

GBC Discipleship RESOURCE



The Kingdom of Heaven is Like...

Week 02 | **The Weeds and the Wheat (Matthew 13:24-30 & 36-43)**

*For a brief overview of why (and how) to engage in each of these practices, you can read the **Guideline For Growing** on our website.*

<https://www.gyneaabaptist.org.au/growing/pages/guideline-for-growing>

What is a Discipleship Menu?

A discipleship menu is a selection of discipleship activities to engage in to continue the conversation that begins on Sunday throughout the week. The aim is to extend our interaction as a community of faith around activities that help us follow Jesus every single day. The activities vary from week to week (though there are some standard activities) and you are encouraged to do as many as you find helpful (like a menu; you don't need to eat everything on it!). Do them on your own (God and you), with a couple of friends (you and a few), or in a Life Group (you and a crew). The important thing is to do a few!

GBC Sermon Podcast and The Big 3 Podcast

Don't forget you can review this week's sermon on the GBC Sermon Podcast. The sermon is usually uploaded by Monday afternoon. You can also listen in to the Big 3 podcast; a weekly podcast where Matt, Jess, and Marc sit down and continue the conversation by engaging in three big questions raised by the congregation about the sermon. The Big 3 comes out on Wednesdays.

GBC Sermon Podcast and The Big 3 Podcast

Jesus told a parable about eco-terrorism or agricultural sabotage to describe how evil has flourished in the world that God has made and sustains. Ancient enemies would steal onto fields at night, over-sowing weeds among the good wheat seed, and it would be months before their sabotage was discovered. The bad seed sown was likely Darnel (*Lolium temulentum*), or False Wheat, which grows according to the same time schedule as wheat, has the same stalk and leaf formation and is nearly identical in every way to wheat. While wheat heads are light golden brown and good for food, darnel heads are black and cause dizziness, blindness, vomiting and even death. The farmer in Jesus' story patiently waits for the harvest, for the heads of wheat to ripen and then gathers and destroys the toxic darnel, and harvests and stores the wheat.

Jesus casts himself as the farmer, who has sown Kingdom people into the world, and the enemy as the Evil One, who sows toxicity and poison and those who do evil. However Jesus sees the evil in our world, and promises to one day restore it to rights. We look forward to that day, recognising that he is the judge of all hearts, patiently enduring the difficulties of the world and repenting when we are more like weeds than wheat.

Passages to Read

We believe that the Word of God is living and active and that reading and reflecting on it is one way we encounter God. As you read, we encourage people to ask a set of simple questions: What stands out to you? What questions do you have? What is the invitation of God to you? Who can you tell?

The readings this week explore the mysterious nature of the God we seek to know and follow. They demonstrate not only that God's character is beyond our ability to perceive but that His actions display a deep desire to be known and approached.

- Matthew 7:1-5
- Matthew 5:9-13
- Psalm 13
- Psalm 86

Questions to Reflect on

These questions can be used as the basis of a small group discussion or as journal questions. As with the rest of this menu, use the questions that are most useful for you or your crew.

1. We think of earthly Kingdoms as being demonstrated or revealed through a locality or buildings e.g. a "Place with a Palace", yet God's rule and reign, the Kingdom of Heaven is demonstrated through his rule over and the obedience by those belonging to him eg: "A people with a purpose". How does God demonstrate or reveal his Kingdom over and through you? Are there aspects of your life that aren't in alignment with the King? Is your allegiance to the King wholehearted?
2. Consider times in your life where you've felt entangled or overwhelmed by circumstance and like the psalmist cried out "how long, Lord?" (Ps 13). Looking back, in what ways was the grace of God working despite your

circumstances at the time? Where did he sustain you in the midst of trials?

3. This parable casts believers as wheat, but we so often want to be the gardeners, servants or angels who 'pull up the weeds', remove the evil and judge others. Read Matthew 5:43-47 and consider Jesus' command to love our enemies. We are to be a reflection of God's love, who cares for all people, good and evil. In what ways does this change our thoughts and behaviours as we live side by side with wheat and weeds, saints and sinners?

Creative Exercise

Using a sheet of paper and pencils, divide the paper in half. On one side write or draw the parts of your life that are like weeds, or darnel. These things might look good on the outside, but are toxic or dangerous or not life-giving. This might be the face we present to the world and may fool others, but 1 Samuel 16:7 says 'Man looks on the outward appearance but God sees the heart'.

On the other side of the paper, write or draw the parts of your life that are like wheat, good and life-giving.

Be honest, but also be kind to yourself as you do this activity, listening for the voice of the Holy Spirit who speaks gently with conviction leading to repentance and will never speak words of condemnation or abuse leading to shame.

Once you have finished both sides of the paper, spend some time in repentance and prayer, asking God to forgive you and to transform the weeds of your life into good life-affirming wheat.

Then rip the paper in half, destroying the weed side completely (you can even safely burn it if you like), giving thanks to God for his great love and mercy.

A Prayer to Pray

Lord God, King of All. May your glory and kingdom be demonstrated through my life, showing others that you rule and reign and are coming in glory soon.

May my life be like the good seed sown in the field. May I flourish and grow, being obedient and faithful to you, receiving every good gift you give.

Help me to live a life that reflects your great love, even among those whose hearts are far from you.

Sustain me in all things, at all times and keep me close to you.

May your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Amen.