

Letter from Andy for 18th July

The Gospel reading today talks about the wheat and the weeds. In it Jesus tells a parable of a farmer who sows good wheat, but then an enemy comes at night and sows weeds amongst the wheat.

There are a number of interpretations of this parable but my favourite is that we are the field and that within our lives there are things that are good, that bring glory to God and make the world a better place, and there are things that are bad, that are hurtful or destructive both of ourselves and the world around us.

As we continue with some form of partial lock-down, and particularly as we start to emerge into a new normal, it's worth asking ourselves those difficult questions that in normal, busy, times we are happy to put to one side because we're getting on with all the other things that can take over our lives.

Questions like 'What in my life – the things I do or say – builds others up? What brings greater good and joy and love into the world? What makes the world a better place to live in?'

And then conversely 'What in my life – the things I do or say – causes harm? What causes anger or hurt or the breakdown of relationships? What makes the world a less good place to live in?'

When we are honest about both the wheat and the weeds in our own lives, and truthfully face up to the reality, we are strengthened to do something about it.

In the parable Jesus tells the workers to let both wheat and weeds grow together for a time, and it's right that we recognize that we will never be perfect, we will never get rid completely of the weeds in our lives, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't try. And when we have this luxury of some time to stop and think it's worth using that time wisely. We won't get it back again.

So a challenge for you this week.

Take a piece of paper and at the top write on one side 'Wheat' and the other side 'Weeds' and honestly (don't worry, no-one else needs to see it) write down all the things you do that bring good under the 'wheat' column, and all the things that cause hurt or fracture under the 'weeds' column. At the end spend a few minutes in prayer asking God to help you to dig out those weeds, and help the wheat to grow better.

Blessings.

Andy

DAD'S CLUB

Saturday 18th July

New time 9.30.am

For the Zoom link email Bob
rev.bob.bailey@gmail.com

Bring your favourite mug and a joke.

WYDAN

Tinned fish, nuts, juice, crisps, rice,
toiletries and cash needed please.

The asylum-seekers are in a hostel
in Leeds at the moment



All Saints'
at the heart of the
community



TRINITY 6

19th July 2020

Collect for Trinity 6

Creator God,
you made us all in your image:
may we discern you in all that we see,
and serve you in all that we do;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Post Communion Prayer

God of our pilgrimage,
you have led us to the living water:
refresh and sustain us
as we go forward on our journey,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Romans 8:12-25

¹² Therefore, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation—but it is not to the flesh, to live according to it. ¹³ For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

¹⁴ For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. ¹⁵ The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. ¹⁶ And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." ¹⁷ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁸ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Present Suffering and Future Glory

¹⁹ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ²⁰ For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. ²¹ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²² that ²³ the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

²⁴ We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²⁵ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁶ For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes

for what they already have? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

The Parable of the Weeds

²⁴ Jesus told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵ But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶ When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

²⁷ “The owner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’

²⁸ “‘An enemy did this,’ he replied.

“The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’

²⁹ “‘No,’ he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.’”

The Parable of the Weeds Explained

³⁶ Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.”

³⁷ He answered, “The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

⁴⁰ “As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴² They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

Reflection on the readings from Pat Rogers

‘The parable of the weeds’ Matthew 13 v 24 and the explanation that follows in v 36 – 43, I have always associated with the ‘Doom’ paintings I’ve seen in churches and galleries. It was the ‘hell fire and damnation’ I found difficult. Who could deserve a fate like that?

The idea of a ‘Day of Judgement’ would have very familiar to the Jewish converts to Christianity whom Matthew was writing for. Matthew is telling us in this parable that

we should not judge, the final judgement is to be done by God. The explanation of the parable in verses 36 – 43, spells out what will happen at the ‘end time’ using language the Jewish listeners would clearly understand.

When I was learning about this parable at Sunday school I just took it as a threat about what might happen if I wasn’t ‘good’ but in the early 1960s I saw the film ‘Inherit the Wind’ and it made me think. The film was about a real event, the ‘Monkey Trial’ in America in the 1920s, when a school teacher was being prosecuted for daring to teach about evolution. There is a scene where the preacher is calling for the teacher to be sent to hell and be damned using very colourful language which reminded me of the Doom Paintings. That scene made me question my faith in God for a while. It may have been just a film but ‘hellfire preachers’ did exist in those days. More importantly, should one person, in the name of God, incite others to think so badly about someone just because they don’t agree with them? Such preachers obviously forgot that only God can be the judge.

Romans 8 v 18 – 25 complements the reading from Matthew. The letter was written when Christians believed that the second coming of Christ was imminent and with it the ‘end times’. Life was very hard for the early Christians, especially those in Rome. Paul is writing here to keep them strong in the face of death and persecution and to remind them of hope and the coming redemption that the death of Jesus on the cross had made possible.

None of us are perfect, hope and redemption is what we all need to focus on.

Pat

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Dial in worship; Held at 10am on Sunday and Wednesday

To join the service;

0330 336 0036.

When asked, enter the group PIN 716 416.