

*Theme for Sunday, July 17, 2011*  
*The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost*

*“Living in the Weeds”*

*Matthew 13: 24 - 30, 36 - 43*

We live in a confusing world where there is a great lack of clarity about all kinds of things. Today, Jesus makes clear what is going on in our world right now, and what is sure to happen in the future.

**Introit**

**Selected Verses from Psalm 86**

L: Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer;

**C: Listen to my plea for grace.**

L: Teach me Your way, O LORD, that I may walk in Your truth;

**C: Unite my heart to fear your name.**

L: I give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,

**C: And I will glorify Your name forever.**

L: For great is Your steadfast love toward me;

**C: You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.**

L: O God, insolent men have risen up against me; a band of ruthless men seek my life,

**C: And they do not set You before them.**

L: But You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,

**C: Slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.**

**ALL: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

L: Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer;

**C: Listen to my plea for grace.**

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**Old Testament Lesson**

**Isaiah 44: 6 – 8**

**Responses page 205**

(Those who trust in the one true God need not fear because He alone is *“the King of Israel and his Redeemer”*. Since all things are in His gracious care and keeping, *“fear not, be not afraid”*.)

<sup>6</sup>Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: “I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god. <sup>7</sup>Who is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and set it before me, since I appointed an ancient people. Let them declare what is to come, and what will happen. <sup>8</sup>Fear not, nor be afraid; have I not told you from of old and declared it? And you are my witnesses! Is there a God besides me? There is no Rock; I know not any.”

**Epistle Lesson**

**Romans 8: 18 – 27**

(In the midst of suffering, Paul points out that Christ’s followers look at reality’s broader picture, and patiently set our hope on the day that will certainly come.)

<sup>18</sup>For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup>For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup>For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup>that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

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Epistle Lesson cont'd

Romans 8: 18 – 27

<sup>22</sup>For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. <sup>23</sup>And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup>For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? <sup>25</sup>But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

<sup>26</sup>Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. <sup>27</sup>And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

**The Holy Gospel     Matthew 13: 24 – 30, 36 – 43     Responses page 206**

(For followers of Jesus, this parable offers assurance that God is reigning, and the Day is coming when all things will be set right.)

<sup>24</sup>[Jesus] put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, <sup>25</sup>but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. <sup>26</sup>So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. <sup>27</sup>And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds?’ <sup>28</sup>He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ So the servants said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ <sup>29</sup>But he said, ‘No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. <sup>30</sup>Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”

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The Holy Gospel cont'd

Matthew 13: 24 – 30, 36 – 43

<sup>36</sup>Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." <sup>37</sup>He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup>The field is the world, and the good seed is the children of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, <sup>39</sup>and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. <sup>40</sup>Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age. <sup>41</sup>The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, <sup>42</sup>and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup>Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.



Connecting Points:  
Our Vision in Action

Find at least one more parable in the Gospel of Matthew this week, and ask God to help you find one thing in it that would help you in your walk of faith. Then write or speak a short prayer, asking for the Spirit's help to live your life in obedience as you wait for the Lord's return.

Our sermon title today is "Living Among the Weeds". As you consider your workplace, neighborhood or school, identify one way you could share the love of Jesus with the people around you. Then ask a Christian friend to pray for you, and put it into action!

God Bless You!