

**The Question of the Week**

“The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; while everyone was sleeping an enemy came and sowed weeds all throughout the wheat.”

Matthew 13: 24

There you are trying to do something good or create something that is beneficial or run a business that makes products available to many people. But not everyone wants you to be successful. Some just don't like you. Others see themselves as your competitors and cannot allow you to flourish because they think it will negatively impact them. Still others find a certain delight in seeing others fail rather than succeed. It does not always take much to prevent success or to bring about failure. Jesus does not need anyone to point this out to him. He has already been on the receiving end of these kinds of treatments. He is teaching us how we are to respond when we encounter the same. He has such great wisdom about life. Are we listening?

There are a couple of interesting points about this parable. The particular weed that was sown was called darnel. In its early growth stages darnel mimics the early growth of wheat. As a result, it is not always possible to identify what is early wheat and what is the weed, darnel. Trying to pull up the weed could mean that you end up pulling up most of the wheat. Then there would be no harvest. So Jesus counsels that sometimes you have to put up with the weeds—for a time—in order to have a harvest. And then when the wheat is full grown the weeds are easily identifiable and it is much easier to cut them down and burn them in fire. And then to cut the wheat and begin the process of making flour.

The application? Sometimes you have to put up with the weeds of life and not expend a lot of energy trying to root out all the weeds (even though being weed-free will make us perfect, at least in our own minds). Concentrate on doing all you can to maximize the harvest, do the things that feed your virtue so as to enable as much good wheat as possible to continue to grow to maturity. And so, we have to put up with stuff—in our own lives, in our family, and in the world around us. We don't have to accept it. We can identify the weeds and name them. What Jesus cautions us against is setting our own hearts to the task and taking on the responsibilities of removing these weeds. He is telling us that God is aware—of all the weeds. God will cut them down in his own time. Our task is to become the best wheat we can become, despite the weeds. Are we getting all this? That is the question of the week.

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