

Discussion Guide

Use this guide by yourself, with a friend, or in a group to help you pursue a deeper relationship with Jesus this week!

Open

The parable for Pastor Don's sermon this week is found in Matthew 13:24-29 where Jesus uses the illustration of a farmer, an enemy, wheat, and weeds to give us insight into God's patience with us and His plans for the end of human history. To get your group's discussion started, tell about a time where you were on the wrong side of a practical joke that ended up going badly - what happened and what were the results?

BIG THOUGHT

Jesus uses the example of a farmer who gets his field sabotaged to help us understand that God is being patient as He waits to bring justice to our world, but that eventually His judgment will come.

Dig

1. Read Matthew 13:24. What does Jesus say His parable is going to illustrate? Why do you think he felt the need to go ahead and give His crowd of listeners a clue (see v. 10-11)?
2. Now read v. 25-26. What happened while the farmer slept? To what effect? What does the result in v. 26 tell us about the fertility of the soil, and how does that agree with Genesis 1:31? The weeds are most likely a plant called "bearded darnel" which is closely related to wheat but doesn't grow any grain - how does this make the enemy's sabotage even more sinister?
3. Read v. 27-29. How well do the servants understand what's happening? Or how to fix the problem? What about the landowner - does he appear to be confused about the cause (v. 28)? Or about how the implications for the harvest? How can this bring us comfort in the difficulties we face?

4. How difficult would it be for you as one of the servants to obey the farmer's directions in v. 30? How good are you in general with having to wait to do what needs to be done? Share some examples with the group if you can...
5. Read v. 36. How does it make you feel to know the disciples needed Jesus to explain the story to them? If you were one of the disciples, would you have asked Him for the meaning when He first came into the house or waited in hopes that one of the others would ask? Why?
6. Now read Jesus' explanation of the parable in v. 37-43. If you've never heard this parable before, does this explanation surprise you? Why or why not? What does His explanation tell us about God's view of His followers (see v. 24)? About God's patience? About how Satan is actively trying to ruin God's work? About the inconsistencies we sometimes find in communities of believers And about whose responsibility it is to deal with the weeds?

Take it Further

Talk with God, and ask Him to help you evaluate yourself clearly. Have you moved from being a "weed" to "wheat"? Are you bearing fruit as a member of God's Kingdom (see Galatians 5:22-26)? And if so, how can you influence the people around you to be ready to survive the "harvest" at the end of time?

Daily Readings

Day 1: 2 Peter 3:10-13

Day 2: 1 Thessalonians 5:2

Day 3: 2 Corinthians 5:10

Day 4: Matthew 13:49

Day 5: 2 Peter 3:9

Day 6: Matthew 24:44

Memory Verse: John 3:16-17



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