

## **Matthew 13:24–43**

### ***Wheat, Weeds, and the Patience of God***

Before we begin, I'd like to try a little experiment today.

This sermon will be a little different from my usual ones.

The gospel is still at the center. But along the way, a musical is going to accompany us.

Some of you love musicals. Some of you probably don't. That's okay.

Because today isn't really about a musical. It's about the questions it asks—and the answers Jesus gives. After all, that's how Jesus often taught.

He spoke about fields, vineyards, shepherds, fishermen, weddings, and lost coins—images from everyday life that everyone understood.

Today I'd like to borrow an image from our own world.

Maybe it will help us hear Jesus' words in a new way.

I have a confession.

I love musicals.

One of my favorites is **Jekyll & Hyde**.

And here's another confession.

I've never actually read Robert Louis Stevenson's novel.

I've only experienced the story through the musical.

But one question has stayed with me for years:

### **Can good and evil ever be separated?**

*(Play "Facade" – first 36 seconds.)*

The opening song is about the masks we wear.

The face we show the world.

And the parts of ourselves we try to hide.

Isn't that true for all of us?

We smile when we're hurting.

We look confident when we're afraid.

We appear patient while frustration is growing inside us.

Dr. Jekyll believes he can solve that problem.

If good and evil are mixed together in every human heart, surely they can be separated.

But his experiment fails.

Instead of controlling evil, evil begins to control him.

Last Sunday, Jesus asked us a very personal question in the Parable of the Sower:

### **What kind of soil am I?**

Today Jesus widens the picture.

Now it's not just about our own hearts.

It's about the whole field.

A farmer sows good seed.

But during the night an enemy plants weeds among the wheat.

When the servants notice them, they ask the obvious question:

*"Do you want us to pull them up?"*

It sounds reasonable. Fix the problem. Clean up the field. Separate the good from the bad.

But the farmer says, **"No. Let them grow together until the harvest."**

Why? Because in Jesus' day, the weeds looked almost exactly like wheat while they were growing. Pull too early, and you'd destroy the wheat as well. The servants thought they could judge. The farmer knew they couldn't.

*(Play "Confrontation" – about 20 seconds.)*

This song captures an inner battle.

Not just Jekyll's battle. Ours.

The desire to forgive—and the temptation to hold a grudge.  
The desire to trust God—and the urge to control everything ourselves.  
Martin Luther described the Christian with the words: **Simul iustus et peccator**.  
At the same time saint and sinner. Completely loved by God.  
Still in need of God's grace every single day. But notice something else in today's parable.  
The servants focus on the weeds. The farmer focuses on protecting the wheat.  
How much of our energy is spent identifying the weeds? In society. In politics. In the church.  
On social media. Jesus asks a different question.

Not,

**"Who are the weeds?"**

But,

**"How can you grow as wheat?"**

How can God's love grow in you?

How can God's patience become visible through you?

Jesus isn't saying evil doesn't exist.

The weeds are real.

The enemy is real.

There will be a harvest.

There will be justice.

But that day belongs to God.

And honestly...

I'm grateful for that.

Because I have judged people too quickly.

And God has surprised me.

I've looked back on painful moments in my own life that I thought were nothing but failure.

Yet somehow God used them for growth.

Sometimes what looked hopeless simply needed time.

Perhaps that's what God's patience looks like.

God sees not only who we are today.

God also sees who we can become.

*(Play "A New Life" – about 15–20 seconds.)*

This song expresses a longing for a new life.

I think we all carry that longing.

Jekyll tries to create it himself. He fails.

Jesus also promises new life.

But not through human effort.

Not by pulling out every weed ourselves.

Instead, through grace.

Through the cross.

Through the resurrection.

Christ is the Lord of the field. He knows every stalk of wheat. He knows every weed.

He knows our hearts completely. And still, he never abandons the field.

He enters it. He redeems it. And one day, he will bring in the harvest.

I said at the beginning that today would be a little experiment.

Jesus once spoke about fields because that's what people knew.

Today, perhaps a musical has helped us see that field with fresh eyes.

But in the end, this story was never about Dr. Jekyll. It has always been about the patient farmer. About the God who never gives up on his field. Who never gives up on us.

And whose grace—not the weeds—will have the final word.

Amen.