



Sermon Discussion Questions

In our “Down to Earth” series this week, we plowed into a parable called “The Parable of the Wheat and Weeds.”

1. Last week, we talked about how God has gifted each of us with talents that we can use to help people connect with Him. Did you get a chance to use any of your God-given talents in a new way this past week?
2. This week’s message pointed to the sad reality that evil exists in our world. Have you (or someone you know) ever rejected God because of the difficulty of believing a good God would allow evil in the world?
3. The speaker this week talked about how different people respond to the problem of evil in the world. Which of these sounds most like you?
 - a) I’m a person who’s all for letting evil people get what’s coming to them, and I’m happy to help make that happen
 - b) I believe there’s a special place in Hell for people who do certain things, and I’m glad to know they’ll be going there
 - c) I realize that I am not perfect, so I trust that God will handle evildoers in a way that is just and right.

The parable we looked at this week is found in Matthew 13: Here is another story Jesus told: “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a farmer who planted good seed in his field. But that night as the workers slept, his enemy came and planted weeds among the wheat, then slipped away. When the crop began to grow and produce grain, the weeds also grew. “The farmer’s workers went to him and said, ‘Sir, the field where you planted that good seed is full of weeds! Where did they come from?’ “‘An enemy has done this!’ the farmer exclaimed. “‘Should we pull out the weeds?’ they asked. “‘No,’ he replied, ‘you’ll uproot the wheat if you do. Let both grow together until the harvest. Then I will tell the harvesters to sort out the weeds, tie them into bundles, and burn them, and to put the wheat in the barn.’” . . .

Then, leaving the crowds outside, Jesus went into the house. His disciples said, “Please explain to us the story of the weeds in the field.” Jesus replied, “The Son of Man is the farmer who plants the good seed. The field is the world, and the good seed represents the people of the Kingdom. The weeds are the people who belong to the evil one. The enemy who planted the weeds among the wheat is the devil. The harvest is the end of the world, and the harvesters are the angels. “Just as the weeds are sorted out and burned in the fire, so it will

be at the end of the world. The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will remove from his Kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. And the angels will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in their Father's Kingdom. Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand! (Matthew 13: 24-29, 36-43)

4. We learned this week that the word Jesus used here that is translated "weed," is a specific type of rye grass called "darnel," which contains poisonous seeds. If you process darnel with good wheat, the good wheat would be ruined by the poison in the darnel. So, until both plants are fully grown, it is almost impossible to distinguish between darnel and good wheat.

Can you relate this to the reason we cannot take matters into our own hands and just get rid of people we deem to be evil?

5. Justice requires judgment, and this story Jesus told ensures us there will be a day when our just God will remove evil people from his presence forever.

Does this doctrine of divine judgment of evil give you comfort, or does it make you uncomfortable? Why?

6. In his book "And the Angels Were Silent," Max Lucado wrote: *"Hell was not prepared for people. Hell was prepared for the devil and his angels. For a person to go to Hell, then, is for a person to go against God's intended destiny. Hell is man's choice, not God's choice. Hell is the chosen place of a person who loves self more than God, who loves sin more than his Savior, who loves this world more than God's world. Judgment is that moment when God looks at the rebellious and says, 'Your choice will be honored.'"*

Does this challenge you to think differently about Hell?

How could this help someone who struggles with the question of how a loving God could send someone to Hell?

7. As we close in prayer, consider whether there is someone in your life who is sowing weeds of evil. Let's take some time to pray for that person (or those people), realizing God desires for them to be changed by the grace and forgiveness of Jesus Christ.