

**TITLE AND NUMBER:** 142. Are you willing to listen?



**REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S):** Matthew 13:24-26, 43

Jesus told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed ears, then the weeds also appeared. (v24-26)

Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.' (v43)

**LOOKING FURTHER:** Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43; Matthew 25:1-13; Psalm 25:4-5

### What does this Bible passage tell us?

Jesus used stories from everyday life to help people understand His message. He often went on to give them an explanation. On this occasion, He was speaking about good and evil: good wheat, bad weeds. We can imagine how annoying it is to plant a garden with good plants and then the weeds mess it up. That must be how God sees the world. What should be beautiful is spoiled with sin.

People often ask, 'Why is there evil, misery and suffering in the world?' and want to blame God for it. In a sense, this is the answer to that question. God sows goodness and kindness, but people tend to listen to the wrong advice. Often it is our own fault when things go wrong; corruption, greed, jealousy and ego are the main reasons for the awful events we hear on the news. It is not that God makes it happen at all. However, He is warning His people that their actions have consequences.

But God is compassionate towards us and has given us warnings – like this one – to make it clear that there is a day of reckoning to come. Then, all the weeds will be pulled out, leaving only the good plants, and there will be a good harvest. We are each responsible for ourselves, and how we live. It is no good pointing to all the bad things and grumbling. The question should be, 'How am I living? Am I being a good plant, or am I starting to turn into a bit of a weed? Do I behave in a way that makes God pleased, or makes Him sad?'

Amazingly, unlike plants, we have the option of being changed. If we do not like who we are and, more importantly, what our outcome will be, we can ask God to change us, and He will!

### Reflections:

- Ask God to show you something that needs to change, and then give thanks for that chance to change. Speak to a Chaplain if you need help.
- See if you can find the hymn 'Come Ye Thankful People Come.' You too can pray 'Lord of harvest, grant that we, wholesome grain and pure may be.'
- In other Bible stories, God sometimes says 'be careful' or 'this could happen to you.' Look at a few other stories and see how God is giving us time to be ready for His harvest.

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for? It's okay to talk to God about this.

