

Sunday July 23 Matt 13: 24-30, 36-43

Only God is the Judge



'The servants asked the master, "Do you want us to go and pull the WEEDS up?"

"No," he answered, "because while you are pulling up the weeds, you might pull up the wheat with them.

Do you like weeding?

There's a kind of satisfaction pulling out a big weed – especially if you get the whole thing roots and all.

It's time to weed - spring is just around the corner.

Q. Do you what's the first sign of spring?

A. It's when the new dog digs up the old dog.

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Weeds are like nature's Graffiti.

The beautiful Red Hops you see in the Flinders Ranges are weeds.

The purple Salvation Jane – looks nice – but as you know it's a weed.

Some very nice flowers in other countries are weeds in our country, Gazanias, Lantana, the beautiful upstanding, proud, Scotch Thistle – is the national flower of Scotland.

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I think when we're in the mood we love to weed – we pull, burn, hoe, spray – it's satisfying

You famers are experts at identifying and weeding out weeds - that's half of your life – you would go broke if you didn't know how to manage weeds.

You are professionals.

You can spot a weed in a crop a mile off.

It's in your blood to want and go and pull it out, or spray it.

But as much as we love to weed - **Jesus says do not pull out the weeds because you might pull up some of the crop.**

Seriously, doesn't Jesus know we are professionals.

Seriously, who cares about losing a couple of wheat sprouts so long as we get the weed?

Jesus cares apparently!

He says, **leave the weeding to me.**

Why can't he trust us to do some simple weeding?

Jesus' concern is for the crop – not one single shoot, or sprout, or plant of the crop should be compromised – not one!

He alone judges between the weeds and the crop.

Judging is Jesus' business.

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.

("Thence" – what does thence mean? Don't you love it when they modernise something and leave out just one word: "thence")

Only Jesus judges (from thence).

This weed in the crop is the **darnel** weed.

It's a copy-cat weed – it looks like wheat in the crop.

Even weed professionals – like you farmers - can struggle to tell the difference between the darnel weed and the wheat when it is young.

If you were to weed out the darnel – You would almost certainly pull out a few shoots of wheat.

Jesus is concerned about the wheat.

Judging between weeds and crop is His business.

Why is that?

What are we like at judging?

Lindy Chamberlain was sentence to life gaol.

She was released after 3 years and exonerated.

What are we like at judging?

Henry Keogh, who I have sat with in Yatala prison, was sentenced to 26 years for murdering his wife.

Henry, definitely killed his wife, but was released after 21 years on a technicality. Now he is suing the government.

What are we like at judging?

George Pel sentenced to 6 years imprisonment for child sexual abuse.

He was released after 1 year because they completely messed up his trial.

He has been legally exonerated – forever!

What are we like at judging?

A few years ago Dennis Ferguson a habitual paedophile, was released from prison after 14 years.

He was released despite the judge saying that there was no hope of ever rehabilitating him.

He was released What are we like at Judging?

He was settled by our government in SE Queensland.

Bundaberg, Murgon, Ipswich, and Toowoomba – all Lutheran towns - he was weeded out of each town one by one.

After offending again in Dalby, in a government provided house - he ended up in Miles a small Darling Downs Lutheran community – living pretty close to some friends of ours.

Well small darling downs Lutheran communities are very good at weeding – they soon got rid of him.

He ended committing suicide in Sydney and wasn't found for days.

Are we good at Judging?

Was he a weed or part of the crop?

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In one of our Alice Springs break ins (we had 3) the robbers broke our safe of the wall – smashed it open – got my gun safe key - and stole one of my guns.

Now who got in trouble?

They found the robber walking down the road with my gun – he went to court and was released with no charge because they could not prove he actually stole my Gun and the other stuff.

Now who got in trouble???

**I got in trouble because he took my gun!!**

**Who's a good judge?**

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It goes on and on.

You will remember most recently Kathleen Folbigg charged with killing her 4 children was pardoned – **there was sufficient new evidence to suggest there was a wrong judgment made.**

Who's a good judge?

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Remember the weeds in the story are copy-cat weeds –

Theses weeds look just like a Lindy Chamberlain or a George Pel - they look just like you and me.

Jesus says I will judge you and me, Lindy, and George, and Dennis Ferguson.

**How does Jesus judge?**

How does he judge you and me?

Isaiah (11) tells us:

*Jesus will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,  
He will not judge us by what he hears with his ears;  
He will judge us with his righteousness....*

### **Who's a good judge?**

A good judge gathers evidence in court.

He takes note of what people saw.....

He takes note of what people heard.....

He considers what people saw and heard and makes a judgment.

### Not so with Jesus according to Isaiah:

When Jesus comes He will not take note of what he saw me do or what he saw you do.

He will not take note of what he heard me say or what he heard you say.

He looks on us with love and places his righteousness – his blood - on us and judges us innocent.

### **Now who's a good judge?**

No-one can judge like that – this is why Jesus says **leave the weeding up to me.**

In a world of copy-cats – only Jesus can judge hearts and pass forgiveness.

Don't get me wrong, we heard in that reading, that there is a blazing fire – and eternal torment – for some.

But what about us, baptised, confused, *stimulus Justus et peccata* – saints and sinners at the same time – half looking forward to our judgment and the crown of eternal life – and half scared to death as the evil one reminds us of our past.

To us Jesus gives judgment a new meaning.

A “sinful” woman came in and poured perfume on his feet. She wiped his feet with her hair and tears. The people around **judged the woman as a sinner.**

Jesus agreed. He said this is a woman of many sins and he forgave her and held her up as an example of repentance and love.

He didn't judge her by what he saw – or by what everybody said.

He judged her with his own righteousness.

The Guests said: Who is this who even forgives sins.

**Nobody can judge like Jesus.**

**Don't pull the weeds out.**

It a command for a reason – it protects the weeds.

**I'm comforted by this text – because too often I look like a weed.**

I don't want you – even though you are experts in weed management – I don't want you to judge me.

Who do you want to judge you?

Please know today – that there is a judgment – and that the judge does not judge as we would.

What we call weeds, The prostitute, the robber on the cross, the tax collector, the woman at the well, all were judged and led into heaven by Jesus himself.

His blood makes us right – then he judges us right.

There are those who trample his blood – reject his righteousness – he judges them.

But you and me, sure one day and confused the next have hope in him – we have nothing to fear.

Leave the weeds alone – do everything else – but don't pull out the weeds. Amen.

*Lord Jesus when you come we have nothing to fear. Turn us away from judging the things that are not our business and lead us to share what you have done for us – our real business. Amen.*