

**Read: Matthew 13:24-30,36-43**

## Let weeds and wheat grow up together

### **Matthew 13:24-30**

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.'"

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

In today's parable (an earthly story with a heavenly point), Jesus compared our world to a field. And in that field, God plants good seed—representing those who believe in Jesus. And in that same field, the devil plants weeds—those who have rejected Jesus. The problem with new plants is that while they are growing, you can't always tell which are wheat and which are weeds. And so Jesus says, "Let both grow up together."

Why would he say that? In short, God has not called us to be the final judge of anyone's life. Are they a weed? Or wheat? We might look at a person struggling with poor choices in their life and think they are a "weed" that someday ought to be gathered in the burn pile of hell. Not so fast! We just don't know what's going on in their hearts. But God does. He sees into human hearts. He can identify a glimmer of faith that no one else can. On the other hand, we might see a person who looks like a stalk of wheat—someone who looks faithful and upright, but God knows the evil and unbelief they may be hiding. We just can't see what God sees.

Jesus is teaching us this: Who is a weed or wheat? It's so hard to know. But God doesn't need us to rip out weeds. Someday, he'll get that job done. As far as it depends on us, live at peace with everyone around you. Instead, let us love the people God has placed in our lives. If hell is real (and it is!), how important it is to share the message of Jesus and his love and heaven with as many people as possible! And then on the Last Day, it will finally be revealed who is a weed and who is wheat. Until that day, let's love one another.

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- Explain the difference between a person who is a “weed” or “wheat” in the story Jesus told.
- Who will someday separate the weeds from the wheat?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- Name at least two reasons why God is better at separating weeds from the wheat than you.
- Instead of jumping to conclusions about other people, what do you think we should do based on today’s devotion?

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- Jesus once said, “Remove the plank of wood out of your own eye before you take the speck of dust out of someone else’s eye?” What does that mean?
- Jesus said to let the weeds and the wheat grow up together. What is the lifelong opportunity that scenario presents to you as a Christian?

### **Closing Prayer:**

Lord God, we don’t know what’s really in other people’s hearts. So keep us from making hasty and self-righteous judgments. Purify our hearts and lead us to continue to trust in Jesus, so that we might be ready for that last, great, and glorious day. Amen.