

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43, Matthew 5:43-48, Deuteronomy 10:12, Hebrews 12:28

Dear Church,

As we all know, anytime we plant a garden, vegetable or flower, inevitable weeds also pop up. Of course, our first instinct is to pull them up, put a hoe to them or use some other method of clearing them out of our garden. In the following scriptures we see Jesus speaking to the people and giving a visual of the kingdom of heaven. This example must have been somewhat confusing to the people as they expected the kingdom of heaven to be without trouble or persecution and worry. We too believe God's kingdom to be perfect. But what about the here and now? Jesus's life and resurrection brought His Father's kingdom to earth.

Each Sunday, we pray the Lord's Prayer from Matthew 6:10 *"Your kingdom come; Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."* Do we assume Jesus was teaching His disciples to look for a perfect world here on earth right now? This is impossible; only when Jesus returns and the old is done away with will the new world be perfect. But the kingdom of heaven right now is in us, we who believe in Jesus as our Savior. He brought the kingdom to earth at His birth, and He put it in our hearts when He put the Spirit of God in us. Where does God dwell? In His kingdom, our heart. His kingdom is now on earth, and we pray for His will to be done here like it is being done in His kingdom in heaven.

Matthew 13

²⁴ *Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field.*

²⁵ *But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶ When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.*

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?'*

²⁸ *"An enemy did this,' he replied.*

"The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them up?'

²⁹ *"No,' he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ 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.'"*



Like the disciples, do we look for explanations of things we do not understand, or are we content to live in our confusion? We might find ourselves floundering in our faith. But we have direct access to the very Spirit of God! Like the disciples who asked Jesus about the parable, we must ask the Spirit to explain what we do not understand, and for the faith to trust in His Word and His ways even if we don't reach this understanding. To believe in something invisible, faith in action, takes a conscientious effort. I struggle like anyone to make a connection with God in this way

until I ask Him to come. To come into the place where I am and then wait. God is always there waiting for me to put the world aside so that I might hear His voice.

This makes the next Scripture so special. God will bring clarity to us and reveal His will and our course of action to follow Him when we seek Him through prayer and Scripture.

Matthew 13

³⁶ Then He left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to Him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field."

³⁷ He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

⁴⁰ "As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will weed out of His kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴² They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear."

These words are relevant today! Take a breath and be quiet as you read the above Scriptures. Find a place where distractions are less likely to happen and pray for the Spirit to come. He will bring all the fruit of the Spirit to bear on our life and enable us to be a witness of heaven on earth.

We stand among the weeds planted by the devil. God uses us and them to glorify Himself. If we follow the teachings of Jesus, we come to look upon those unbelievers in a different light.

Matthew 5:43-48

⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

This is our work, to glorify God, do His will and follow His plan.

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Call to Action: How do you view God's kingdom on earth right now? Do you realize that living out your life in the fear of the Lord is doing kingdom work? Look up Deuteronomy 10:12 and Hebrews 12:28. Ask God for wisdom in living for Him.