



Falsehoods not
only disagree
with truths, but
they usually
quarrel among
themselves.

Daniel Webster

ONCE AGAIN, AS OCCURS EVERY YEAR ABOUT THIS TIME, the canning room is bathed in the cool-white glow of the fluorescent lamps suspended over Linda's seedling trays. Over the mid-winter months she peruses her mountain of seed catalogs, selecting and planning this next season's garden. Some time in February the seed packets begin to arrive, and now, as March begins the spring thaw, rows of tiny green shoots are emerging from the shallow seedbeds.

This family being of decidedly frugal (if not downright penurious) bent, Linda will often take advantage of sales to purchase large quantities of potting soil for this purpose. As

with most products, however, there are varying degrees of quality in bagged soils, and the cheapest is unquestionably "cheap" indeed.

When it comes time for my good wife to lay in her supply of potting soil, she typically passes by the more expensive "soil-less mix" and bags of ultra-sterilized soil to get the cheap bags of potting soil on sale at K-Mart.

One year she must *really* have saved some money, because there were quite a few surprises sprouting in her seedling flats. The rows of new geraniums, delphiniums, heliotrope, tomatoes, peppers and basil were invaded by sprouts of grass and other weeds. Since the flats were never outside, but remained in the house under fluorescent lights,

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by the Pond

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Observe: “Ye shall know the truth”—not a truth; but *the* truth; the saving, purifying, glorifying truth. Keep on believing, and Jesus will teach you that great truth which is above all other truth—essential, quickening, cleansing, divine. You shall know the truth. You may be charged with dogmatism, but you will not flinch from the assurance that you know the truth. You no longer guess at truth, nor hit on a sliding scale of probabilities; but you know it assuredly. You will grow familiar with it; truth will be to you a well-known friend. You will discriminate so as to know the truth when you see it, and detect it at once from the deceptive falsehood. You will know the truth, and you will not be led away by the flattering voice of error. You will have the touchstone with you, and will not be deceived by base metals. You will so know the truth as to be influenced by it, actuated by it, filled by it, strengthened by it, comforted by it, and by its power you will yourself be made true. Surely this is a good reason for abiding in Christ’s Words!

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

it’s a safe bet the weeds were not carried in by the wind, but instead sprouted from the cheap potting soil.

So along with the normal care and watering of the seedlings, that season included the pulling of tiny grass starts as they showed themselves among the plants. What was relatively easy to remove then in its germinating state, would have been much more of a challenge if left, and transferred to the garden come planting time. Her simple weeding in the comfort of the house saved much labor and back-bending later in the heat of the summer sun.



And the disciples came to the other side of the sea, but they had forgotten to bring any bread. And Jesus said to them, “Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” They began to discuss this among themselves, saying, “He said that because we did not bring any bread.” But Jesus, aware of this, said, “You men of little faith, why do you discuss among yourselves that you have no bread? Do you not yet understand or remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets full you picked up? Or the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many large baskets full you picked up? How is it that you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? But beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Matthew 16:5-12

We live in a world in which there is an extraordinary amount of cheap information flying about. From the television, radio and newspaper, to magazines and journals, to newsletters, e-mail, and the ubiquitous Internet—this variegated procession of word-carriers continuously fills the air with ideas and pronouncements declared essential (and, of course, unimpeachable) to our lives and well-being.

As if it couldn’t get any worse, today the festering bilge of bad advice comes just as readily from the pulpit or seminary, as from the yellow press or liberal university. We live and move through oxygen tinged blue by

the teachings of the foolish, and by necessity we must be constantly on guard against the weeds that threaten the integrity of what we know to be truth.

While the pure and fertile soil of the gospel is itself impermeable to the weeds of this world, we must remain vigilant in what we permit to take root in the soil of our own lives. The way of all flesh is to believe the fanciful before the mundane, to trust in the elaborate invention before the plain truth.

[Jesus said,] “Why do you not understand what I am saying? *It is* because you cannot hear My word. You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies. But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.”

John 8:43-45

We must remain ever vigilant against the lies of this world finding purchase in the soil of our lives. And when even one seed slips past our defenses, we must remove it quickly before it takes root.

Effortlessly remove the sprout now, or struggle with the mature, deeply-rooted plant later.

The choice is ours.



So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

John 8:31-32

