

What Grows In Your Garden?

July 17, 2011

Matthew 13:24- 30 Parable of the Weeds

The other day, God kept telling me – go – look at your garden with all the pretty flowers – you know – the one you haven't tended to yet this year. Dig up a weed and take a real good look at it. Well, I went and looked and - - “Oh My”! Some of the weeds were very large – so I started to dig some up – and then I saw what God was saying to me. – Roots – some deep, very deep, and some very sprawly.

Okay God! Now, how does this fit in with today's message?

Well, imagine yourself sitting among the crowd that had gathered that day as Jesus was talking to them about a field of wheat & weeds. He had a way of telling stories that could baffle anyone. Would you have understood what He was trying to say? Would you have gotten the real meaning?

I must admit, I don't think I would have gotten that deeper meaning.

It just tells me we will always have weeds in our gardens.

Even His disciples later followed Him into the house and asked Him to explain this one.

In this parable He said–

“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away.

Jesus went on: The one who sowed the seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world – the good seed is the people of His kingdom – He is saying we – You & I - are the good seed in that field – The weed represents the sin, the evil doing, and everything else that works against the great purposes of God. The sower of the seed is the Son of God, the long-awaited Messiah, the Savior of the world.

The scripture goes on to say - The servants ran to him and said “Did you not sow good seed in your field?

How, then, has it weeds? And he told them an enemy had done this.

And then the servants ask “Do you want us to go and gather the weeds? And he answers them “**NO**, lest you gather the good wheat with the weeds. Let them grow together until the harvest; and then the reapers will gather the weeds to be burned and they will take the good wheat to the barn.

Understand, in those days, they didn’t plant nice neat rows in their gardens, they cast it out letting it fall where it may. So searching for only the weeds would have been quite an awesome task, especially since they looked so much alike..

Jesus told them- - The Son of Man would send out His angels, and they would weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil.

Jesus is telling us that we should all live together in His kingdom just as the weed grew with the wheat. We - are to live together.

“Just leave the weeds alone,” Jesus said. God knows what’s good and what isn’t.

Notice the master wasn’t the least bit worried that the wheat might get choked out by the weeds. He knew that what he planted would come to harvest.

. Nothing can stop God’s work in Christ. His kingdom is forever.

There will come a day when good will be separated from evil, and the righteous will shine like the sun (Matt. 13:43)..

God created each one of us to inhabit His garden. He gave us so much, including the freedom to choose. Be it good or evil .But evil does linger among us, confusing us and tempting us – enticing us - to do things not pleasing to God..

Let’s go back to those weeds I was digging up – I had some that went so deep down – it reminded me of a sin or an evil that is so deep rooted in us- we

just have a real hard time letting it go, like maybe being critical or prideful or judgmental.

Then there were the real sprawly ones – with tiny fingers going every which way – trying to spread out among other growth. I looked at it and thought this is something like how gossip works – it just keeps spreading. We sure do God in our daily lives.

It's often hard to tell who is wheat and who is weed. I don't know about you, but sometimes I am wheat and sometimes I am weed, and I usually don't know when I'm being either. Some of the things I do that I think are good and holy turned out to be more about me than about Christ, and the things I am not even aware of, end up making a difference, things like opening a door or calling a friend, just saying hello or giving a listening ear.

God said “ Let them – let us all grow together – live together. How would it be if we tried to chase someone out of our church, making that ultimate judgment, only to find out we sent away a good servant They actually did that in biblical times. They would purge from the church those they thought to be of the devil - trying to create a perfect church. It would be disastrous for us to try to create a “pure” church, ...one with no sinners. Where, then, could we, as sinners and God's less than perfect children - seeking His Grace, - go to find Him?

They were judging others by their meager standards - and He has told us -

“judge not – lest ye be judged also”.

You see – God does not judge us by just one act in our lives, be it good or bad, – He sees and knows every part of our being and knows our hearts. Some that have done wrong can turn to Him and become good, and some that have been good, can turn away.

Only God, our Heavenly Father, makes the final decision.

We all stumble at times – But our God is a gracious and loving God.

He went to the cross for us – that our sins might be forgiven.

That is a gift we just need to accept – to receive.

* I know I fall short of His glory

* I can be critical of others

* I sometimes judge others

Take, for instance, I'm driving down the road and some **idiot** passes me on the wrong side, races ahead of me, then jumps back in front of me.

Can you relate to that?

Well, guess what – I have just been critical of one of God's creations and judged him. I have had bad thoughts about him. I then find myself saying "I'm Sorry God – please forgive me" Instead of getting angry and upset, just lift a simple, quick prayer to God asking Him to keep that person and those around him safe. We all sin and do, say or have thoughts not pleasing to God.

But it's okay - It's really okay - We make mistakes – but - - Our God is a gracious and Forgiving God!

We just need to sincerely ask His forgiveness and His help to not to do it again.

I know I am a sinner – but I also know of God's Grace – His love for me and for you

If only we could all see through His eyes and love as He loves.

Someone wrote an article about our eyes I'd like to share: Our Eyes

They blink together,

They move together,

They cry together,

They see things together,

And they sleep together,

But they never see each other.

Just maybe that is what is God asking of us:

To accept instead of judge

To bless instead of curse
To praise instead of criticize,
To help instead of turn away
To Love instead of Hate
To forgive instead of resent
To rejoice for others instead of envy
To be honest instead of deceitful.
And - To never see faults in others

I think God would be pleased if we used our eyes as if they were His eyes – seeing only the good - for -He , and He alone, sees with the **all seeing eye**. Just as our eyes work together – so should we – the body of Christ , His kingdom, work and live together in love & harmony.

God wants the whole of me – the whole of you – trusting in Him His Holy Spirit, Living in you and me; His Grace and His Love guiding us, and for us to share that Love with others.

What seeds do you grow?

Hear this story of a successful business man.

** he was getting ready to retire and felt it was time to choose a successor to take over his business.

He called all his young executives together and explained that he was getting ready to step down and he needed to choose a new CEO, ...one of them.

He gave each one a very special SEED; told them to take it home, plant it, water it and bring it back in one year. He would then judge the plants they bring back and choose the new CEO.

One man, Jim, took his seed like all the others and followed the boss's instructions. Five weeks went by, then five months. All the other men were talking about their plants, all but Jim – his had not grown. Still Jim kept watering his plant as instructed.

The day came to bring their plants back to the boss. All the others came in with very large plants, trees and flowers. Jim's pot was empty – he felt like a total failure - but his wife had encouraged him to remain honest and bring in his empty pot.

The boss looked at all the other pots and what they had produced.

Seeing Jim's pot in the back of the room, he invited the others to sit down and called Jim up front. – He then announced: “Behold – Your new CEO”

You see – the seed He had given each of his executives one year prior was a boiled seed – it would never grow. The others had replaced that original seed with a different one. Only Jim had the courage to bring back the original seed. Jim had grown much more than the other men. He had become more deeply rooted in honesty and faithfulness

Perhaps this is what God is asking of us– just as that boss was searching for the one of integrity – Isn't God asking us to remain His good seed – to have the courage to follow Him – to obey His commandments, - To put our deep roots in Him

I think I may have a plan for the garden of our daily living:

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PLANT THREE ROWS OF PEAS:

- 1. Peace of mind**
- 2. Peace of heart**
- 3. Peace of soul**

PLANT FOUR ROWS OF SQUASH:

- 1. Squash gossip**
- 2. Squash indifference**
- 3. Squash grumbling**
- 4. Squash selfishness**

PLANT FOUR ROWS OF LETTUCE:

- 1. Lettuce be faithful**

2. Lettuce be kind
3. Lettuce be patient
4. Lettuce really love one another

NO GARDEN IS WITHOUT TURNIPS:

1. Turnip for meetings
2. Turnip for service
3. Turnip to help one another

TO FINISH OUR GARDEN, WE MUST HAVE THYME:

1. Thyme for each other
2. Thyme for family
3. Thyme for friends
4. Thyme for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ

WATER FREELY WITH PATIENCE AND CULTIVATE WITH LOVE.

Could it be that turning weeds into wheat is exactly the reason Christ came into the world? - and For us to bring others to know Him.

As Paul Harvey would say “Now you know the rest of the story! ! !”

So - the question is:- What grows in your garden – the garden in your heart – the garden in your life! If you think you may have some weeds there, go to your Lord and Savior , and seek His forgiveness. – let Him help you get rid of those weeds.

I do pray your garden is filled with:

Faith - Hope -& Love - -

With - Humility - Goodness

And, above all else, that you be surrounded with the GRACE and PEACE of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

May God Bless You,

Amen