

*For the week of The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
July 23rd, through July 29th, 2023*

Notes for the Week — The Parable of the Wheat and Weeds, Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Last week, we noted Matthew 13 is a turning point in Jesus' ministry. Two groups emerge in response to Jesus: those who receive Him and His word and those who don't. The parables sift these groups. His first parable, of the Sower, speaks to why some reject His Word (Satan, the sinful flesh, and the world) and their resulting barrenness. Yet those who receive the mysteries of the Kingdom in Jesus increase in their fruitfulness for an abundant harvest.

The next parable he speaks is of the Wheat and Weeds. The Son of Man plants a good crop, the sons of the kingdom in the field. Along comes his enemy, the devil, who sowed weeds, the sons of the evil one, among the wheat. As it is spoken to the crowd, Jesus emphasizes the coexistence of the wheat and the weeds until the time of harvest. It would only be then that the two would be separated, the wheat gathered to the barn and the weeds thrown into the fire. But when Jesus explains the parable to his disciples, he shifts the emphasis to that final day. "The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, and throw them into the fiery furnace. ...Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

What are we to make of this apparent shift in the parable? Add to this that Jesus equates the field to the world in his explanation, yet he says at the beginning it is about the kingdom of heaven. And again, at the end of his explanation he says the angels will gather out of his kingdom all sources of evil. With this in mind we see two layers of meaning emerge from Jesus' own words.

When he speaks to the crowd, Jesus is speaking judgement as a word of warning. He is trying to subvert opposition to His Word. Jesus does not delight in the death of a sinner, but they are "sons of the evil one" and will share in his fate if they persist. So they should not seek after someone else, even if Jesus doesn't meet their expectation or desire. He alone is the harbinger of the kingdom.

When he speaks to the disciples, on the other hand, he speaks a word of hope and promise. As Jesus brings the kingdom, Satan is close at hand sowing evil. Jesus knows that for a whole host of reasons it is getting harder for the disciples to follow him. As they look around them, the world continues to reject Jesus. The world puts pressure on them to reject Jesus too. Even their sinful flesh desires to turn them from Jesus. Things just don't seem to be "going their way," and it wearies them. But Jesus assures them that He is the Son of Man, the One who comes in power. But right now, He comes in power to sow, to plant, to nourish, to save. However, at the right time the harvest will come. On that day, all they have waited for will occur. Their hope will not have been in vain.

So persist in hope. Jesus is faithful. He will do it. Amen.

The Order of Meditation and Prayer

*Pray and confess out loud as much from the order of meditation and prayer as you are able, or as your family size and ages dictate.
Learn by heart the verse, catechism, and hymn of the week.*

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

APOSTLES' CREED

VERSE: MATTHEW 13:35B

I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.

PSALM 119:57-64 or the appointed daily psalms

Prayer on the Psalm

O Lord, You who are the same yesterday, today, and forever, remember us pilgrims in this nether world; for frail is our frame, and few are our days. Let the Word of Your salvation be a lamp to our feet and a light for our path, that our soul must not walk in darkness, but may find the way to that city whose light is the Lamb. Amen.

Daily Psalms	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning	1, 2	5, 6	8	10	13, 14, 15	18	20, 21	23, 24
Evening	3, 4	7	9	11, 12	16, 17	19	22	25

BIBLE READINGS

	Bible Narrative	Second Reading
Sunday	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43	
Monday	The Rich Young Ruler—Matthew 19:16-30	Habakkuk 2:1-20
Tuesday	The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard—Matthew 20:1-16	Habakkuk 3:1-19
Wednesday	Jesus Predicts His Passion a Third Time—Matthew 20:17-28	Zephaniah 1:1-18
Thursday	Two Blind Men Receive Their Sight—Matthew 20:29-34	Zephaniah 2:1-15
Friday	Jesus Cleanses the Temple—Matthew 21:12-17	Zephaniah 3:1-20
Saturday	Deuteronomy 7:6-9	Romans 8:28-39

CATECHISM — Ten Commandments Review

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection

DEVOTION OR MEDITATION

DAILY PRAYER

Select from among the following prayers as time and circumstances allow:

Collect of the Week

O God, so rule and govern our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that, ever mindful of Your final judgment, we may be stirred up to holiness of living here and dwell with You in perfect joy hereafter; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Daily Themes for Prayer

- Sunday:** *For the joy of the resurrection among us; for the fruit of faith nourished by the Word and Sacrament.*
- Monday:** *For faith to live in the promises of Holy Baptism; for one's calling and daily work; for the unemployed; for the salvation and well-being of our neighbors; for schools, colleges, and seminaries; for good government and for peace.*
- Tuesday:** *For deliverance against temptation and evil; for the addicted and despairing, the tortured and oppressed; for those struggling with sin.*
- Wednesday:** *For marriage and family, that husbands and wives, parents and children live in ordered harmony according to the Word of God; for parents who must raise children alone; for our communities and neighborhoods.*
- Thursday:** *For the Church and her pastors; for teachers, deaconesses, and other church workers; for missionaries and for all who serve the Church; for fruitful and salutary use of the blessed Sacrament of Christ's body and blood.*
- Friday:** *For the preaching of the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the spread of His knowledge throughout the whole world; for the persecuted and oppressed; for the sick and dying.*
- Saturday:** *For faithfulness to the end; for the renewal of those who are withering in the faith or have fallen away; for receptive hearts and minds to God's Word on the Lord's Day; for pastors and people as they prepare to administer and receive Christ's holy gifts.*

In Our Prayers this Week

Our Congregation: *Richard & Christine Dewey, Chelsey; Scott & Joy Dwyer; Jackson Dwyer; Sydney Dwyer*

Baptismal Birthdays: *Christian Ellis; Justin Rictor; Marty Burik; Dwayne Harris; Jayme Wagner; Kurtis Bryan*

Wedding Anniversaries: *Brady & Malissa Desormeaux; Shawn & Molly Herrmann; Mark & Debra Jenkins; Keith & Amy King*

Members of the Congregation: *Jan Bryan; Barb Kohlmeier; Alan Barraza; Deena Rogers; Xander Daniel; Terry Coulson*

Friends of our Congregation: *Jan Gorton; Tom Corcoran; Gloria Bohling; Victor*

Other:

Our Circuit:

St. John Lutheran Church, Aliceville; Rev. Timothy Booth

Trinity Lutheran Church, Burlington; Vacant

Our District Staff and President, *Rev. Justin Panzer.*

Tami Lierz, Administrative Assistant;

Jeffrey Maltz, LCEF

Our Synod and President, *Rev. Matthew Harrison*

Our Community: *City of Wellsville; USD 289*

Our State and Governor, *Laura Kelly*

Our Nation and President, *Joseph Biden*

LORD'S PRAYER

MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER FROM THE CATECHISM

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

—or—

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

HYMN OF THE WEEK

"Almighty God, Your Word Is Cast"

577

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| 1 The day is surely drawing near
When Jesus, God's anointed,
In all His power shall appear
As judge whom God appointed.
Then fright shall banish idle mirth,
And flames on flames shall ravage earth
As Scripture long has warned us. | 4 Then woe to those who scorned the Lord
And sought but carnal pleasures,
Who here despised His precious Word
And loved their earthly treasures!
With shame and trembling they will stand
And at the judge's stern command
To Satan be delivered. |
| 2 The final trumpet then shall sound
And all the earth be shaken,
And all who rest beneath the ground
Shall from their sleep awaken.
But all who live will in that hour,
By God's almighty, boundless pow'r,
Be changed at His commanding. | 5 My Savior paid the debt I owe
And for my sin was smitten;
Within the Book of Life I know
My name has now been written.
I will not doubt, for I am free,
And Satan cannot threaten me;
There is no condemnation! |
| 3 The books are opened then to all,
A record truly telling
What each has done, both great and small,
When he on earth was dwelling,
And ev'ry heart be clearly seen,
And all be known as they have been
In thoughts and words and actions. | 6 May Christ our intercessor be
And through His blood and merit
Read from His book that we are free
With all who life inherit.
Then we shall see Him face to face,
With all His saints in that blest place
Which He has purchased for us. |
| 7 O Jesus Christ, do not delay, But hasten our salvation;
We often tremble on our way In fear and tribulation.
O hear and grant our fervent plea: Come, mighty judge, and set us free
From death and ev'ry evil. | |

Text: Bartholomäus Ringwaldt, 1532–99; tr. Philip A. Peter, 1832–1919, alt.
Text: Public domain

Looking Forward to "The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost"

July 30, 2023

Readings: Deuteronomy 7:6–9 | Romans 8:28–39 | Matthew 13:44–52

The Lord our God has chosen us to be "his treasured possession," not because of any strength in us, but solely "because the LORD loves" us (Deut. 7:6–8). He is faithful, and He "keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments" (Deut. 7:9). He has searched for us and found us in love, and He has bestowed on us "great value" by the great price that He has paid on the cross (Matt. 13:45–46). In His joy, He has redeemed us by His cross and gathered us into His kingdom by the Gospel. Now we are "hidden in a field," covered by the cross and subject to the persecution of the world (Matt. 13:44), not for destruction, but "to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom. 8:29). Since we "are called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28), and because Christ Jesus died, rose again and lives to intercede for us "at the right hand of God" (Rom. 8:34), there is nothing in all creation that can separate us from "the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:39).

