheat plant is growing in the middle of your flower garden?
 - In many ways the same thing applies to people as well. Of course people have an infinitely greater potential to grow and to change. What a person is today is not necessarily what they will become tomorrow, next month, or in the years to come.
 - In this case there was a field. There were some seeds planted. Apparently two different types of seeds were planted and by at least two different people, with different motives.
 - The seeds were planted, the rains fell, the ground nurtured the seeds, and time passed. It was not until all of this had come to pass and the plants emerged from the ground that the people involved realized that they were not all the same, that some were different. Then these same people proclaimed some good and others weeds.
 - When we meet and interact with people we are seeing them as they at once specific point in their lives. We are encountering them as they are at that particular moment in time. Perhaps we know something of their past. Maybe we have even shared part of their past. Or a LOT of their past. We may have an idea of who they are, what they believe, and how they will react under certain

circumstances. But only God knows the whole story. Only God has read their story from beginning to end. Only God knows what they will become. Only God knows their future.

- V-27 (*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?'*)
 - This is certainly a reasonable question
 - It is along the same lines as asking why God allows bad things to happen in this world. Was this what God had in mind when God began creation?
 - How does this apply to parents and children? How does this apply to God and the created world?
- V-28 (*An enemy did this, ' he replied. "The servants asked him, ' Do you want us to go and pull them up?'*)
 - Some time ago there was a story in TV about two colleges who have had a long-standing football rivalry. It seems that during the half time show the visiting team's marching band secretly dropped seeds at the fifty-yard line. No one noticed it. Time passed as it always does,. And the seeds grew as they generally do. It was then that the visiting team's initials appeared on the fifty-yard line of their rival's home field.
 - In the beginning God created the world and it was good. God even said so (Include that passage from genesis here)
 - Satan (for what ever reason) planted seeds as well – only these were weeds planted to harm and destroy. Seeds of doubt (Did God really say..), weakened faith
 - The workers asked, *Do you want us to go and pull them up?* The farmer said no. Let them grow. We will sort it out at harvest time. Right now pulling the weeds would do more harm than good.
 - Weeds are weeds. They will become what they are destined to be with no potential or chance for change. However, people can and do change. There is always the chance that tomorrow will bring changes with it. (Saul/Paul for example)

P2 Matthew 13:36-43 ()

- V-36(1) (*Then he left the crowd and went into the house.*)
 - In the section before this Jesus came out of the house and the people gathered around him.
 - He preached. He healed. And he taught those who wanted to hear about heaven and our heavenly father, the Lord God.
 - Some understood. Some didn't. Then he left them and returned to the house.
 - Sounds to me like we have just heard (or witnessed) Christ's life and mission laid out in miniature.
- V-36(2) (*His disciples came to him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.)*)
 - The disciples apparently didn't get it. Didn't understand the message or point of the story (parable)
 - We are frequently in the same boat as the disciples.
 - Thursday in our afternoon bible study Paul asked an interesting question. One that makes this point so well I borrowed it. How did Jesus present the Gospel?
 - By flashing his divinity like a gun fighter of old flashing his pistols for all the world to see?
 - Or by forcing and demanding that people listen and change their ways?
 - No. Absolutely not. Jesus shared the Gospel. He talked about our Heavenly Father. And most of all he demonstrated God's love in real, practical, everyday ways.
 - So, when we find ourselves reading the scriptures, hearing the stories, and they just don't seem to make sense let me suggest that you pause a moment. Think about what Jesus did in similar circumstances. Then if at all possible choose the most love filled, life affirming option available.

Conclusion (A call to action)

- This world (God's creation) is like that field in which the farmer sowed good seeds.
- Our lives are like that field in which the farmer sowed good seeds
- Our hearts and minds are like that field in which the farmer sowed good seeds
- Let God's spirit nourish you, let God's love sustain you, and let God word guide you so that your life might have meaning and bring glory to our heavenly father. Be the wheat among the weeds.
- In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.