

The Weeds in Your Garden

Kathy and I were preparing to have house guests that would stay with us. Naturally, I wanted to make a good impression so I cut the grass, trimmed the shrubbery and weeded our landscaped yard. When trying to make the yard look good, weeds become a real distraction. As I was working I made several observations:

- A few weeds were springing up right in the middle of some flowering plants, crowding out what was intended to beautify our yard.
- Some weeds were very stringy and fast growing, embedding themselves in the ground cover or wrapping themselves around trees.
- The thickest weeds were in an area where we had recently removed a shrub but not yet planted anything in its place. The weeds were quick to fill the void where there was no vegetation.
- Generally, the weeds are easy to remove in their early growth as they have very shallow roots. The longer you allow them to fester in the ground the more entrenched they become and harder to remove later.
- Some weeds have a colorful flower on top, giving the illusion of being flowers. Underneath, however, they are strangling vegetation all around them.
- Weeds grow much faster than flowers.



Our daily life has many similarities to the infiltration of weeds. Life is beautiful but undesirable, sinful habits can overtake that wonderful life, if allowed to flourish. When sin invades our life it gradually chokes out the good that God intended for us. In their infant stage bad habits can be relatively easy to remove or avoid, but eventually they gain power and become more difficult to shed. The bad habits may even appear to be desirable and attractive, yet underneath they are undermining the person God intended you to be. Satan deceives you into thinking that sin enhances your life, while it runs the risk of destroying you.

What can we do about it? We are especially vulnerable if we haven't established habits that strengthen our faith, helping us to recognize and fight back against sin. Without a prayer life or being in the Word we leave ourselves open to sin, filling the void when left by the lack of a foundation of an active faith. We need to keep a continual watch on how we live our lives and consciously remove the bad habits.

The Garden of Eden was a major turning point in the relationship with God. God created the Garden of Eden to be perfect and a place of unspoiled beauty with no weeds to blemish its purity. But in the Garden, Adam and Eve gave into temptation and disobeyed God. Then they lied about it and placed blame on each other, trying to justify their actions. They distanced themselves from God, a struggle we also face when we disobey God.

What are your sins? What undesirable habits do you have that eat away at the goodness of God's creation – the beautiful person you were created to be? Do you nourish your faith so that sin doesn't take hold? Do you weed out sins before they gain a foothold on your life? The Ten Commandments etch in stone the weeds God wants all of us to avoid. Don't try to justify your own sins by taking them in the narrowest sense. The Ten Commandments describe in broad terms what God wants you to avoid and what He wants you to honor.

Our house guests appreciated the beauty of the yard. The people around you will appreciate your beauty as a person of God. Removing weeds in your garden is a constant process, as is the sins you face. What is growing in your garden? Keep gardening so that you can be what God intended you to be.

Scripture: *Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then I will be blameless, innocent of great transgression. May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer (Psalm 19:13-14).*

Prayer: Dear Lord. We face the threat of sin every day of our life. Help us to make a conscious decision to shy away from sinful temptations. We thank you for your forgiveness when we fall short. Amen.