

What does this say to the claim, “Everything happens for a reason”, implying the reason is God’s will?

13. What does Jesus mean by the “end of the age” (v40)?
14. What does “that place” of “weeping and gnashing of teeth” mean? Why is there weeping?
15. What is implied by the “fiery furnace” (v42)? Is this a consuming fire or a refining fire?
16. What does it mean that “the righteous will shine like the sun” (v4)?
17. How does this picture differ from expectations that God's kingdom would immediately remove all evil?
18. Why do you think God permits the righteous and the wicked to coexist for a time?
19. What dangers arise when people try to eliminate evil by force or by making premature judgments?
20. What is the difference between patience and indifference, or “tolerance”?
21. Is it truly fair to divide humanity into two categories—the “saved” and the “lost”? Or if we allow for each of us to be both wheat-y and weed-y, is there not something lost in Jesus’ point? It may seem humble to say so, but does that take away from our confidence in Christ, in our salvation? Or our ability to discern right from wrong, true from false, what is life-giving and what is harmful?
22. Are there any limits to Christian tolerance or forbearance? At what point, if any, are Christians called upon to “root out” evil?
23. We live in the time between the sowing and the harvest. If not rooting out evil, what should characterize Christians during this period?
24. How can you contribute to the growth of the “good seed” rather than spending your energy identifying weeds?
25. How do you interpret Jesus’ conclusion, “He who has ears, let him hear”? Do not we all (or nearly all) have ears?

Family Bible Study

7/19/2026



Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

The Parable of the Sower

²⁴ Jesus put another parable before them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field, ²⁵ but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. ²⁶ So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. ²⁷ 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?’ ²⁸ 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?’ ²⁹ But he said, ‘No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. ³⁰ 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.”’”

³⁶ Then Jesus 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.” ³⁷ He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, ⁴² and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

Questions to Wonder with Kids

- In today's reading, Jesus is telling another story – Jesus likes telling stories! In this one, known as the Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds, Jesus talks about a farmer who discovers that someone has played a trick on him. What happened?
- Have you ever helped your parents or grandparents in the garden, weeding? Why is it important to weed a garden or field?
- What does the farmer tell the servants to do?
- I wonder why he tells them not to weed the field....
- The weed that has snuck in the field is called a 'darnel' which looks like wheat as it grows, right up until the seeds are mature. But if its seeds are mixed in with ground wheat, they will cause a person to get very sick. Wonder why the farmer isn't worried about getting the weeds out before then...
- Jesus then explains the parable to his disciples, telling them what each of the parts of the story correspond to. What does he say are the wheat and weeds? The 'reapers,' those who collect the wheat? The sower? The enemy?
- What happens to the wheat and the weeds in the end? What happens to the "law-breakers"?
- What does this story say God will do to evil and to those who do evil?
- What does this story say God will do to the 'righteous'? Do you know what it means to be 'righteous'...to do right?
- I wonder what it means that the "righteous will shine like the sun"...
- How do we know if who is "wheat" and who are "weeds"? How can we be sure we are the wheat?
- What is more important—getting rid of weeds/evil, or being wheat/righteous?

Questions for Adults

1. In this passage, Jesus is telling his audience another story, a parable. What are the main elements of the parable? Who or what is the subject of this story? To what is he comparing in the story (v24)?
2. At what point does the problem manifest (v26)? What is the cause of the crisis? What assumptions do the servants make?

The weed is thought to be darnel, which looks like wheat but if ground with it will spoil the flour. The King James translates the word as "tares."

3. What does the Master of the estate do? What does he *not* do (v29)?
4. Patience, we sometimes think, is a passive thing—it's what you do when you *cannot* do anything else, like waiting for an hour in the doctor's waiting room or being stuck in a traffic jam. Is there a way that patience is not a passive but rather an active response?
5. Why does Jesus not explain the parable until he is alone with his disciples (v 36–43)?
6. Given this explanation, does the story strike you more as a "parable" or as an "allegory"? What is the difference?
7. Is there anything that is lost or obscured if we read this as an allegory?
8. The servants are eager to separate the weeds immediately. Why do we often have the same impulse?
9. Why do you suppose the Master/God refrains from pulling up the weeds/"law-breakers" immediately (v29)?
10. What theological question or problem does this parable seek to answer ('Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have weeds? v27)? Is this a satisfactory answer?
11. What does the parable suggest about the active agents or causes in the world? Who or what causes events to happen?