

**Rev. Thomas Emery**  
***“Harvesting Wheat among Weeds” Matthew 13:24-30, 34-43***  
***Salem Presbyterian Church***  
**Sunday, July 20, 2014**

The parable in our text tells us that the global church consists of wheat and weeds, good and bad, and saints and sinners. The church is not a showcase of perfect saints but a school of sinners. While we are shocked with the sinful behavior of a number of church people, we must not forget that the field of the church consists primarily of wheat. In spite of some sinners, most members take their religion seriously. They have Jesus as their model, and they long to be like Him in their daily lives.

### **TEACHING POINTS**

**Teaching Point One:** *We have divided selves.* Jesus Christ came to save us not only from destruction, but from each other and from our divided good and bad selves. He came to pull us away from condemnation and judgment of others.

**Teaching Point Two:** *We might think first to throw the “good for nothings” out of the church, but God will not allow it.* We need to share forgiveness and understanding to those making mistakes who seek to become more Christ-like.

**Teaching Point Three:** *Like God, it would be better for us to wait and long for the wayward to return home.*

### **THIS WEEK’S MEMORY VERSE**

Let both grow together until the harvest. At harvest time I will tell the reapers, “First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned, but then gather the wheat into my barn”” (Matthew 13:30 NET).

### **ACTION POINT**

We need to realize that there are weeds in God’s field, the worldwide church. If we do not realize this fact, we will become disillusioned and disgusted with the church. Many of us may have a romantic and idealistic view of the church as a place where the people are as good as gold. When the truth is known, these often quit the church or if not members, they refuse to join it. Have you not heard someone say “I am not going to join a church, because there are too many hypocrites in it”? So, let’s be honest and face up to the facts, lest you get an unrealistic picture of the people in the church. Are there hypocrites in every church? Indeed, there are. But, be less judgmental and look at the church from God’s patient perspective. We are a work in progress.