Sermon Sunday 19.07.2026

Last week Kerry talked about the Parable of the Sower, with the seeds falling on the path, the rocky ground, the thorny ground and healthy ground and the challenges the seeds have to grow in each area. She helped us identify God as the Sower who has planted His Word in each one of us and how the Holy Spirit will help us on our journey through our Christian lives. Today, our gospel talks about the Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds. Those familiar with the harvest season will be familiar with the words of 'Come Ye Thankful People Come' which talks about 'wheat and tares together sown.' Think of those words of the first verse, ***Come, ye thankful people, come, Raise the song of harvest home; All is safely gathered in, Ere the winter storms begin; God our Maker doth provide, for our wants to be supplied; Come to God's own temple, come, Raise the song of harvest home***. At harvest, after the challenging work of growing and reaping God asks us to give thanks for the harvest, something that can help to sustain us till the next years challenging work begins.

Now each one of us that has ever been in a garden has encountered weeds trying to overtake the land and suffocate the healthy plants. My garden this year has been a bit neglected, and the bindweed has grown over many of my roses, honeysuckle, and clematis climber plants, along the ground and onto the garden chairs. One day there seems a little bit of the bindweed, and I think that I will remove it later in the week, but within a few days it has spread so fast, I began losing the beauty of watching the other plants grow and come into flower.

As Jesus tells the Parable, he talks of the farmer sowing the good seed in his field but later an enemy creeps in and sows weeds amongst the wheat. It is not till the plants grow that the servants notice the weeds amongst the wheat. This is a bit like the world we live in today as we see both the beauty and brokenness daily on the news, on social media and sometimes in our own lives. Each of us too may see the days where we encounter both beauty and brokenness in our own personal lives in the way other people treat us or in the way we may unintentionally treat other people.

All the world is God's own field, Fruit unto His praise to yield; Wheat and tares together sown, Unto joy or sorrow grown; First the blade, and then the ear, Then the full corn shall appear, Lord of harvest, grant that we, Wholesome grain and pure may be. This verse reminds us that this world that we live in is God's field and we are the caretakers of the world. The good seed is the children of the kingdom and Jesus has moved among the people, sowing the good seed of the kingdom as he encounters all those who come to believe in Him. The kingdom is here in this world we live in. It is everywhere that people bear witness to his life, his truth, his mercy, and his righteousness. In the Parable, Jesus also reminds us that the weeds represent evil that lives in the world and the damage this evil can do to all those it touches. Sadly, in the world there are people who want to harm and destroy those that do not follow their values and principles, and this can be seen where people practice deception, pride and rebellion and create conflicts and strife, often impacting on the lives of innocent people. This challenges the reign of God. With the love and dedication and help of those who believe, those who sow and take care of the harvest will remain faithful to God and bring the harvest home through the way they live their lives in these difficult times.

For the Lord, our God shall come and shall take His harvest home; From His field shall in that day All offenses purge away; Give His angels charge at last in the fire the tares to cast; But the fruitful ears to store In His garner evermore. When we see the weeds grow, we may act quickly and remove them but if we do not remove the weeds carefully, we can damage the plants that are hidden by the weeds. I know that the bindweed in my garden is a nuisance, but if I go and just start tugging at it and pulling it off the other plants, I will take off the roses or flowers on the other plants with it and lose the beauty of those flowers. Instead, I go as close to a root as I can and cut the bindweed. Though it is painstaking to do, I then follow and unwind the plant where possible. As the bindweed has been cut away the weed from this point onwards will die and I can now carefully unwind the weed from around the beautiful flowers. As a church we still need to try to resist evil and be there to protect those who are vulnerable within our communities and in the wider world. We need to be patient and faithful to God and wait till the time is right for God to gather all in. While we wait for God to bring His harvest home how do we prepare for this time? How can we help to prevent or stop some of the evil that goes on in our lives or in the wider world? We know that we can we trust in the Sower, in God, through His Son Jesus Christ, through His Word that He shares with us to guide and support us. This is where we can do our part in taking care of Gods world in any small way we can. Here is where we can learn to be more humble, more truthful, more merciful with those around us and even more courageous on caring for those in need.

Even so, Lord, quickly come, Bring Thy final harvest home; Gather Thou Thy people in, Free from sorrow, free from sin, there, forever purified, In Thy garner to abide; Come, with all Thine angels come, Raise the glorious harvest home. Jesus tells us that the harvest time is coming, and the angels will gather from the Kingdom all those causes of sin and those who do harm and evil to those around them. Those that are the righteous, who believe in the Word of God will shine like the sun as they are gathered into the kingdom of God the Father. God will not let his people struggle for ever and He will untangle the wheat from the weeds.

The Parable reminds us to trust in God and recognise evil without letting the evil take over in our lives. God wants us to be like the farmer and trust that the seeds we plant and nurture in our lives will grow and He will help us to work at keeping the weeds at bay. Our church should practice faithfulness without compromising who we are and what we do in our community. We can look at the broken and help bring the beauty back into their lives. We are asked to practice repentance and spend time helping to grow in our faith and guiding and supporting those still new to the faith. We should practice humility and take time out to care for those in need. We are asked to let God work within us and allow Him to search our hearts and weed out anything that we hide where weeds may have taken root through our bitterness, our pride, our resentments, our dishonesty or our apathy to what goes on in our community and across the wider world. It is a time to respond to God's calling through Jesus and respond and grow in our faith.

Jesus says, "Let anyone with ears listen" and trust in Him now and as we await the end of the age we should continue to live as God's children in His Kingdom. We should learn to be patient, watchful, humble, and hopeful. We should resist evil and shine with the light of Christ within us in this world where we still have the wheat and weeds sown together. The day will come where the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of God our Father and we need to prepare ourselves for that day when the angels come and raise the glorious harvest home. **Amen.**

Tina Titley