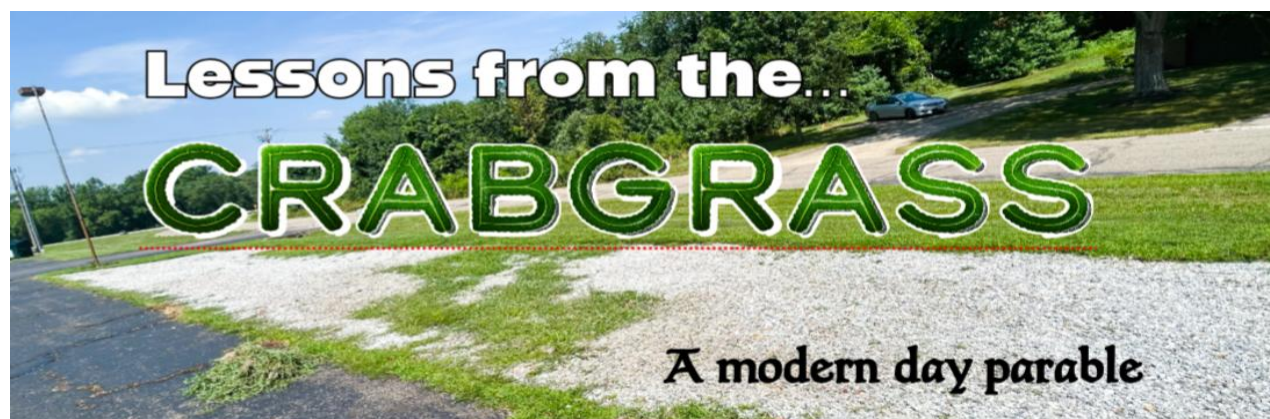




Introduction *"Then I saw, and considered it well..." Proverbs 24:30-34*

We have been gleaning from the parables of Jesus for the last few months. Tonight, we will finish with a modern-day parable from everyday life. There are life lessons all around us if we take the time to pay attention and reflect on things. As I was pulling weeds in the church parking lot last week, I discovered a nasty patch of crabgrass. While pulling them out one by one, I realized there is quite a life lesson to be found in this painful process. This is what I learned...

Crabgrass *Defined as a fast spreading, invasive weed that grows in lawns and gardens, often unwarranted because it chokes out healthy grass.*

Consider this description:

Crabgrass looks harmless at first – a light green spot by the driveway – but give it 3 July days, and it has run 30 shoots in every direction, stolen water from nearby grass, and anchored itself with roots like steel cable, so pulling one clump overturns half the lawn. By August, the patch is now a thick felt of stems mowing can't fix. Other grass can't breathe; the crabgrass laughs as it drops 50,000 seeds to be next year's invasion.

Weeds Weeds came because of ____ as the ground was cursed. **Gen 3:17-18**
Weeds are also called tares in the Bible and connected to Satan. **Mt 13:25**

NOTE: That one weed pictures spiritual enemies of our souls trying to keep us from living for God. Innocent looking sins germinate overnight, run shoots underground, choke out the life of godliness planted by God, and leave unseen seeds waiting to spread!

The Lessons

God can teach us to spot, uproot, and replace soul-choking sins before they spoil our life.

1. Sin must be _____ out – not trimmed. **Matt 13:24-30; Eph 5:3-10; Col 3:5, 8-9; Jas 4:1-8**

Observation: Trimming weeds makes for a lot of work, repetition, and exhaustion!

Application: Surface fixes – half-hearted apologies, secret habits we keep – are useless. Root-level repentance is needed to remove both the visible and _____ part of the sin.

Old Testament example: Achan – **Joshua 7:23-26; 6:18**

One hidden sin ruined Israel's victory at Ai. They had to root out the problem. Secret sins must be brought into the light of the word of God, confessed to God, and forsaken.

What are the weeds in your life that you just keep trimming instead of pulling them out?

2. Daily diligence prevents _____ of sins. **Heb 3:12; 12:15; Deut 29:18; Isa 5:4, 7; Jer 2:21**

Observation: A small weed today is tomorrow's big problem!

Application: There is no such thing as a _____ sin. Upkeep of our spiritual life is a must. Morning devotions, an honest examination of your life daily, and short accounts with God help to stop bitterness, resentment, lust, and greed before they corrupt your soul.

Old Testament example: Another generation – **Judges 2:10; 3:1-6**

Israel stopped cultivating their relationship with God and caring for the spiritual wellbeing of the next generation. Schedule family devotions and prayer time so the weeds don't spread.

What do you plan to do in your life and with your family to stop the spread of sin?

3. Plant seeds of righteousness every day. **Matthew 12:43-45; Gal 4:9; Eph 5:18; Col 3:15-17**

Observation: Cleared ground invites reinfestation if left _____.

Application: After pulling the sins out of your life, sow the ground of your heart with things that are good and virtuous. Replace pulled sin with the opposite... if gossip pulled, replace with edifying speech (Eph 4:29)... if anger uprooted, replace with patience (Gal 5:22-23).

Old Testament example: Replacing ungodly ways – **Deuteronomy 7:26**

Israel was to pull down the idols and replace with obedience and worship of God. Replace sinful behavior with godly behavior and things – dig into the word of God, fellowship with believers, sing songs that magnify Jesus Christ, watch movies that help your spiritual life...

What will you do to replace ungodly habits with good ones for the Lord?
