

Are Jezebel's Weeds Dominating the Garden of Your Life?

If you've ever seen a wisteria vine, especially in bloom, you know its charms are almost impossible to resist. That's what drew me to purchase one about four years ago.

When I first saw the beautiful lavender flowers on the vines wrapped around an arbor in a neighbor's yard, I knew I had to have one.

I succumbed to the beauty of the blooms dangling from the vines. Mesmerized, I couldn't wait to have one growing over the arbor in my own backyard. After purchasing one at a local garden center, I hurried home to plant the woody, climbing vine. However, I soon discovered this invasive plant has a mind of its own.

In an article by Jeanne Rostaing called, "Wisteria: A Dangerous Beauty (Are You Tempted?)," she says, "You are not the first to succumb. Marco Polo was an early conquest. He brought wisteria seeds out of China in the 13th century. But you would be wise to take the time to get to know this beauty before you commit to her.

Like a Jezebel, she will steal your heart and then, after you are weakened and besotted with love, she will set about to dominate your garden and, if possible, your house. Take this caveat to heart: she is fully capable of attempting to murder your other plants."

While the wisteria has not taken over my house, it dominates my arbor and the corner of the backyard where it is planted. Even if I had known how much work this plant takes to maintain, I would still have planted it because I love working

in my yard. The resulting beauty of my labor is worth the efforts I expend.

On a recent Saturday, I was, once again, pruning my wisteria. Rostaing says, "Buy yourself a heavy-duty pair of pruning shears because, if you do plant wisteria, you will need to become a virtuoso pruner." I've definitely become a master at pruning this wild, but lovely vine.

As I pruned that day, I was once again amazed at how fast the vines had curled around my fence posts, the wooden swing hanging underneath my arbor and everything else close enough for its tentacles to grasp. Snipping away with my pruning shears, I began to compare my vine with sin.

Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Little things we might not consider sin—cheating on our taxes, not speaking up when we receive too much change back at the store, not telling the whole truth, judging others because they're different from us, envying what others have or the way they look, and the list could go on—but if not kept in check, they can become as invasive as the wisteria vines threatening to take over my yard.

If we avoid our faults, we can't deal with them. When we face our personal issues with honesty, seeking God's help with the pruning, we can live a life pleasing to Him.

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