

Dear Friend,

I don't often write letters these days, but I thought you might like to mull this one over.

A couple of months ago, this young bloke breezed into town. We came across him in the pub, just sipping his beer and chatting to, well, anyone. It didn't take long before we discovered he could spin a terrific yarn, and pretty soon he had an audience. Mind you, he starts out by talking about 'the kingdom of God.' God? The man upstairs?! What's that got to do with us lot, working the land? Then he lets slip that his dad was a carpenter. Well, I'm not sure that knocking a couple of bits of wood together qualifies him to know what it's like for us.

Then he goes on like this: "This farmer goes and plants wheat in his paddock...." and I thought, 'Maybe he does have a clue after all.' Then he says, "....but his cranky neighbour, just to spite him, goes in and plants weeds among the wheat." Well that hit the nail on the head. Just like the dozy coot next door who doesn't spray for Salvation Jane and expects us to cope with the infestation. Mind you, I'm not sure it's deliberate, but sometimes I wonder.

Well anyway, this Jesus bloke goes on to talk about the owner of the paddock telling his workers not to try and get rid of the weeds while the crop's growing, but separate them when it's harvested, and chuck the weed into the fire to be burnt. And all this takes place at the end of the age. Oh right. We're back to the kingdom of God bit. I got so interested in the farming stuff that I'd forgotten that.

But then I thought, "Maybe they're one and the same." I mean, maybe this Jesus fella is talking about here and now, right where we are. Then blow me down! He says just that! "The kingdom of God is among you, right now." What is this bloke? A mind reader? Then I got to thinking about him being here at all, in this town, in this pub. I guess I pray when I'm desperate, like when we need rain badly, so I sort of go to God once in a while, but I never really thought about God coming to *me*. To tell you the truth, the idea of a 'Kingdom' of God scares me a bit. Aren't kings supposed to be powerful and lop off your head if you look at them sideways? Yet here was this fresh faced young bloke telling us it's right under our noses, like it was wrapped up in him or something.

Then it occurred to me that maybe, just maybe, that's what it's all about. Here he is, way out here, having taken the time to come to **us**,

talking to us about stuff we do every day, as though he knows us already. I mean, *He* knows what weeds and pests mean to us when they infest a crop. *He* knows how hard it is to live with neighbours who make it hard for us. And I bet he knows too what it's like to seed when the rains are late and the forecast is that they might not come at all. Or what it's like to lose lambs to feral dogs or cattle to disease. And I reckon he understands the hurt and anger you feel when the banks give bad advice, line their own pockets, then threaten to foreclose when drought means you can't pay on time.

And then I *really* started thinking.

If kingdoms are wrapped in kings, then, judging by what this bloke did and said, God's kingdom could be about getting to know him and God, and trusting that he's got our backs.

The problem is, from what I've heard, doing that could get you into hot water. There are people out there who get really narked when they know you're a God-botherer. And if I take this on, I sure as heck don't want to be like them fellas on street corners who yell at you about God hating sinners and sending them to hell at the drop of a hat. Somehow that just doesn't fit with what I see in this Jesus bloke.

And would I just be trying to get on the gravy train, praying for stuff and expecting God to just drop it in my lap? That doesn't seem to cut ice either. After all, Jesus was talking about all the tough stuff we have to live with, that won't be dealt with until... until what? The end of an age? Or is it just when God knows its time to deal with it? Now we're back to this trust thing. It always seems to come back to this trust thing.

Maybe I don't know enough about God and Jesus yet to be able to trust him, I mean, *really* trust him. So that means I've got to get to know him better. And that means maybe I'd better talk to him a lot more.

Now I'm a practical person, and I don't go into things without a lot of thought. So maybe I'll take a bit of time to mull all this over and try and figure out what my next move should be. But I suspect I'm

meant to jump in feet first. I'm not sure there's any other way of doing it.

**Jesus hung around the town for a few weeks. Sometimes we'd find him at the coffee shop, sometimes on the verandah of the pub or in the beer garden, always spinning yarns and making us think.**

**So if this bloke turns up in your favourite watering hole, go up to him and introduce yourself. It'll be worth it.**

**Yours truly,  
Your mate, Charlie.**

\*\*\*\*\*

Lord,  
you came  
spinning yarns  
about widows and merchant's  
sons and seeds and harvest,  
pearls and buried treasure;  
threads spun out,  
to capture our hearts  
and weave magic  
into the carpet of our imagination  
go that we in turn might fly  
and spin a thousand and one yarns  
in your name.

## Yarn Spinner (A letter from Charlie)

(Matthew 13:24-30)



© Rev'd. Sr Sandra Sears  
June 2016