

WE HAVE SOME GROWING TO DO

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Matthew 13:24–30

Fall is a reckoning season. Fields reveal what spring sowed and summer nurtured. Jesus' parable of wheat and weeds (tares) reminds us that growth is always contested:

as the Sower plants good seed, an enemy scatters look-alike weeds—*zizania*, widely understood as darnel, the infamous “fake wheat.” Early on, darnel mimics wheat; only at maturity does the difference show. In fact, sowing darnel in a rival's field was such real sabotage in the ancient world that Roman law explicitly forbade it. Jesus' story rings with gritty realism.



The Planting — “While They Slept...”

Jesus says the enemy came “while men slept” (v.25). Spiritual drowsiness is the devil's hour. The Church Fathers saw this with pastoral clarity. St. John Chrysostom observed that the devil cannot create—only imitate and corrupt after truth is sown: “error arose after truth... false apostles after the Apostles.” Augustine added, “He said, ‘Let both grow together till the harvest’—He did not say, ‘Let the wheat decrease.’” In other words, patience is not surrender; it is confidence in God's timing.

The Sower is Christ, the field is the world, the good seed are God's children, and the weeds are the devil's work. The lesson is humility: we are not the Sower; we are the seed. And vigilance: “while men slept” the enemy sowed. Whenever the church naps morally, doctrinally, or pastorally, trouble finds its way into the soil. Counterfeits grow where the faithful grow. But still, the

Sower's seed is good, and the field is His. **We have some growing to do in humility and vigilance!**

The Prospering — “Let Them Grow Together”

Why does the Master forbid immediate weeding? Because zeal without wisdom injures the wheat. Luther warned that uprooting tares too soon “uproots the wheat” and can keep people from ever meeting the Word's saving power. Calvin added that while false doctrine must be resisted, faults we cannot presently correct must be endured so that harshness does not harm the faithful. This balance—patience with people, clarity with truth—is profoundly pastoral.

Patience, however, is not passivity. In God's providence, resistance strengthens roots. Farmers know that even weeds can press crops deeper into the soil, forcing them toward water. Likewise, opposition drives believers into prayer, Scripture, and fellowship. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn once wrote, “The line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being.” The battle is not just around us but within us.

Martin Luther King Jr. said it well: “Degrading tares may choke the sprouting necks of growing wheat for a season, but eventually the harvest will come and separate the evil tares from the good wheat.” Weeds press the church into resilience—teaching depth, discernment, and dependence. God can use what He does not approve. **We have some growing to do in patience, resilience, and discernment!**

The Picking — Burned or Barned

Jesus interprets His own parable: the harvest is the end of the age, the reapers are angels, the wheat are gathered into God's barn, and the weeds are bound for burning. Thomas Aquinas noted the balance—patience now, justice then, glory forever.

Psalm 37 echoes the hope: *“Fret not thyself because of evildoers... for they shall soon be cut down like the grass.”*

Why not pull early? Because we misjudge. Roots are intertwined. Haste can harm the very people God is still ripening. As Luther and Chrysostom reminded us, purges done too soon risk injuring wheat—and forgetting that God can turn tares into wheat by grace.

In church life this means realism about counterfeits, patience with people, clarity with teaching, and restraint in judgment. Our task is faithfulness; final sorting belongs to God. The weeds will be bundled. The wheat will be gathered. The harvest will come. **We have some growing to do in trusting God’s justice and mercy!**

Growing Through It

As we look across the field, the rhythm is clear: The Planting anchors us—good seed sown by the Son while the enemy schemes. The Prospering stretches us—wheat and weeds sharing soil, resistance deepening roots, patience guarding tender grain. The Picking assures us—angels will sort, weeds will burn, wheat will shine.

We do not grow around trouble, we grow through it—through imitation and irritation, through waiting and watching, through wounding and healing—until real fruit bends our heads toward the Harvester. And so, the testimony of the field becomes our confession of faith: **We have some growing to do—planted by grace, proven under pressure, and preserved for the barn.**



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