

# Weekly Study Guide

The week of October 12, 2014

## Daily Readings

Monday	Matthew 13:24-30	Tuesday	Matthew 13:36-43	Wednesday	Romans 12:14-21
Thursday	1 Corinthians 4:5	Friday	Malachi 4:1-3	Saturday	Matthew 15:12-13

*My notes on this week's readings...*

## Next Week in Worship

**Next week's message:** *Like A Mustard Seed*

**Next week's readings:** Matthew 13:31-33

Most people are attracted to the big and impressive. We like things to be flashy and attractive. "Nothing succeeds like success." But Jesus said the Kingdom of God comes in a small container. It's like a tiny mustard seed. Join us next week to learn how the humblest beginnings can be used by God for the greatest of ends.

first lutheran church

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# Group Discussion

## Connect

We're learning right now from some of Jesus' famous stories. Do you have any other favorite stories - from books or movies or things you've heard?

## Learn

Read Matthew 13:24-30. Jesus was speaking to people who wondered whether his Kingdom message could really be true in spite of all the difficulty and challenge that they continued to face.

- What parts of this story grab you first or raise questions for you?
- Jesus says that there is an enemy who sows evil in the world, unlike God who sows good. Do you find this explanation helpful? Why or why not?
- Although God permits evil to grow alongside good for now, Jesus also teaches that there really will be a final judgment and cleansing in the future. Why is this teaching important?
- Read Jesus' explanation of this parable in Matthew 13:36-43. What, if anything, does the explanation add to your understanding?

Read Romans 12:17-21. This passage is part of the Apostle Paul's teaching to the ancient church in Rome.

- According to this passage, why should Christians refrain from vengeance?
- How should we respond instead?
- How do you react to the idea of God taking ownership of vengeance for evil? Is it a comforting thought? An unsettling thought? Why does this matter?

Many Christians have been told that if God is real and if they are faithful, then bad things shouldn't happen to them. For many of us, this has led to crises of faith. But the teaching of Jesus, alongside his example and the example of his first disciples, tells us that suffering and trouble are still likely to happen in God's world and even to God's people.

- Where do you think we get this misunderstanding?
- Does this parable require you to change your thinking somehow?

## Apply

In Matthew 13:29-30, the servants of the master are told not pull up the weeds. In Romans 12, Christians are told to refrain from taking vengeance. Are there any attitudes or actions in your life that are challenged by this teaching?

## Pray

Many Christians have been planted in a field where they are struggling against the choking weeds. Pray for others who are hurting, that God will relieve their suffering and strengthen them in faith and perseverance.