



One Page Sermon

By Pastor Robb McCoy

February 12, 2023

Worship Every Sunday at 9:30 AM

Parables about Wheat, weeds, yeast, and more weeds

Sermon from February 12, 2023

Scripture: Matthew 13:24-43

I'm not much of a gardener. In fact, at my first parsonage I created a small patch of ground and decided to plant a few vegetables. I planted squash and carrots. It was a beautiful patch of black soil, marked with what I had planted. Some time passed and some green popped up. These little green sprouts pleased me to no end, but I wasn't exactly sure what I was looking at. There were clearly two different kinds of leaves. I wasn't sure which was carrots and which was weeds, and it was before I could just pull out my phone and do a google image search. It looked like one plant was in rows, so I set out to pull out the other kind of greens that were emerging.

A few weeks later I had some healthy squash plants and a very beautiful patch of... weeds. When I thought I was pulling the weeds, it turned out that instead I pulled the carrots. I would have been much better off not judging (remember last week) and allowing the carrots to bear their fruit (I know it's a vegetable). Most people are much better gardeners than me, but when it comes to people Jesus warns us that we aren't particularly good and telling the weeds from the wheat, either.

There are a lot of Christian who feel it is their job to do the weeding. They have made sure that the weeds get excluded. They do a great job of doing exactly what Jesus told us not to do. The fact is, when it comes to people, we would probably be better off not pulling any weeds. Let God decide who is wheat and who is weed.

Jesus tells us in this parable not pull the weeds, because if you do, you will inevitably harm the wheat. Then he tells us that the Kingdom of Heaven is like planting a giant weed in the middle of a field! Yes, mustard is a weed. It is invasive and grows and multiplies fast. Again, you may not want to take my advice on gardening or farming, but even I know that two things no one wants in their field is shade and birds (it's a "scarecrow" not a "welcomecrow").

Why would the Kingdom of Heaven be like planting a tree in a field? It makes no sense. There's no good news for a field with a tree in it. Unless you are a bird – the thing no one wants in their field in the first place.

Why would the Kingdom of Heaven be like yeast hidden in flour? For a kosher home, hiding yeast in flour would be the last thing you would want. A bushel of flour is a lot of flour – 40-60 pounds.

That's enough to bake 200 hundred loaves of bread. The only reason to mix yeast into 60 pounds of flour is if you are going to make a LOT of bread.

The Kingdom of Heaven isn't good news for those who want to have perfect fields or hoard their flour. It is good news to the birds who need to find a nest but might upset the pristine image of society's field. It is good news to those who can eat from 200 loaves of bread. The Kingdom of Heaven isn't good news for those who want to separate wheat and weeds. It is good news for those who will be allowed to grow and produce fruit.

For far too long the Church has treated LGBTQ people as the weeds that need to be pulled, separated, and tossed aside. The Church has tried to create neat, beautiful, pristine fields with no birds. The Church has tried to store its flour and make sure none gets wasted. That's not the Kingdom of Heaven. Instead, the Kingdom of Heaven is that place where all are allowed to grow – and let God decide who is what. The Church has tried to create a neat, tidy, orthodox, disciplined understanding of where everything fits – no birds allowed. The Kingdom of Heaven plants a weed right in the middle of it and allows the birds to make nests. The Church has held onto its flour, hoping to keep it stored, ready to be doled out neatly and in rations. The Kingdom of Heaven mixes in the yeast, gets things growing, and makes sure there is enough bread for a huge party.

From the start of Creation we were called to be gardeners. God called everything in the garden good. We are the ones who have decided what's wheat and what is weed, and far too often we get it wrong. Maybe it's time we stop trying to divide and separate, because the Kingdom of Heaven isn't defined by weeds and wheat. It is lived into like a mustard tree in a field.



A Mustard Tree in a vineyard