

"LIFE THROUGH THE LENS"



WEEDS IN THE PUMPKIN PATCH

An old saying is, "You can take the boy out of the farm, but you can never take the farm out of the boy".

Ivan no longer has a farm; that is probably untrue. Show a farmer (ex or present day) a piece of unused dirt; he immediately has "a farm" and knows what to do with it. So, every year, at the right season, you can find Ivan busily tending his "piece of dirt" where melons and pumpkins are grown to be shared with residents of the retirement village where he is well known and respected. He "knows" the bit of dirt, he "knows" the plants, and he recognises the weeds that will impact the growth and fruiting of his crop.

As I watched the hoe fly and the weeds demolished, I remembered Jesus had a few things to say about weeds and their impact.

Left unchecked, weeds easily over-run and ruin what is meant to be a productive piece of paddock, garden or life. A caring gardener or farmer recognises weeds and does something to eliminate them, helping the crop or vegetables flourish and bless many.

How often are we, in our "wisdom", tempted to judge people and decide who are weeds and not fit to be part of our group, society, or religious gathering and want to remove them so we no longer have to "put up with them"? In **(Matthew 13:24-43)** Jesus warns about over-zealous weeders making decisions that could hurt others through ignorance. Remember, Jesus is the one who plants faith in people; he recognises who is growing the way he plans, and he is the one to decide who is "in" and who is "out".

Perhaps we would all be better spiritual horticulturalists if we studied what is growing in the paddocks of our own lives. How many of us nurture weeds of anger, lack of self-control, eagerness to gossip, pride, and judgement of others who are not "growing" like we think they should, just to name a few?

Jesus, the "Master Gardener", has promised to help all who trust him and his loving forgiveness and strength to recognise the weeds in their lives and root them out with his power. Just as the melon plant can't remove the weeds in the patch and must rely on the gardener, we need to rely on the power and love of Jesus in our lives and see how we grow and become blessings to others.

God bless you,

Kevin