Date: 7/20/19

Title: Tomato Blight

Theme: Jesus can protect you from the blight of sin.

Object: Nice tomato from the garden; branches from tomato plant showing various stages of early blight, Daconil spray used to control blight.

Text: Matthew 13:24-30 (NIV) 24 Jesus told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. 25 But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away.

One of the good things about July and August is all the good fruits and vegetables that you can grow and eat.

We have been having some wonderful broccoli, zucchini, tomatoes, cucumbers, and green beans from the garden.

It is amazing how God created little seeds that grow into plants that produce wonderful fruits and vegetables.

But some things that grow in the garden are not good for the things that were planted there.

First of all there are weeds.

Weeds grow everywhere. You don’t have to plant weeds.

They come up and grow all by themselves, and if you don’t weed the garden, the weeds can choke out the plants that you planted.

Another pest in the garden is insects.

Bees are good for your garden because they can cross pollinate the crops you planted.

But Japanese Beetles, grubs, earwigs, stink bugs, and caterpillars eat the good plants that you planted.

One of the most annoying pests in my garden is tomato blight.

Tomato blight is a tiny little fungus that lives in the soil buried in the dirt of the garden.

It is a little plant that attaches itself to the leaves and stems of a tomato plant, and eventually destroys it.

When it rains, drops of water splash mud up onto the bottom leaves of the tomato plant, and the tomato blight fungus attaches itself to the tomato leaf and begins to grow there.

Would you like to see what the tomato blight fungus does to a tomato branch?

[Show blighted tomato branches in various stages of decay. Show good tomato, show Daconil spray that is supposed to control blight.]

Once the blight gets on the bottom leaves, it moves up the tomato plant.

The leaves turn black, curl up and fall off.

The fungus gets on the stems and can stop them from carrying nutrients up to the tomatoes.

Finally, the fungus attacks the tomatoes and makes black spots on them that makes them rot.

For many of the tomatoes, it is like a race to see if they can get ripe and get picked before the blight gets them and they get thrown away.

In the scripture we read today, Jesus said the kingdom of God was like a man that sowed good seed in his garden, but at night when everybody was sleeping, and enemy came along and sowed weeds.

Who do you think the enemy is that sowed weeds in God’s garden? (The devil)

And every time I see tomato blight on my tomato plants, I think of what the devil wants to do to us.

He wants to put the spots of sin on us and ruin us before Jesus comes back to pick us for His kingdom.

We need to make sure every day that we have protection from the blight of sin.

The Bible says: “Submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.”

Ask Jesus to help you do what is right. Stay close to Him. Do what Jesus would do.

How many want Jesus to protect them from the blight of sin?