



SEEDS AND WEEDS

Rev. Mark A. Medina

July 23, 2017

I must confess that my sermon that I had prepared for today is not the one I am preaching today. Because of all the things that have happened over the past 72 hours, knowing that there have been transitions in the life of this congregation and there are going to be transitions. So I am going to give a brief sermon or as some would say, sermonette.

The parables of Jesus tell the truth about God's Kingdom in very simple and down to earth stories. There are 7 kingdom parables in Matthew chapter 13 as well the Gospels of Mark chapter 4 and Luke chapter 13. These stories are known as kingdom parables where each teaches a "great value of the Kingdom of God. They also teach us of the universal nature of the Kingdom." *[simplybible.com]*

Our Lord uses these parables in settings where ordinary people make their living and raise their families. He knew how everyday situations could teach wonderful lessons about God's kingdom and how people can relate. Yes, simple parables tell a great truth of an ever present God.

The parable of the wheat and the weeds or tares tells of the final judgment. Many of us know what wheat looks like and that it is used in grain based foods. This parable is also known as the parable of the tares. In the biblical usage of the word, tares are damaging weeds that look like wheat when it is young. Side by side in their growing cycle, wheat and tares look the same. The difference begins to show when harvest approaches. The tares show the lack of a grain head which is abundant on wheat. Tares or weeds are essentially noxious and are present on the earth. They can gum up a combine while harvesting.

Jesus set the parable once again in a field where seed was sown. The wheat grew along with the tares which showed themselves before the harvest. The servants made the Master aware of the situation and he told them to wait until the harvest to pull the weeds. The reapers would then collect the weeds and burn them. The ripe wheat was then harvested and stored away.

Our Lord then explained the parable to the disciples so they could fully understand the breadth of the ministry ahead.

He said that he is the Master who is ³⁷**"The one who sows the good seed....** And where ³⁸**the field is the world."** Some pastors misguidedly preach that the field is the church. However, the Lord sets folks straight. **"...and the**

good seed are the children of the kingdom; here too, the gracious God created children of all ages in goodness and love. All the while Satan is already in the world causing people to do evil because **The weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sowed them is the devil;**"

The Lord and Master says that the second Advent of his coming is the harvest; **"the harvest is the end of the age..."** Those who will come to do the work of reapers **"are angels."** They will come to collect the weeds which are **⁴⁰...burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹the Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴²and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** The Lord then promises that **⁴³...the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!**

This parable establishes how things will transpire at the end of time. Of course, everyone has a different view of how the final harvest will take place. Many people even rationalize and intellectualize their place in those days. Some folks also say that they don't need to grow in their faith anymore because they already "know" they are going to be in the good harvest. Regardless how one views the final harvest, it is important to see where we are in our relationship with God through Christ today. How do we recognize the awesomeness of God?

God is the one who is the creator of all, is omniscient with full knowledge of everything and Almighty in every sense of the word. God was, God is, God will be in all aspects of creation and life.

When Scottish theologian John Baillie taught at Edinburgh University, he made it a practice to open his course on the doctrine of God with these words: "We must remember, in discussing God, that we cannot talk about Him without His hearing every word we say. We may be able to talk about others behind their backs, but God is everywhere, yes, even in this classroom. Therefore, in all our discussions we must be aware of His infinite presence, and talk about Him, as it were, before His face."

The recognition of God in our individualized world makes us feel vulnerable because God knows about everything we think, we plan and we do.

Friends, you and I are not alone in this wondering. King David also came to the conclusion that God is an ever present and all-knowing God. The many situations that David went through in his life brought a greater awareness of an ever present God. The hymn he wrote shows the intertwining presence of God in every aspect of his mortal life. May your ears and hearts be open to this hymn as I read it again. And as I do, please close your eyes and reflect in your hearts where you are in your recognition of God in your lives. Psalm 139:1-12, 23-34

¹ You have searched me, LORD, and you know me.

² You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

³ You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

⁴ Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely.

⁵ You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me.

⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

- 7 Where can I go from your spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?**
- 8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.**
- 9 If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,**
- 10 even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.**
- 11 If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"**
- 12 even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.**

My dear Brothers and Sisters, our God is an awesome God who loves us unconditionally and is ever present in our lives. So may we live in harmony with Christ, with others and even with oneself. We fully acknowledge that our lives are an open book to God. The creator knows everything about us, all the things we have said, and all the experiences of life. As King David wrote **23 Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.** **24 See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.** We have a loving God who planted us in this world so we can be fruitful in life and faith.

Our closing prayer this morning was inspired by the Gospel of Mark 4:26-34 in *Worship Works Ministry*. Let us pray. "God of small seeds and mighty plants, you take our meager lives and with your love cause them to produce acts of loving kindness for you in this world. You hear our cries and find us when we are lost and wandering in fear. You bring us home with you so that we may be made whole, rejoicing in your goodness. Help us to joyfully serve you all of our days, knowing that you are always watching over us. Prepare our hearts to receive your word and our spirits to respond in eagerness to serve you." In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

++++++

- Transitions: This church is going through another transition.

+++++

Scriptural Support:

Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24 (NIV) For the director of music. Of David. A psalm.

1 You have searched me, LORD, and you know me.

2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

4 Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely.

5 You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me.

6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

⁷ Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,

¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

¹¹ If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"

¹² even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

²³ Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. ²⁴ See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43 (NIV) The Parable of the Weeds

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.'"

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.