

# Sermon: The Uncommon Sense of Victory

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Preacher: Dr. Wes Feltner

[ 0 : 00 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

And today, once again, we're going to look at some of the uncommon sense of the kingdom. And we may do this another week or two, and then we'll have another brand new series coming here very soon.

And we're excited, as always, about what God is going to teach us as we enter into a new series. But if you've got your Bible, Matthew chapter 13, Matthew chapter 13, and we're going to read for our scripture reading verse 24 through verse 30.

Matthew chapter 13 and verse 24. It says,

[ 2 : 34 ] Let's pray together. God, thank you for your word. It's just a joy and a privilege every week to be able to study your word.

Thank you that you are a God that has spoken, that you are not silent, but you have revealed yourself. And you have given us truth, much needed truth, as we navigate life in this world.

So, Holy Spirit, come and guide us today as we seek to understand these things. Pray that you would just fill us with the hope of the gospel as we look at your word today.

And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. It's over. It's finished. Defeat is definite.

Faith family, have you ever felt that way? Have you ever experienced that feeling of, it's finished, it's over, that defeat is certain?

[ 3 : 38 ] I have, many times, on many different occasions, and one of those occasions where I felt that and thought that was back when I was 14 years old.

I was watching a professional football game on television, and I, like the rest of America, was absolutely convinced that it was over.

It was finished. That defeat was certain. The game I was watching was a game between the Houston Oilers and the Buffalo Bills.

Now, some of you are already ahead of me on this. But during that game, the Houston Oilers, led by then-quarterback Warren Moon, was absolutely destroying the Buffalo Bills.

A little quick fake comes back, likes the time, throws, touchdown for Houston. A little play-action fake in the end zone, touchdown. One goes deep, and it is caught.

[ 4 : 48 ] What a catch by Curtis Duncan. Moon goes deep, touchdown Houston. Right goes far side.

This is intercepted. And down the far sideline is Bubba McDowell. And Houston moves out in front now, 34-3.

34-3. Actually, it was 35-3 because Houston would go on to make the extra point.

And if the score wasn't bad enough, earlier in the game, the famous quarterback for the Buffalo Bills, Jim Kelly, had been injured. And now it's like halfway through the third quarter.

And if you were watching that game, in fact, some of you I know remember that game. If you're watching that game in that particular situation, what does common sense tell you?

[ 5 : 50 ] Common sense says it's over. It's finished. Defeat is definite. And then this happened.

Here is Davis. Thanks for the corner. Buffalo's first touchdown of the ball game comes with 8.52 left to go in the third.

Right to draw. Down to side. All alone. Big East goal. Like nice touch.

Has another man open. Back 20 to the end zone. It's unreal. You're going for it. At 4th and 5th. Into the end zone. Has a man touchdown. Buffalo trailing by four.

Right to draw. In down. Touchdown. Mark Levy with the, well, semi-excited reaction. At this point, that's the greatest comeback in NFL history.

[ 6 : 50 ] Down 35 to 3. Now the Bills are up 38 to 35 with a little more than 3 minutes remaining. It's what became known as the greatest comeback in NFL history.

Faith family. Faith family. Have you ever experienced a situation where common sense told you it's over. It's finished.

Like in the movie Rocky. You've been hit 40,000 times in the face. And yet somehow, some way, victory occurs in the end.

Maybe for you it was a business on the verge of bankruptcy. Or a marriage on the verge of divorce. Or a patient on the verge of dying.

Or a ministry on the verge of being over. And whatever it was, you looked at the scoreboard. And common sense said, defeat is definite.

[ 7 : 53 ] And yet, somehow, there was victory in the end. Now, faith family, a lot of us do that as we look around the world and we see evil in the world.

Have you ever experienced something like that? Where you just looked around at the world in which you live, and it just looked like evil was winning. And that defeat for good, defeat for the people of God, was definite.

There was way too much disease. Way too much death. Way too much destruction and discouragement and depression. And in those moments, the common sense tells you, lose your faith.

Common sense tells you, give up the fight and accept defeat. If you've ever felt that way as a Christian, and a lot of us have, if we're being honest, we need some uncommon sense.

And that is exactly what Jesus gives us here in Matthew chapter 13. Look at verse 24 again. He put another parable before them, saying, The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field.

[ 9 : 14 ] But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also.

Jesus here is telling a very, very common story. Many of the parables that Jesus gives are very common situations that people would have understood. And in this particular situation, you have a farmer who has sown seed in his field.

And in the middle of the night, his enemy comes in and sows a counter crop. Now, this was very, very common in the ancient Near East.

So common there were laws against such a thing. And the reason that's the case is because for you and I, this kind of a thing may not seem all that serious. But yet it was very, very serious.

This wasn't a practical joke. It wasn't like somebody, you know, putting your stapler at work in Jell-O. Or your neighbor kind of TPing your front yard.

[ 10 : 21 ] No, no, no. It was far more serious. A modern day expression of this or an example of this would be like someone hacking into your bank account and threatening all your finances.

Or somebody starting a rumor about you that threatened your vocation. That would be something that you would see as very, very threatening to your life.

That is exactly what's happening in this story. Now, what is Jesus illustrating with this? Well, look at verse 36. It says, Then he left the crowds, went into the house, and his disciples came to him saying, Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.

And he answered, The one who sows the good seed is the son of man. The field is the world. The good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one.

And the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age. And the reapers are the angels. In other words, to translate this, this is what Jesus is saying.

[ 11 : 31 ] There is a field. The world in which we live. And in this field, Jesus, the son of man, is at work.

He is sowing seed. And the kingdom of God is advancing. And you see it around you. People being saved. Churches growing.

Revivals happening. Missions expanding. Attics finding freedom. Lives being transformed.

Christians growing in truth. It is clear, if you look across the world, that God is at work.

You see it in all different kinds of places. The son of man is sowing seeds. The kingdom of God is advancing. And yet, at the same time, the evil one is at work.

And this is very obvious to see as well. Gossip that destroys relationships. False religions spread. Christians devouring one another.

[ 12 : 36 ] People taking advantage of other people. Crime and selfishness and injustice. There is no doubt at all, when you look around the world, that you see the work of the evil one.

You see evil present at every turn. If you prefer the country music version of this, here is how Brad Paisley puts it.

Turn on the news. Same old story. Every day. Hate for words.

We all use. So much anger. So much pain. I don't know if you believe in heaven.

I don't know if you believe in hell. But I bet we can agree that the devil is alive and well.

[ 13 : 45 ] All of us can relate to the lyrics of that song. And Jesus' point here is to say that in the world, in this field in which we live, both are happening.

Good is happening. And evil things are happening. And of course, the reality is, as God's people, as followers of Jesus Christ, disciples like Jesus is speaking to here in this parable, we can look around the world and sometimes we see more weed than we do wheat.

We see more evil than we do good. And when we see that, where evil just seems to be triumphant and good seems to be defeated, it's easy in our common sense to say, it's over.

It's finished. Defeat for the people of God is definite. Now, keep in mind here that in this story, Jesus is not suggesting that these two kingdoms or these two works, that is the work of Christ and the work of the evil one, are both equal.

Oh, no, no, no. Make no mistake about it that the field belongs to the farmer, to the sower. Like the words of the old hymn, this is my Father's world.

[ 15 : 15 ] Oh, let me ne'er forget that though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet.

Oh, faith family, make no mistake about it. God is in control of the world. That is a absolute fact.

But that doesn't change the reality that sometimes we look at the scoreboard and it feels like, it appears like we're losing. And as if that wasn't bad enough, namely that there are bad seeds being sown along with the good seeds, the problem gets even worse.

Look at verse 25. But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away.

That word weed, zizana, which is the Greek word here, it's a degenerate form of wheat called a darnel. And the problem with it is it looks very similar to wheat, but it's a counterfeit.

[ 16 : 30 ] And so the problem in the field is not just that you have bad seed being sown along with good seed, is that the bad seed can look very similar to the good seed.

And you don't really know the difference until you give it time to mature. It's a lot like children. And if those of you that have children, when children are born, they look like baby possums.

Okay. There's a picture of my youngest child right there. It's really hard to know when children are born, who they're going to look like as they get older.

And yet what happens is as they grow and as they mature and as they get older, they tend to take on the characteristics of one parent over the other.

You just have to give it time to mature. It's the same thing that Jesus is teaching here, is that you've got to give maturity, a time of maturity to happen before you can tell between the good and the bad.

[ 17 : 34 ] Now there's a couple of implications here that I think are important for us. Faith family, listen in. All right. Zone in here. Number one is this. Notice it on the screen. Be careful not to judge.

Be careful not to judge. The Scripture is clear that we are called to not judge other people. Yet, we love to do this all the time.

What I mean here is it is not that we don't have any kind of discernment, but it does mean that we have not been given the final authority to say that person is wheat or that person is weed.

We don't have that authority. Only God has that authority. And yet, it's very easy sometimes in our religious Phariseeism to set back and pronounce judgments on people that is not our responsibility to do.

So, faith family, I warn you from the Word of God, do not judge others. But, on the other hand, notice the secondly, is that be careful in lacking judgment.

[ 18 : 46 ] Be careful in lacking judgment. In other words, while we are not to judge, make final proclamations on people, that's God is the ultimate judge to do that.

At the same time, we are not to walk around life without discernment. Just because it has a Christian label does not mean it is Christian.

This is why the Bible frequently warns against people drifting from the faith because there's a lot of counterfeit gospels, a lot of counterfeit faith systems out there.

For instance, 1 Timothy 4 verse 1, Some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits. Romans 16, 17 Watch out for those who cause division and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught.

Finally, Jude, verse 3 and 4, Contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. Why? For certain people have crept in unnoticed who pervert the grace of our God and deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 20 : 01 ] So faith family right here, everybody zone in. There's a problem in the field. And the problem in the field is not only is there good seed sown along with bad seed, but the bad seed can often look like the good seed.

And while we are not the final judge, we are to have discernment and have some sense of godly judgment in terms of discerning the things of God.

Now, wouldn't it just be easier if we could rip up the weeds? Get rid of all those evil people. Destroy all those things that are evil.

Well, you might think that sounds extreme, but that's exactly what the disciples recommended. Look at verse 27. Matthew 13, verse 27. And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, Master, did you not sow good seed in your field?

How then is it that we have weeds? And he said to them, an enemy has done this. So watch. The servants said to him, here's a great idea. Do you want us to go and gather them?

[ 21 : 15 ] But he said no, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. In other words, the disciples say, we got a great idea.

Let's pick up our swords and let's go out and chop down all the weeds. We want a weed-less world. We want a world where there is no evil.

So let's get out and attack and purify the field for the farmer. But Jesus says, no, no, no. Be very, very careful here.

Now, my guess is many of us can resonate with that. We felt that kind of feeling before of just getting so tired of evil people and evil things and it can become so consuming that we become bitter and we become judgmental and we become angry and we become revengeful.

But I wanted to remind us here this. Notice it on the screen. We are not called to pull weeds. We are called to sow seeds. We are not called to pull weeds.

[ 22 : 26 ] We are called to sow seeds. Just like Jesus sows good seeds, so are we. And the reason why that's our calling.

And the reason why this is so important. Again, if you've zoned out, zoned back in here. The reason why Jesus does not want the disciples to go out and rip up all the weeds is because, first of all, in the parable, the darn ale plant would often grow along with the wheat and would be kind of wrapped around it so that if you pulled one, you would pull the other.

And the reason why God doesn't want to wipe out the weeds, are you listening, is because He's going to make some of them wheat. The reason why God doesn't want us to rip out the weeds is because He's going to make some of them wheat.

In fact, many of you, if not most of you, who are watching this today are former weeds. You were separated from God.

You were apart from God because of your sin. You were, by nature, children of wrath. And God, in His patience, didn't rip you up, but changed your life.

[ 23 : 50 ] Jesus is saying to the disciples, I know that you want to get out there and purify my field, but listen, I will do the work of purification, both in the end as well as now.

Listen to what Peter writes in 2 Peter 3, and verse 4. They will say, where is the promise of His coming? For ever since our fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.

Do you see that? When is this going to change? When is the scoreboard going to be right? When does good win? That's the feeling here. This stuff's just been continuing on and on and on for way too long.

Let's go grab our weed eaters and clean up the field. And listen to what Peter goes on to say in verse 8. But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord is one day a thousand years, and a thousand years is one day.

The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness. How many of you are thankful for this next phrase? But is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all

should reach repentance.

[ 25 : 15 ] What a good word. You see, when you feel like you're losing and it feels like in the garden or in the field of life, the weeds are overtaking you, and your reaction is, let's just tear it up.

The voice of Christ is saying, be patient with that as I have been patient with you. Because to all of you who are wheat, you used to be a weed.

And I know you're sick of it. I know you want things to change, but I am a patient sower. The field belongs to me, and I am doing a great work.

Now, faith family, this does not mean that there will not be a time of justice. Of course there will be. We see that even right here in the text where that which is wrong will be made right.

Look, for instance, in verse 30, let both grow together until the harvest. And at harvest time, I'll tell the reapers, gather the weeds first, bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.

[ 26 : 28 ] Now skip over to verse 40. Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. The Son of Man will send His angels and they'll gather out of His kingdom all causes of sin and all lawbreakers and throw them into the fiery furnace.

And in that place, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Faith family, look right here. Look right here. Do not mistake the patience of God with passivity.

God is not being passive. God will deal finally and ultimately with sin. But until that harvest comes, until that final judgment comes, He is being patient with you.

And you and I need to be patient in the world. And what this ought to do, faith family, is it ought to stir up in us a desire not to be executioners, let's go out and destroy evil, but evangelist.

Let's go out and tell evil where good is found. Let's go out into the darkness with light. Let's go out into the weeds with the transforming message of the gospel on how to become wheat.

[ 28 : 02 ] That's what this ought to motivate us to do. And this is so important where Jesus here is giving these disciples the right mindset. And it's not let's go out with force, but let's go out with the gospel.

Let's go out and continue to diligently sow seeds of the good news of Christ. Jonathan Edwards said this, he said, quote, and now you have an extraordinary opportunity.

A day wherein Christ has thrown the door of mercy wide open and stands in calling and crying with a loud voice to poor sinners.

Oh, that harvest day has not happened yet, but it will happen one day. And for those of you listening today that have never repented of your sin and put your faith in Jesus Christ, oh, would you hear the call for you today to repent and believe and to trust Jesus Christ as your Savior.

Because His patience does not mean passivity. It does not mean that He will not one day deal with it. But that day is not today.

[ 29 : 14 ] Which means today is an opportunity for you to believe. believe. And that may mean that there are others of you that need to have a conversation with a family member.

Others of you that need to have a conversation with a friend that need to reach out to say rather than let's go pull weeds, let's go sow seeds. And God is specifically calling you to do that today.

So, there is a warning here in the weeds, to the weeds, but that's not really the intent of the parable.

So here's what we have. We've got a problem in the field. There's good seed and there's bad seed. And the bad seed can often look like the good seed. So we are not to judge, yet we are not to lack judgment. But the sower is patient.

The servants want to go out and pull out the weeds, but the farmer is saying, give it time. I've got a work to do. And I want you to be about sowing seed and not pulling weeds.

[ 30 : 19 ] And then all of this is to give hope and comfort to the disciples. Look at verse 43. Verse 43. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father.

He who has an ear, let him hear. Jesus' ultimate goal in this is to, listen, faith family, encourage the disciples to encourage believers that that final day of good and that final day of glory is coming when you will shine like the sun.

Jesus understands the discouragement the disciples feel. Jesus understands the discouragement that maybe you feel right now. I mean, you look around at the remains of life in a fallen world and you're so discouraged and you feel like you're losing and it feels like it's over, it's finished, defeat is certain and you begin to grumble and get anxious and Jesus is saying, brother, sister, child of God, one day you're going to shine like the sun.

Don't be discouraged disciples, but be encouraged even when it feels like the weeds are winning. Notice just three things quickly here as we begin to wrap up of promises that we as God's people can trust in as we live in this field.

[ 32 : 09 ] The first promise is this, the kingdom of God will be revealed. The kingdom of God will be revealed. Jesus said, I will build my church and he's gonna, faith family, build his church and he will do it in a Walmart break room and he will do it in a taxi cab in the Twin Cities and he will do it in faith family church and he is not asking your permission, he is not seeking the poll of Americans, he is building his church in places you don't always see and the gates of hell will not prevail against it and one day it will shine as the sun.

You may not see that now but it is happening in places you cannot see. That ought to encourage you in the midst of a pandemic, that ought to encourage you in the midst of difficult economic times, that ought to encourage you as you watch the news and see announcements of weeds after weeds and evil after evil.

The kingdom of God hasn't gone anywhere. And the common sense approach to life might be, it's over. Brother, sister, it's not over at all.

It's just preparing for a final day when every eye will see it as it shines like the sun. So the first promise is the kingdom of God will be revealed.

The second promise is this, is that service to God will be rewarded. Service to God will be rewarded. This parable is intended to encourage the disciples.

[ 33 : 52 ] This parable is taught and interpreted specifically to the followers of Jesus Christ, meaning that's his target audience. And he wants them to know that service to him in his field will be rewarded.

Don't give up. Don't fall away. Keep persevering in the service of God because one day you will shine like the sun.

Thirdly, third promise we see here is not only that the kingdom of God is going to be revealed and not only that service to God is going to be rewarded but finally that hope in God will be realized. Hope in God will be realized. Right now there are some of you watching this and you are stressed out when it comes to work.

There are some of you watching this today that you are in the middle of a family situation that is deeply discouraging. There are some of you watching this today who are fighting with cancer and in the midst of the darkness it is easy to say where is hope but what does scripture say?

[ 35 : 14 ] Hear me faith family look at me faith family darkness may be here for the night but joy comes in the morning. Your hope in God will one day be fully and finally realized when the kingdom of God is revealed and all of your service to God is rewarded and in that moment every ounce of hope in you that it took to get to the next day and to get you to the end will be realized as you shine like the sun.

What is this teaching us? There's a problem in the field. There's good and there's bad and quite honestly sometimes it looks like the bad is victorious over the good.

So why don't we just go out and rip it out? No, no, no, no. I have a plan. I am a patient farmer that has a plan for my field so don't lose hope.

Disciples use a little uncommon sense. I know uncommon sense says it's over. We're done. But uncommon sense says be patient.

Be patient. Like any good farmer knows, you've got to listen, you've got to sow the seeds and wait for the harvest.

[ 36 : 50 ] You've got to wait for the harvest. harvest. Be patient in trusting God to do His work in your life and in the world.

And not only be patient, but do not lose hope. There is not a single grain of wheat that's going to be missing in the end. And right now your cross may feel heavy.

Right now the companions may seem few. Right now the path may seem narrow, but the kingdom of God is like sowing seeds where you sow good and wait for the harvest to come.

Be patient. Don't lose hope. Remember the uncommon sense of the kingdom that even though it looks like you will be defeated, victory is already yours.

and when Jesus teaches this to the disciples and as Jesus prepares his disciples to do ministry with this kind of mindset he is preparing them not just for that day he's preparing them for another day.

[ 38 : 09 ] You see a very short time after this parable the disciples are going to see evil on display like they had never seen before.

They are going to see gossip and they are going to see anger and they are going to see betrayal and they are going to see murder weeds everywhere and for three quarters the opposing team is absolutely beating Jesus to death.

and common sense says it's over. The disciples thought it's over.

It's finished. We have been defeated. The weeds are victorious and one Sunday morning a finger twitched and eyes that had been crusted over with blood opened and two legs that had been crucified to a Roman cross walked out of the grave and victory that seemed impossible became an eternal reality.

It was faith family the greatest comeback back in all of human history. So let not your heart be troubled.

[ 39 : 50 ] God is sovereign over the world and one day there will be a great harvest.

And that may not make a lot of sense right now. But it is the uncommon sense of the kingdom of God.