

Wheat and Weeds

"When the crop began to mature and yield grain, the weeds made their appearance as well." —Matthew 13:26

Some of you reading this have been serving the Lord in ministry for years. You have prayed and worked long and hard, toiling with all your heart in your desire to bear fruit for your Lord and Master. Perhaps you are beginning to see the good fruits of your efforts as those to whom you have ministered are progressing as disciples, making their own commitments to Jesus, or sharing their faith with others. The crop you have sowed is beginning "to mature and yield grain" (Mt 13:26).

This is the time when people Jesus describes as "the weeds" begin to make their appearance (Mt 13:26). Just when it looks like your efforts will result in a fruitful harvest and in glory to God, people appear within your ministry or community and begin to wantonly consume energy you intended to use to nourish "the wheat," that is, those bearing fruit as a result of your loving service. Now your "wheat" are not getting "fed" properly because your "weeds" are siphoning off their spiritual food.

Now it looks as if the entire ministry may be shelved by the all-consuming weeds. Naturally you want to uproot the weeds, but Jesus says to let the weeds grow (Mt 13:30). This seems to make no sense, but God is the Vinegrower (Jn 15:1), and He knows how to produce fruit. Jesus prunes you and the wheat (Jn 15:2), and allows the weeds to consume nourishment meant to sustain you! Yet God has an even higher priority: conversion. He wants the weeds to become wheat. Conversion is costly, inconvenient, and strength-sapping. It also brings great joy in heaven (Lk 15:7).