



On your marks

The Bible has lots of stories linked to harvests. In fact, in the Middle East there were two harvests - an early and a late one - so harvest was very much part of their lives. And because life then depended so much on what the ground could produce (and not on what is on special offer at the supermarket!), the harvest was always a very special time indeed.

And harvest reminded the people then, and also reminds us today, of something amazing about God - that most of the things that we eat have come from the tiniest of seeds! It's no wonder that Jesus used seeds in so many of his parables - each one designed to get us thinking more about what God is like and who we are meant to be.

These parables were puzzling, however, and the parable of the weeds and wheat in Matthew 13 was certainly meant to challenge us. The following idea takes this story, told with the help of the pictures, and deliberately gives space for either your children's group or all-age congregation to work it out for themselves.

Get set

You will need to be able to show nine pictures - these are all available [here](#).

Alternatively, you could collect and use similar pictures of your own from a calendar or books.

Beware of rushing in to give your interpretation of this parable... or even what Jesus says about it later in Matthew 13. Give the children/congregation time to talk about it in groups together first. Encourage them to listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying through this story for us now.

Go!

Weeds among the wheat - Matthew 13:24-30

Jesus then told them this story:

Picture 1 - Furrows

The kingdom of heaven is like what happens when a farmer scatters good seed in a field.

Picture 2 - Green shoots

But while everyone was sleeping, an enemy came and scattered weed seeds in the field and then left.

Picture 3 - Field of corn

When the plants came up and began to ripen, the farmer's servants could see the weeds.



Picture 4 - Weeds and wheat

The servants came and asked: 'Sir, didn't you scatter good seed in your field? Where did these weeds come from?'

'An enemy did this', he replied.

His servants then asked: 'Do you want us to go out and pull up the weeds?'

'No!' he answered. 'You might also pull up the wheat. Leave the weeds alone until harvest time...'

Picture 5 - Harvest time

'...then I'll tell my workers to gather the weeds and tie them up and burn them...'

Picture 6 - Burned-up stubble

'...but I'll have them store the wheat in my barn.'

Picture 7 - Wondering questions

- I wonder what you like about the story.
- I wonder what puzzles you about the story.
- I wonder what's the most important part of this story.
- I wonder what this story teaches you about God.
- I wonder what this story means for you today.

Picture 8 - A picture to put up while they talk about the parable

Picture 9 - A verse you may choose to read together

God gives seed to farmers and provides everyone with food. He will increase what you have, so that you can give even more to those in need. You will be blessed in every way, and you will be able to keep on being generous.

2 Corinthians 9:10 - 11a (CEV)

You could end this session with an opportunity to explore the story further with a craft activity of their choice, followed by a time of prayer.