

# “A STEP BEYOND”

## NEWSLETTER

**Christy-Smith Funeral Homes**

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**A Step Beyond**

Meets at 6:00 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month at Christy-Smith Family Resource Center, 1819 Morningside Avenue. 712-276-7319

## The Parable of the Weeds

(Matthew 13:24-30)

**Kathy Yoder**



Sometimes weeds can be pretty. As a child, I didn't realize that purple thistles are weeds.

The purple blooms are so pretty, especially when they're backlit by

the summer sun. One day I was in a big field smelling the blooms. I've always known how to entertain myself. The purple blooms have a sweet scent. I accidentally touched one of the thistles. I never did that again. Thistles are noxious weeds. They grow where they want. They're invasive. They protect themselves no matter what. And even cows won't eat them.

If they were people, they'd be the kind of people who only think of themselves.

Everything is about them and their survival. They don't care what damage they do along the way. They live their lives as if the whole world revolves around them. They might look good, but just like weeds, they're noxious, too. Obnoxious.

Jesus told the Parable of the Weeds to a crowd. Israel was an agricultural community. Jesus told parables that were meaningful to the culture in which the people lived. They knew about weeds, about wheat, about the growing season, and about harvest time.

The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. Jesus is the Son of Man. He's the Sower who sowed the good seed.

The field is the world. The good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. They are the sons and daughters of the king. They submit to the king. They are the ones who admit their sin, repent and put their trust in Jesus and follow

Him. If you are a believer, you are God's seed planted in this world. He wants us to grow and to prosper. In Jeremiah 29:11 it reads, "I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord. Plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you a hope and a future."

Unfortunately, there's another sower in this world. He is the enemy of Jesus. The devil. He plants the weeds in this world. The weeds represent the sons and daughters of the evil one. They do not repent of their sins. They do not follow Jesus. They follow Satan.

Once a little boy asked me if the devil wore red clothes, had horns and a long, pointy tail. He was thinking of the funny cartoons we've all seen. I told him that I don't think so. In fact, I told him, I think the devil looks really good. Fancy. Inviting. Someone important. Like a king. He looks like the real thing, but he's an imposter. He's a noxious weed in a wheat field. He wants to choke out the good seed, those who believe in Jesus. He promises great things, but he's a liar.

Thinking of Satan as a funny cartoon character makes us less wary of him. But remember how the Bible describes him? In 1 Peter 5:8 it says, "Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." It's important to know that there is an enemy. It's important to know that Jesus is stronger than the enemy.

In the parable, the servant asks, “Do you want us to go and pull up the weeds?” The Sower says “no.” He goes on to say that “while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them.”



It’s hard to tell the weeds from the wheat. The Sower doesn’t want to risk pulling up any wheat. By yanking out the weeds,

there’s the possibility of harvesting some wheat too early. So, there are weeds in this world, unbelievers, who may become wheat, or believers. We are not to be servants who want to yank out the weeds. That job’s already taken. God is the final judge, not us. That’s important to repeat. We are not to judge, that’s God’s job.

Scholars think the weeds in this parable are probably what’s called “bearded darnell.” It’s a species of the grass family. A rye grass. Its seeds are lightweight and poisonous because of a fungus growing inside them. When they’re young, they look very much like wheat. It’s hard to tell them apart until they mature. Then it’s easy to tell that they’re counterfeit wheat. They’re taller than the wheat because their smaller black seeds make their heads wave high. The real wheat is full of abundant, greenish seeds, which makes their heads bow down.

So it is with us. The harvest time is at the end of the age. Jesus says that at that time He will send out his angels to harvest the fields or the world. The weeds and the wheat will be separated. The followers of Satan and the followers of Jesus will be separated. The weeds will be or the followers of the enemy will be thrown into the fire. Believers will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Then Jesus ends his explanation by saying, “Whoever has ears, let him hear.”

We have ears. We need to listen and to be aware. We need to hear and to change our lives and make sure that we are following Jesus. It’s as simple as that. As good seed, we need to grow and spread the love of the Father to others, but first, it has to take root in each one of us.

Why am I writing this now for the July/August Step Beyond Newsletter? For a couple reasons. People we love have died. We know better than anyone that none of us is guaranteed tomorrow. And we realize another truth. It’s important to appreciate each day we’re given here on earth. To look for things and people for which to be thankful. To thank the Lord for all he’s given us. To live a life of love. To be wheat and not weeds.

That’s where true freedom is found. In following the Lord. That’s where peace is found. In Him. July makes me think of

freedom. The greatest freedom is in surrendered belief in Jesus.

August makes me think of change. Kids going back to school. Summer’s almost over. We start getting ready to put the flip flops away. Change is hard. Change can be scary. But change can be good. If we are rooted in the Lord, there will be change in our lives. The weeds can look attractive, but they don’t change. They’re always weeds. They might look like wheat for a while, but eventually their true nature is revealed.

So, let’s not be afraid of the Augusts in our lives. One of my favorite Bible verses is Proverbs 3:5-6. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight.”

May you have straight paths without weeds. May you trust in Him with everything you are. May you see blessings all around you. And may you live in freedom forever.

***Christy-Smith  
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