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Grounders:

Do you ever wonder why God allows evil to exist? Do you find yourself telling God that your life would work out a lot better if He would just remove the evil barriers in your way? Whether it is a competitor, a criminal, a nemesis, a cheating spouse, or an enemy who was a former friend, we often find ourselves frustrated over the evil obstacles resident in our lives. In His *Parable of the Weeds*, Jesus gave insight to this dilemma (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43).

**In this world, weeds and wheat coexist until the harvest (Matt. 13:24-28a, 36-39a).** Jesus told a story about a farmer who had sowed wheat. While he was sleeping, his enemy sowed weeds among the wheat and then left. Later, when the wheat sprouted and formed heads, the weeds also appeared. The owner's servants asked the farmer where the weeds had come from, and his response was, "*An enemy did this*" (Matt. 13:28a).

Jesus explained the first part of the parable to His disciples (Matt. 13:36-39a). The Sower of the good seed is Jesus Christ (Matt. 13:37). The field is this world (Matt. 13:38a). The good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom—those who are in Christ (Matt. 13:38b). The weeds are the sons of the evil one—those outside Christ (Matt. 13:38c). The enemy who sows the weeds is the devil (Matt. 13:39a).

**When frustrated with the existence of evil, remember that in this world, weeds and wheat coexist until the harvest and that sometimes, the weeds and wheat are indistinguishable.** The word translated *weed* is *zizanon* (a kind of darnel which is a weedy, rye grass with poisonous seeds). The weed looks just like wheat until the wheat sprouts its head.

**At harvest, the weeds are burned and the wheat is barn-ed (Matt. 13:28b-30, 39b-42).** The servants had asked the farmer if they should pull up the weeds (Matt. 13:28b). "*No, he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. 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'*" (Matt. 13:29-30).

Jesus explained this to His disciples (Matt. 13:39b-42). The harvest is the end of the age (Matt. 13:39b). The harvesters are angels (Matt. 13:39c). The weeds are burned—Jesus used His frequent imagery for hell (Matt. 13:40-42). The wheat is barn-ed—the righteous will shine like the sun, free from evil (Matt. 13:43).

**When frustrated with the existence of evil, repent: at harvest, the weeds and the wheat are distinguishable and judged.** Repent means "to change one's mind." Each of us reaps what he sows, but each is not beyond the reach of Christ (Gal. 6:7-10). We must not only repent of our sin against God, we must repent of our sin against others (withholding the kingdom of God from them) and invest in them to be in Christ—turning from weeds to wheat.

**We live with the presence of evil because God wants all weeds to become wheat (2 Peter 3:9).** Jesus said that when one surrenders his life to Christ as Lord and Savior, he crosses from weeds to wheat, from death to life—judgment has occurred (John 5:24-27). This is possible by the One who gave Himself for the weeds. Jesus said, "I tell



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you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds” (John 12:24).

This week, do the same. *Remember* that weeds and wheat coexist until harvest, and sometimes, the two are indistinguishable. *Repent* of wanting to uproot evil people from your life, and invest in them to move from weeds to wheat.

Wheat,  
Mitch