

Froot Loops?

Matthew 13:24-30

Do you remember when life used to be so much simpler? When Apple was still just a fruit . . . when tweeting was something only birds did . . . when we used to speak in real words not just acronyms . . . when it would make no sense to say, “Can you transfer the JPEG of the LCA from the DVD to the USB and SMS me?”

Back in those days things were so much more straight forward . . . so much more black and white . . . back then you knew where you stood . . . in those days the world was divided into just two types of people . . .

Weet-Bix eaters and Coco Pops eaters.

Ah . . . they were the good ol’ days!

Take your Weet-bix . . . well, that was the good stuff . . . the healthy stuff. Weet-Bix was for sensible people . . . people who wanted to live right . . . people who were kinda ‘straight’ . . . Weet-Bix was the natural heir of porridge . . . kept you cleansed and regular. And, it was patriotic . . . “Aussie kids are Weet-bix kids” after all!

Then there was Coco Pops! The devil’s own cereal . . . full of sugar and other nasty additives to lure unsuspecting children into a life of irresponsibility . . . “Tastes like a chocolate milkshake, only crunchy!” And, if on the rare occasions mothers would relent to their child’s pestering, the Coco Pops box was guarded under lock and key and rationed accordingly.

Those were the good ol’ days. But, those days are gone . . . times have changed. Now you can’t just pick up a box of Weet-Bix and know it’s going to be good for you . . . for one thing Weet-Bix contains gluten! That’s enough to make the most sensible, health-conscious person shake in their boots! Weet-Bix is not good for them. And, Coco Pops we’re now told, are a good source of B vitamins (that must be good for you!) . . . they’re low in saturated fat . . . a good source of iron and zinc and calcium . . . and contain no artificial colours or preservatives! Now, that sounds great!

What’s happened to the world? It’s got all mixed up! What happened to the days when *Weet-Bix* was good and *Coco Pops* was bad? When we knew where we stood? But, now, we can’t tell what’s bad and what’s good.

It’s enough to make anyone long for those good ol’ days . . . when there were only two types of people . . . Lutherans, and everybody else . . . and heaven help if a Roman Catholic should darken these pews let alone a heathen! Those days you could tell the good people from the bad . . . by their surname . . . and how they lived . . . and word soon got around about who was doing what . . . and you could make sure only genuine, card-carrying Lutherans became members of the church . . . they were the ones eating Weet-Bix . . . or porridge!

But, now, that’s all changed . . . we’ve let our guard down, haven’t we? . . . weeds have been sown among the wheat . . . they let anybody in these days! And they all look the same . . . they all live the same . . . how are we s’posed to tell the difference? Dressing up in your Sunday best used to be a sure sign . . . but, who does that anymore? Even attending worship regularly used to be a sure sign . . . but, who does *that*

anymore? Living a good life and doing good things in the community used to be a sure sign . . . but, *everyone* does that nowadays!

What a confused time we live in . . . a time when the things of the world encroach more and more on our faith life . . . things that used to be avoided at all costs are now considered normal . . . and we're being encouraged not to hide behind these four walls, but to be out in the world . . . mixing with the world . . . yes, mixing!

But, without those old, familiar expectations, obligations and systems in place that mixing can be a bit scary. Goodness, have you heard? They even allow women to be pastors now! And those gay and lesbian people . . . they're amongst us now! How do we know who's who? Who is wheat and who is weed? Because, we all know if you let weeds get a hold there's no stopping them . . . they'll take over! So, like good workers it's tempting to want to identify the weeds and pull them out . . . to keep ourselves separate from the weeds . . . that's assuming, of course, that *we* are the wheat!

What are we to do?

Well, perhaps we could start by listening to the head farmer. Or, maybe these days he would be called the Quality Control Officer. He says: "Wait! Don't worry about trying to separate out the weeds from the wheat. Don't worry about the judging" That's not our job. Our judgment is limited. We don't have the full picture. We'd just mess it up . . . again! Leave the harvesting to him . . . only he knows the right time and the right method. We need to trust his judgment.

Now, there's a radical idea: trusting God!

But, can he be trusted?

Well, he can be trusted enough to enter this mixed up world . . . to leave the security of his heavenly home . . . he can be trusted enough to speak the truth about us, but to love us nonetheless . . . to love us unconditionally . . . he can be trusted enough to take all our sin . . . all our guilt . . . all our shame, and go to the cross . . . he can be trusted enough to die for us . . . to die for all people . . . Weet-Bix eaters and Coco Pops eaters . . . he can be trusted enough to step into the fiery furnace of hell . . . so that we would not have to . . . he can be trusted enough to give us the gift of his Holy Spirit to dwell in us despite our weakness and failings. He was trustworthy enough that he was raised to life on the third day.

When all our other supports and ways of reckoning are stripped away all we have left is Jesus . . . and Jesus can be trusted. When we put our trust in him we don't have to worry about looking at ourselves and wondering if we're good enough . . . wondering, am I wheat, or am I weed? . . . we don't have to worry about measuring others for God's kingdom by the way they act, or speak, or dress . . . that's not our call to make . . . the Lord of the harvest has that in hand. We just have to worry about growing . . . and part of growing means learning to live with all sorts of people . . . Weet-Bix eaters, and Coco Pops eaters . . . maybe even some Froot Loops! But we leave the judging to God. Only he can see our hearts. He's got it all in hand.

In this mixed up world, where the things we once thought were certain are not anymore the best thing we can do is trust. God does the judging so we can get on with the growing . . . and the living . . . and working out all those acronyms . . .

Amen.

Pastor John Strelan
St John's Lutheran Church, Unley
Pentecost 8, 2026