

The End
Sunday Pentecost 7, Year A
Isaiah 44: 6 – 8; Romans 8: 18 – 27; **Matthew 13: 24 – 30, 36-43**
July 19, 2020

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

The end. Those words used to be the last thing on the screen before the end credits would appear. The end.

I think about those words often. The end. Sometimes, they are good words. Sometimes, they are dreadful.

The end of life is often bittersweet as our last enemy takes a loved one. If they are a child of God, we rejoice that their battle is over and they have persevered and completed their sentence in this prison that we call life.

Yet, we also weep, for their presence is missed. Their smile unseen, except in photographs, which only seem to make the bitterness of separation even more sour.

The end. Even a simple movie, book, or other story can leave us dazed at its conclusion. Good stories leave you wanting more. They send your imagination reeling. The enjoyment is over and the sorrow sets in.

There are all kinds of endings in our life. Again, some pleasant, like the end of a drought or a long separation. Others, not so much.

In the parable that Jesus shared with us this morning, our Lord speaks about THE END.

He is still sitting in the same boat where we left Him last week. The same crowd is still gathered. And, Jesus tells them this parable about, not just any ending, but the finality of the story of our Scriptures. The end of this fallen world. The end, that would begin, at His cross.

Then, after a couple of shorter parables, and in good dramatic fashion, in order, perhaps, to emphasize His point, He gets out of the boat and goes back to the house where He was

staying. Pretty much telling those who had been listening that the day's teaching was over. The end.

His disciples then, and for our benefit, request that Jesus explain the parable.

And, Jesus explains it to them.

The parable, as is true for every parable, wasn't about the story being told. Instead, the parable was a visual representation of something totally different. While He was telling them a story about a farmer and his crop, His point had nothing to do with farming.

Instead, it was all about ... you guessed it... the end.

On this earth, right now, there are children of God, and children of the enemy. God has allowed them both to reside here. Each offending the other. Each struggling to survive in spite of the other. Just like wheat and weeds fighting for room to grow and the light of the sun.

For us, it seems it would be best if God would have simply removed the weeds from the soil so that we could live without the struggle, without the competition. That seems right and fair.

But, for His own reasons, perhaps to drive us continually back to Him, He has allowed evil to carry on.

A fact that we see practically every day. Not just on the news or in our nice little town, but even in our own mirrors. We see the scars on our bodies. The lines of weariness on our face. We have been through much. We have fought hard. Sometimes, along with our God ... sometimes, against Him.

I know there were times when we could have easily looked like little those little weeds. Doing all sorts of terrible things, in thought, word, and deed. But, look at you now! You are growing up into strong stalks of wheat. Maybe with a bend or tweak in your stalk as you have

been beaten on by the storms of this world, and stepped on by the evil, who wonders about casting more wickedness around us.

But, all along the way, you have continued to grow. Watered by your baptism, fed by the farmers own blood and flesh. As His Word is proclaimed, you continue to hear His footsteps getting closer. Closer. Closer.

The harvest is coming. Will we be ready? Will the angels rip you out of the ground and throw you into the eternal fire? Or, will they bundle you up together with other believers and carry you to the farmers barn, the Kingdom of God, where the rest of your brothers and sisters await your arrival?

Well, thankfully, our Master has tended to us this far. The weeds are still around us. Yet, He has yet to withhold His gifts from us. He has not left us. The farmer has blessed you and kept you. The farmer's face still shines at the sight of you growing in faith and in His love. The farmer has yet to turn His face from you. Instead, He continues to lift His countenance upon you. And He still gives you peace. He will see you through.

Your struggle will be over. The evil will be removed. You won't have to fight anymore. You will be exactly who and what he intended you to be when He put your seed in the ground.

“Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”

I'm looking forward to that. I'm sure that you are, too. I think all of us are looking forward to THE END.

Now may the peace that passes all understanding, guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Amen.