

Just Let The Weeds Grow

Rev. Terrance Jacob on Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43 at SALC, 7/19/26

How many of you ever had to deal with weeds? I remember “pulling” weeds in our lawn when we were growing up and didn’t use chemical weedkillers. Even when we planted vegetables in our urban garden, we had to contend with weeds. The important thing was that you had to get rid of weeds before they overran the crops. And weeds seem to grow quicker than the crops or the lawn.

So imagine if some wisecrack told us to just leave them to grow. With some lawns, like buffalo grass, the type called St. Augustine grass, you might get away with it if you mow the lawn in a specific way. But with agricultural crops, like wheat in the biblical parable, a farmer would think you are crazy to say, “Just let the weeds grow!”

Jesus tells this parable about a person who plants good seeds of wheat in his field and an enemy came and sowed weeds amongst the wheat. As they grew together, it became clear that there were weeds amongst the wheat and the workers asked if they should go and gather the weeds. The farmer replied, if you try to do that you will uproot the wheat with the weeds. So he said, “Just let the weeds grow!” Let them grow until harvest time, ‘cos then you will be able to distinguish and separate them easily.

I’m sure some of the crowd who knew a thing or two about farming might have said to themselves, this fellow should stick to

carpentry or spiritual work. Some of you may be thinking that too - it may be that some of his disciples said that too. After all, he also tried to give fishing advice that didn't make sense to fishermen. So when the crowd left, they asked him to explain the parable. It was not farming advice - thank God, some must have said - Jesus explained that he was the sower, the field was the world, the good seed was the children of God, that is those that believe in him, and the weeds were the children of the evil one, planted amongst God's children by the devil.

The parable is about letting the seeds grow until the good seeds show them up at the harvest in the Kingdom of God. So even in the Church today, we are advised to let the weeds grow.

1. When the enemy brings weeds

- Imposters with heresy - leave them be.
- Those that don't quite know the gospel - learn from TV, memes and those corny bill boards and social media posts - don't argue with them
- Even the weeds that are the so-called "Innocent and passive", those that do nothing but take up space and energy
- Jesus says even though you cannot stand them and they make your blood boil, let it be. Trust the process of growth.
- Proclaim the truth, don't spend your energy fighting the lies = political parties thrive on that, so leave that to them.
- Do what the Gospel has commanded you to do = proclaim the word in deed and word AND just keep growing.

- Produce the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5: **22** By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, **23** gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

2. Proclaim the Truth, Produce the fruit! The Church through the ages grew by this principle, and so can we

- Leaders of the Sanhedrin in the first century wanted to stop the Christians from growing. Then as recorded in Acts 5, one of their leaders, Gamaliel cautioned, "Leave them alone. If their movement was merely of human origin, it would eventually fail on its own, but if it were from God, fighting it would mean opposing God Himself. And the early church went on proclaiming truth and producing fruit.
- Political leaders were threatened by these Christian Seeds too. Remember the great persecutions under Emperor Nero in the first century. Christians were burnt at the stake, brutally murdered and hunted, yet the church, which went underground, literally in the catacombs, kept on proclaiming truth and producing fruit.
- So besides religious and political leaders trying to stop the church, at different points philosophers and influencers, as we call them today, tried to stop the growth. Through the middle ages 476 to 1500s with the rise of reason and the so-called Enlightenment, Christian theology was attacked. The church survived, by doing what it was called to do ... simply following the will of the sower. Proclaiming the truth and producing fruit.

- So let me clarify that refrain. It does not mean that we should allow ourselves to be trampled on. The church stood up to the opposition. The church always stands up when there is violations of the values of the kingdom of God, either when it the world leaders try to stop it from living our faith or when it affects those that cannot speak for themselves - Jesus came to set the oppressed free, release the captives - that's a whole sermon on its own, and even though it's also about truth telling and producing fruit to, being election season, I'm going to save it.

3. So let me end by focussing on the individual - the individual good seed. Don't beat yourself up if you struggle to bear fruit

- Peter was so sure he would bear good fruit/grain, but when it mattered he did not stand up for Jesus. But the Lord had prayed for Him because he understood the weeds of fear, doubt and human weakness.
- The fruit is the work of the Spirit, who comes to our aid. The helper, as Jesus says. The harvest is not about us. But we just keep our shoulder to the wheel; hand to the plough
- When the servants told the master about the weeds, he told them he knew. He knew that the enemy had planted weeds, imposters, doubts, obstacles, deceptions amongst gods crop - where God has sowed good seed in good soil - Jesus knows what we will face in this life. Let the weeds grow, he says, my good seed will show them up.
All praise to God. Amen.