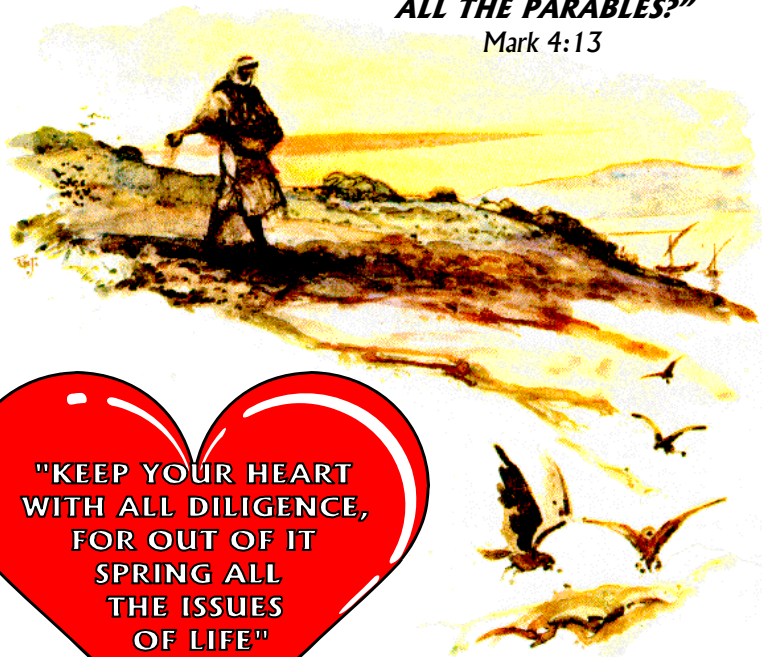


THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

***"DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND
THIS PARABLE?
HOW THEN WILL YOU UNDERSTAND
ALL THE PARABLES?"***

Mark 4:13



**"KEEP YOUR HEART
WITH ALL DILIGENCE,
FOR OUT OF IT
SPRING ALL
THE ISSUES
OF LIFE"**

Prov. 4:23

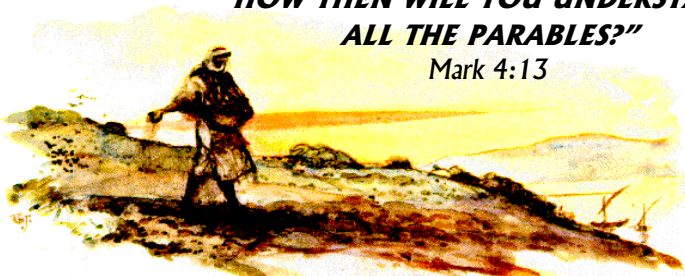
By

Pastor Randy Shupe

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

***"DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND
THIS PARABLE?
HOW THEN WILL YOU UNDERSTAND
ALL THE PARABLES?"***

Mark 4:13



**"KEEP YOUR HEART
WITH ALL DILIGENCE,
FOR OUT OF IT
SPRING ALL
THE ISSUES
OF LIFE"**

Prov. 4:23

By

Pastor Randy Shupe

**COPYRIGHTED 2003
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**



**"DO YOU
NOT
UNDERSTAND
THIS PARABLE?
HOW THEN
WILL YOU UNDERSTAND
ALL THE PARABLES?"**

Mark 4:13

"AND HE SAID TO THEM, "DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND THIS PARABLE? HOW THEN WILL YOU UNDERSTAND ALL THE PARABLES? THE SOWER SOWS THE WORD. AND THESE ARE THE ONES BY THE WAYSIDE WHERE THE WORD IS SOWN.

WHEN THEY HEAR, SATAN COMES IMMEDIATELY AND TAKES AWAY THE WORD THAT WAS SOWN IN THEIR HEARTS. THESE LIKEWISE ARE THE ONES SOWN ON STONY GROUND WHO, WHEN THEY HEAR THE WORD, IMMEDIATELY RECEIVE IT WITH GLADNESS; AND THEY HAVE NO ROOT IN THEMSELVES, AND SO ENDURE ONLY FOR A TIME.

AFTERWARD, WHEN TRIBULATION OR PERSECUTION ARISES FOR THE WORD'S SAKE, IMMEDIATELY THEY STUMBLE. NOW THESE ARE THE ONES SOWN AMONG THORNS; THEY ARE THE ONES WHO HEAR THE WORD, AND THE CARES OF THIS WORLD, THE DECEITFULNESS OF RICHES, AND THE DESIRES FOR OTHER THINGS ENTERING IN CHOKE THE WORD, AND IT BECOMES UNFRUITFUL. BUT THESE ARE THE ONES SOWN ON GOOD GROUND, THOSE WHO HEAR THE WORD, ACCEPT IT, AND BEAR FRUIT: SOME THIRTYFOLD, SOME SIXTY, AND SOME A HUNDRED." Mark 4:113-20

**THE PARABLE
OF THE SOWER**



***“DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND
THIS PARABLE?
HOW THEN WILL YOU UNDERSTAND
ALL THE PARABLES?”***

Mark 4:13

Jesus taught forty parables about the Kingdom of God. He places great significance upon this one parable. It is the key to the ability to understand all of the remaining Kingdom parables (Mark 4:13). Before we delve in to the Parable of the Sower, we might consider why Jesus spoke in parables at all. The Master answers that question for us:

**“AND THE DISCIPLES CAME AND SAID TO HIM,
‘WHY DO YOU SPEAK TO THEM IN PARABLES?’
HE ANSWERED AND SAID TO THEM,
‘BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO YOU TO KNOW THE
MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, BUT TO THEM
IT HAS NOT BEEN GIVEN. FOR WHOEVER HAS, TO HIM
MORE WILL BE GIVEN, AND HE WILL HAVE ABUNDANCE;
BUT WHOEVER DOES NOT HAVE, EVEN WHAT HE HAS
WILL BE TAKEN AWAY FROM HIM.**

**THEREFORE I SPEAK TO THEM IN PARABLES, BECAUSE
SEEING THEY DO NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY DO NOT
HEAR, NOR DO THEY UNDERSTAND. AND IN THEM THE
PROPHECY OF ISAIAH IS FULFILLED, WHICH SAYS:**

**‘HEARING YOU WILL HEAR AND SHALL NOT
UNDERSTAND, AND SEEING YOU WILL SEE AND NOT
PERCEIVE; FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS GROWN
DULL. THEIR EARS ARE HARD OF HEARING, AND THEIR
EYES THEY HAVE CLOSED, LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH
THEIR EYES AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, LEST THEY
SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND TURN,
SO THAT I SHOULD HEAL THEM.’**

**BUT BLESSED ARE YOUR EYES FOR THEY SEE, AND YOUR
EARS FOR THEY HEAR; FOR ASSUREDLY, I SAY TO YOU
THAT MANY PROPHETS AND RIGHTEOUS MEN DESIRED TO
SEE WHAT YOU SEE, AND DID NOT SEE IT, AND TO HEAR
WHAT YOU HEAR, AND DID NOT HEAR IT.”**

Matt. 3:10-17

It is quite sobering to realize that Jesus spoke in parables to disguise the truth to large segments of His first covenant people pertaining to the Kingdom of God. God had passed judgment upon them because they had allowed their heart to grow dull, their ears to become hard of hearing, and their eyes, they had closed. simply put, they had become un-teachable. Therefore, God saw to it that when Jesus taught about the Kingdom of God, the un-teachable would remain untaught.



**“THEREFORE I SAY
UNTO YOU, THE
KINGDOM OF GOD
WILL BE TAKEN FROM
YOU AND GIVEN TO A
NATION BEARING THE
FRUITS OF IT...NOW
WHEN THE CHIEF
PRIESTS AND THE
PHARISEES HEARD HIS
PARABLES, THEY
PERCEIVED THAT HE
WAS SPEAKING TO
THEM...”**

Matt.21:43-45

The above proclamation by Jesus upon the religious leaders of the Jews depicts the removal of the Kingdom of God from their entrusted care. Notice it is given to a people who will bear forth the fruits of the Kingdom. To bring forth the fruits of the Kingdom one will need to understand the mysteries of the Kingdom. Jesus grants this ability to His disciples which includes us today:

**“TO YOU IT HAS BEEN GRANTED TO KNOW
THE MYSTERY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD;
BUT TO THOSE WHO ARE OUTSIDE,
ALL THINGS COME IN PARABLES, SO THAT SEEING THEY MAY
NOT PERCEIVE, AND HEARING THEY MAY HEAR AND NOT
UNDERSTAND; LEST THEY SHOULD TURN,
AND THEIR SINS BE FORGIVEN THEM.”**

Mark 4:11-12

“AND HE SAID TO THEM, ‘TO YOU IT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO KNOW THE MYSTERY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD; BUT TO THOSE WHO ARE OUTSIDE, ALL THINGS COME IN PARABLES, “SO THAT “SEEING THEY MAY SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE, AND HEARING THEY MAY HEAR AND NOT UNDERSTAND; LEST THEY SHOULD TURN, AND THEIR SINS BE FORGIVEN THEM.’ AND HE SAID TO THEM, ‘DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND THIS PARABLE? HOW THEN WILL YOU UNDERSTAND ALL THE PARABLES?’ ”

Mark 4:11-13

We can begin to see that Jesus is setting the Parable of the Sower as the primary source for unlocking all the mysteries contained within the Kingdom of God parables. Although it has been granted to us to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, we cannot grasp them apart from first understanding the message of the Parable of the Sower.”

Over the years of ministry, in which I have observed the behavior of God’s people, it has been through the Parable of the Sower that I have gained understanding of those things which I have seen. Apart from the knowledge of the Parable of the Sower, it is quite confusing and puzzling to grasp how God’s people can all hear the same word but not produce the same results.

The Parable of the Sower is not just a message pertaining to the ability of the Word of God to bring salvation (conversion via the new birth). This is just the initial experience with the principles contained within the Parable of the Sower. It goes much deeper:

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER IS AT WORK WHENEVER AND HOWEVER THE WORD OF GOD IS SOWN INTO THE HEART, BOTH IN BELIEVERS AND UNBELIEVERS



The Parable of the Sower depicts four heart attitudes toward the hearing of the Word of God. Only one-in-four brings forth the fruit of the Kingdom.

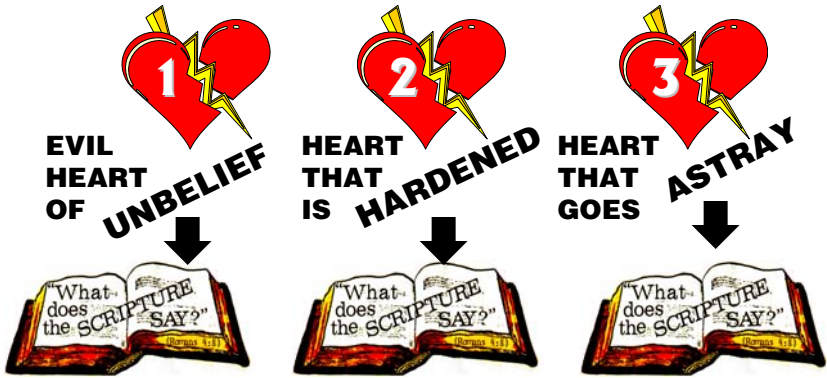


HEART DISEASE TOP KILLER

"Heart disease remains by far the nation's biggest killer, taking a life every 32 seconds, the American Heart Association said yesterday..."

In light of the above statistic, there is a great emphasis being placed upon guarding our heart in the natural or physical realm. There is a greater need for guarding our heart in the spiritual realm. This is the moral to the story of the Parable of the Sower. It contains a threefold depiction of:

SPIRITUAL HEART DISEASE



What is portrayed above as a synopsis of the heart disease found in the Parable of the Sower is also found in Paul's account of the children of Israel in the wilderness. God's people have always been vulnerable to Satan's heart attacks.

"THEREFORE, AS THE HOLY SPIRIT SAYS: 'TODAY, IF YOU WILL HEAR HIS VOICE, DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS IN THE REBELLION, IN THE DAY OF TRIAL IN THE WILDERNESS, WHERE YOUR FATHERS TESTED ME, PROVED ME, AND SAW MY WORKS FORTY YEARS. THEREFORE I WAS ANGRY WITH THAT GENERATION, AND SAID, 'THEY ALWAYS GO ASTRAY IN THEIR HEART, AND THEY HAVE NOT KNOWN MY WAYS.' SO I SWORE IN MY WRATH, 'THEY SHALL NOT ENTER MY REST.' BEWARE, BRETHREN, LEST THERE BE IN ANY OF YOU AN EVIL HEART OF UNBELIEF IN DEPARTING FROM THE LIVING GOD; BUT EXHORT ONE ANOTHER DAILY, WHILE IT IS CALLED TODAY, LEST ANY OF YOU BE HARDENED THROUGH THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN.'"

Heb. 3:7-13

"THE CARES AND ANXIETIES OF THE WORLD, THE DISTRACTIONS, PLEASURES, DELIGHTS, GLAMOR OF RICHES, THE CRAVING, PASSIONATE DESIRE FOR OTHER THINGS CREEP IN..."

Mark 4:19 Amplified

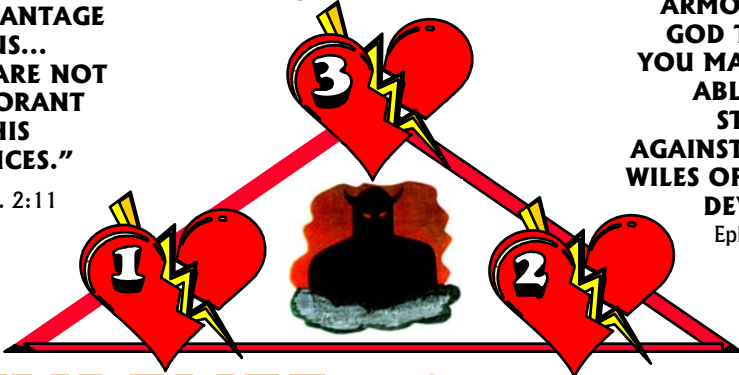
ENSNARED

"LEST SATAN SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF US... WE ARE NOT IGNORANT OF HIS DEVICES."

2 Cor. 2:11

"PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO STAND AGAINST THE WILES OF THE DEVIL."

Eph.6:11



UNBELIEF

OFFENDED

"WHEN THEY HEAR THE WORD... SATAN COMES IMMEDIATELY AND TAKES AWAY THE MESSAGE WHICH WAS SOWN IN THEM..."

Mark 4:15
Amplified

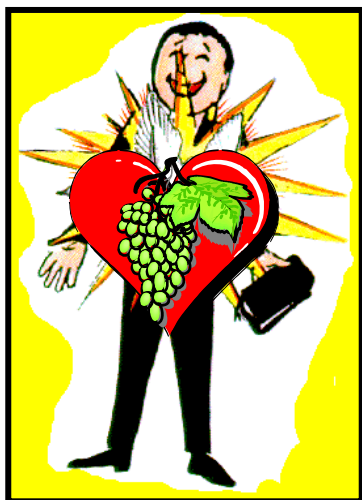
"WHEN TROUBLE OR PERSECUTION COMES ON ACCOUNT OF THE WORD, THEY IMMEDIATELY ARE OFFENDED, DISPLEASED, INDIGNANT, RESENTFUL, WITHDRAW... FALL AWAY..."

Mark 4:17
Amplified

**THESE ARE
THE ONES
SOWN ON**



GOOD GROUND



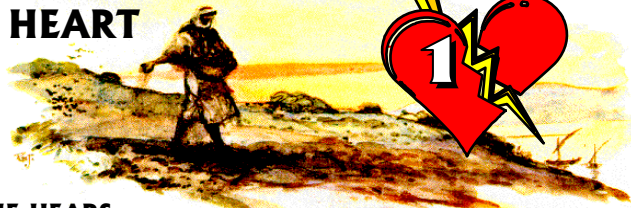
**“...WHO HEAR THE WORD
AND RECEIVE AND ACCEPT
AND WELCOME IT AND
BEAR FRUIT-SOME THIRTY
TIMES AS MUCH AS WAS
SOWN, SOME SIXTY TIMES
AS MUCH, AND SOME A
HUNDRED TIMES AS MUCH.”**

Mark 4:20 Amplified

It is important to remember Jesus depicts that only one-in-four people, who hear the same word, will fulfill the mandate to produce Kingdom fruit. If you will cultivate this reality throughout your Christian walk, you will avoid the pitfall of the discouragement of always being out-numbered. The multitudes of the children of Israel were displeasing to God (1 Cor.10:5). I fear that the same testimony shall be inherited by multitudes of professing Christians.

In the remainder of this booklet, we shall ponder each of the four hearts. We will deal with the three forms of Satan's heart attacks first. We will conclude with looking at what is depicted above as the antidote for spiritual heart disease.

THE HEART



“WHEN ANYONE HEARS THE WORD OF THE KINGDOM, AND DOES NOT UNDERSTAND IT, THEN THE WICKED ONE COMES AND SNATCHES AWAY WHAT WAS SOWN IN THE HEART. THIS IS HE WHO RECEIVED SEED BY THE WAYSIDE.” Matthew 13:19

OF **UNBELIEF**

Notice, the above states the seed to be a particular aspect of the Word of God. It is the Word of the Kingdom. There is much more to the Kingdom of God than the concept Jesus presented in John Chapter Three of seeing and entering the Kingdom by means of the new birth. Remember, Jesus taught forty parables describing the Kingdom of God. In two-thirds of those parables Jesus presented the right and wrong use of money and possessions. When some of these principles of the Kingdom are sown in the heart of God's people, there is the great potential of becoming an unbelieving believer. By this I mean that we can believe in Jesus, but then not believe all that He says to us. We believe some things, but not all things. Thus we become an unbelieving believer. Consider this sober warning:

**“FOR MOSES TRULY SAID TO THE FATHERS,
‘THE LORD YOUR GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET
LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN.
HIM YOU SHALL HEAR IN ALL THINGS,
WHATEVER HE SAYS TO YOU.
AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS THAT EVERY SOUL WHO
WILL NOT HEAR THAT PROPHET
SHALL BE UTTERLY DESTROYED
FROM AMONG THE PEOPLE.”**

Acts 3:22-24

The context of these words clearly reveal that Jesus is that prophet. All of the words of the Kingdom He spoke in these parables must be considered among those things that we are expected to hear and believe! We are not to have selective hearing when it comes to the words of Jesus.

Let us consider just two concepts that Jesus taught pertaining to His people. Judge whether you suffer from being an unbelieving believer with selective hearing:



“...THE KINGDOM ... SHALL BE LIKE TEN VIRGINS... TO MEET THE BRIDGROOM... FIVE WERE WISE, AND FIVE WERE FOOLISH... THE BRIDGROOM CAME, AND THOSE WHO WERE READY WENT IN WITH HIM TO THE WEDDING; AND THE DOOR WAS SHUT. AFTERWARD THE OTHER VIRGINS CAME ALSO, SAYING, ‘LORD, LORD, OPEN TO US! BUT HE ANSWERED AND SAID, ‘ASSUREDLY, I SAY TO YOU (FOOLISH VIRGINS) I DO NOT KNOW (RECOGNIZE) YOU.’”

Matthew 13:1-13



Jesus says they were all virgins espoused to the Bridegroom. However, only five virgins were ready for the wedding when the Bridegroom came. Jesus, the Bridegroom in this parable, takes the wise virgins and leaves behind the foolish.

He tells the foolish that He does not “know” (recognize) them. The moral to the parable is stated in telling the foolish virgins to watch pertaining to the coming of the Son of Man as the Bridegroom. Unbelieving believers dismiss these words of Jesus as not being a parable for the church. How can we embrace the theology of Paul in which the church is “espoused to one husband as chaste virgins (2 Cor.11:2), and then reject the parable of the return of the Bridegroom for His espoused virgins? This is a word of the Kingdom dealing with the subject of the rapture!

It is more popular and soothing to believe that the rapture will encompass all virgins that have experienced the new birth. The Parable of the Sower comes into play when the word of the Kingdom stands in opposition to our preconceived ideas! Satan comes and immediately takes away the word sown through our unbelief.



**“...YOU ALSO BE READY, FOR THE SON OF
MAN IS COMING AT AN HOUR YOU DO NOT
EXPECT...LORD, DO YOU SPEAK THIS PARABLE
ONLY TO US, OR TO ALL PEOPLE?...**

**BLESSED IS THAT SERVANT WHOM
THE MASTER WILL FIND SO DOING**

(RULING OVER HIS HOUSEHOLD

AS A GOOD STEWARD).

**BUT IF THAT SERVANT
SAYS IN HIS HEART,**

**“MY MASTER IS DELAYING HIS COMING, AND
BEGINS TO BEAT THE MENSERVANTS AND
MAIDSERVANTS, AND TO EAT AND BE DRUNK,
THE MASTER OF THAT SERVANT WILL COME ON
A DAY WHEN HE IS NOT LOOKING...
IN AN HOUR WHEN HE IS NOT AWARE,
AND WILL...**

**APPOINT HIM HIS PORTION WITH
THE UNBELIEVERS.”**

Luke 12:40-46

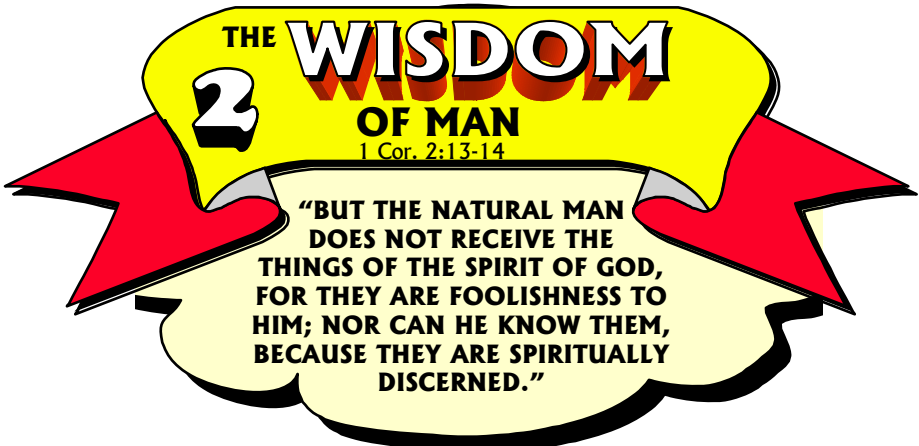
Here is another parable similar to the one we just examined. Perhaps Jesus is defining what kind of conduct will constitute a foolish virgin. The above is a parable about the master's servant. Note that because of his evil conduct, he receives his portion with the unbelievers. Does that not imply that he is a believer?

Doctrines such as “once saved, always saved”, or as it is often called, “unconditional eternal security”, cause God's people to be unbelieving believers toward Kingdom truths such as Jesus presents above. To be “cut in two” and to “receive your portion with the unbelievers” does not harmonize with a position of unconditional eternal security. What Jesus presents is very conditional. Neither does it harmonize by concluding that this kind of person “was never truly saved.” Jesus said:

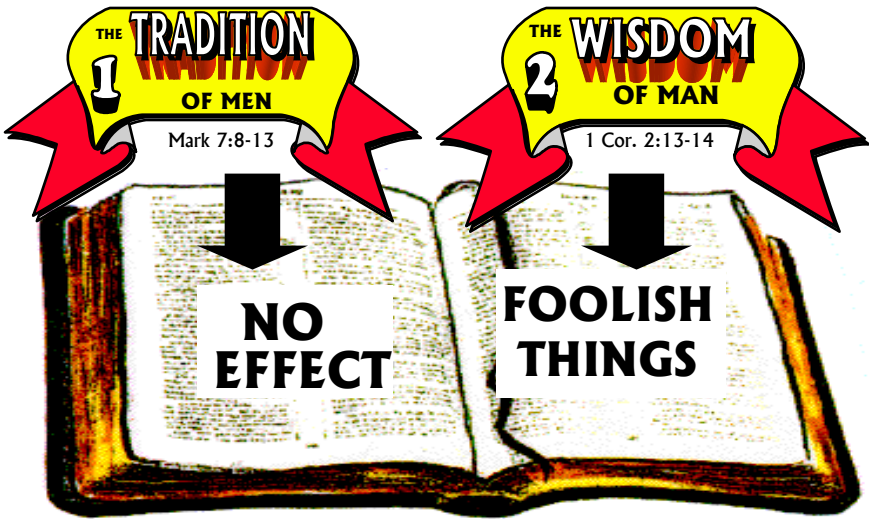
- 1. HE IS THE MASTER OF THAT SERVANT...**
- 2. HE GIVES HIM HIS PORTION WITH
THE UNBELIEVERS...**



There are two primary sources from which unbelief germinate into our hearts:



UNBELIEF



**“GIVEN
SUFFICIENT TIME,
CHERISHED
TRADITIONS
BECOME DOGMATIC
BELIEFS”**

**(French Historian,
Armaury DeReincourt)**

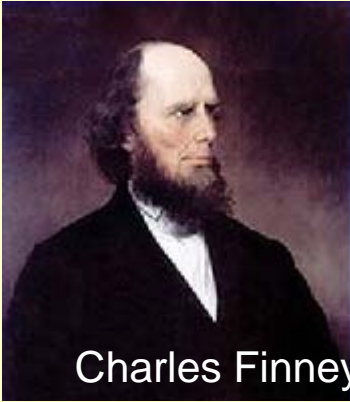
**“REASONING AND
LOGIC ARE NOT THE
FOUNDATIONS OF
FAITH BUT RATHER
THOSE OF
UNBELIEF”**

**(American Revivalist,
Charles G. Finney)**

The tradition of men causes the Word of God to have no effect. In other words, there will be no Kingdom fruit produced.

Tradition is always 180 degrees opposite of what God says. For instance, Paul tells us “every man praying or prophesying having his head covered, dishonors his head” (1 Cor.11:4) The Jewish man covers his head to pray. The Word of God becomes of no effect.

The same is true for the wisdom of man which considers the things taught by the Holy Spirit to be foolishness. In other words, spiritual things do not appeal to reason and logic, the foundation of the wisdom of man. Therefore, if spiritual things cannot be reasoned to the satisfaction of human understanding, they are rejected. Consider Charles G. Finney’s comments on this subject:



Charles Finney

“God presents facts without explaining them, leaving faith to lay hold upon and rest in them. Many of these facts we can never comprehend...It is therefore indispensable that we should be trained in the very beginning of our Christian course to rest in the facts ...too much pains should not be taken to explain and philosophize on facts lest by so doing you leave the impression that everything must be explained before it is received. In my own experience I have found that I have greatly injured my growth by insisting too much on understanding everything before I would receive it.

Now I have observed...that this class of persons have no real faith. Their confidence is not at all in God, and the Bible, or in any of its statements, simply because God has declared them. They are pleased with and confide in their own speculations...and have no true confidence in God’s Word.” (Reflections on Revival- Charles G. Finney)

For the sake of illustration, let us ponder the subject of speaking in tongues. This is a supernatural manifestation from God. It is not subject to reason and logic. Paul tells us that when one prays in a tongue that his understanding is unfruitful (1 Cor.14:14). It is by faith that we understand that in the Spirit a believer speaks mysteries to God Himself that are not understood by the believer (1 Cor.14:2). These are facts of faith, not of reason/logic. It becomes as gibberish to our understanding in the natural realm. Multitudes of God’s people reject this gift because of dependence upon reasoning and logic. As Paul says, “The things of the Spirit are foolishness to them” (1 Cor.2:14). He goes on to say, “Neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

This same doctrine also suffers from the tradition of men. Multitudes are taught that speaking in tongues is not for today. Let us test that theology by the words of the prophet Jesus:

“GO INTO ALL THE WORLD AND PREACH THE GOSPEL...HE WHO BELIEVES AND IS BAPTIZED WILL BE SAVED...AND THESE SIGNS WILL FOLLOW THOSE WHO BELIEVE...IN MY NAME THEY WILL... SPEAK WITH NEW TONGUES...”

Mark 16:16-17



“GO INTO ALL THE WORLD AND PREACH THE GOSPEL...HE WHO BELIEVES AND IS BAPTIZED WILL BE SAVED...AND THESE SIGNS WILL FOLLOW THOSE WHO BELIEVE...IN MY NAME THEY WILL... SPEAK WITH NEW TONGUES...”

Mark 16:16-17



“REPENT AND LET EVERY ONE OF YOU BE BAPTIZED...AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. FOR THE PROMISE IS TO YOU AND TO YOUR CHILDREN, AND TO ALL WHO ARE AFAR OFF, AS MANY AS THE LORD OUR GOD WILL CALL.”

Acts 2:38-39

Jesus states that it is a sign that will follow all who believe in the gospel. Why do so many of God's people accept the mandate to go preach the gospel to the whole world, but then reject what is to be a sign following the message? These too must be classified as unbelieving believers. Consider above how Peter perceived the promise of the Father which was poured out at Pentecost. Did he believe it was just for them?

Notice how exactly Peter carries out the great commission Jesus gave in Mark 16. He does not practice the great omission of tongues as in today's theology. He first calls people to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. This is exactly what Jesus told them to do in the great commission. They were to preach the gospel and he who believes is to be baptized unto salvation. Peter follows with the other half of the great commission, the receiving of the Holy Spirit which is the promise of the Father. This is the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-8, Acts 2:33,38,39).

Finally, consider Peter teaches that, this gift is “for you, your children, all who are afar off, as many as the lord our god will call”. Jesus said this sign will follow those who believe. If we believe in Jesus, we should also believe in the gift of tongues that Jesus and Peter said was a gift for all believers. I pray this illustration is helpful to see the danger of being an unbelieving believer with selective hearing.

“AFTERWARD HE (JESUS) APPEARED TO THE ELEVEN AS THEY SAT AT THE TABLE; AND HE REBUKED THEIR UNBELIEF AND HARDNESS OF HEART, BECAUSE THEY DID NOT BELIEVE THOSE WHO HAD SEEN HIM AFTER HE HAD RISEN.”

Mark 16:14



The above is a solid rebuke by Jesus of this kind of unbelief. Back up in this chapter and you will see that Jesus testified of His resurrection by two angels, by Mary Magdalene, and by two disciples on the road to Emmaus. The scripture sums these events up with, “...but they did not believe them either” (vs.13).

In the account of John’s gospel, we find the account of doubting Thomas:

“BUT THOMAS, ONE OF THE TWELVE, WAS NOT WITH THEM WHEN JESUS CAME. THE OTHER DISCIPLES THEREFORE SAID TO HIM, WE HAVE SEEN THE LORD”. BUT HE SAID TO THEM, “UNLESS I SEE IN HIS HANDS THE PRINT OF THE NAILS, AND PUT MY FINGER INTO THE PRINT OF THE NAILS, AND PUT MY HAND INTO HIS SIDE, I WILL NOT BELIEVE”....AFTER EIGHT DAYS...JESUS CAME...HE SAID TO THOMAS...DO NOT BE UNBELIEVING BUT BELIEVING...BLESSSED ARE THOSE WHO HAVE NOT SEEN AND YET HAVE BELIEVED.”

John 20:24-29 excerpts

The Holy Spirit, in the four gospel accounts, has placed great emphasis upon the prevailing atmosphere of unbelief among the disciples. The church of today, for the most part, has picked right up where the disciples left off. This is quite evidenced by the great omission of selected parts of the great commission such as speaking in tongues as a sign that is to follow those who believe.

When Jesus begins telling the crucial Parable of the Sower, the first thing on His mind is this evil heart of unbelief that men will exhibit towards the contents of the Word of God. This stern admonition of Paul is still applicable to the saints today:

**“BEWARE, BRETHREN,
LEST THERE BE IN ANY OF YOU
AN EVIL HEART OF UNBELIEF...
DO NOT HARDEN YOUR HEARTS AS IN THE REBELLION...
FOR WHO HAVING HEARD, (THEN) REBELLED?...
SO WE SEE THAT THEY COULD NOT ENTER IN
BECAUSE OF UNBELIEF.”**

Heb.3:12-19 excerpts

THE OFFENDED HEART



“...THE ONES ON STONY GROUND ARE THOSE WHO, WHEN THEY HEAR THE WORD, AT ONCE RECEIVE AND ACCEPT AND WELCOME IT WITH JOY;...THEY ENDURE FOR A LITTLE WHILE; THEN WHEN TROUBLE OR PERSECUTION ARISES ON ACCOUNT OF THE WORD, THEY IMMEDIATELY ARE OFFENDED (BECOME DISPLEASED, INDIGNANT, RESENTFUL), AND THEY STUMBLE AND FALL AWAY.”

Mark 4: 16-17 Amplified

The second heart condition (attitude) Jesus describes upon the hearing of God’s word is the offended heart. Notice that initially the word is received with joy, but afterward, when trouble or persecution arises because of the Word of God, an offense is birthed in this believer’s heart.

How is it that the Word of God can be both a joy and an offense? We only need to look at Jesus himself:

“THE CHIEF CORNER-STONE”



“A ROCK OF OFFENSE”

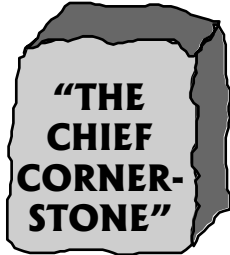
“... CHOSEN BY GOD... A CHIEF CORNERSTONE, ELECT, PRECIOUS... THE STONE THE BUILDERS REJECTED... A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE.” THEY STUMBLE, BEING DISOBEDIENT TO THE WORD OF GOD.”

1 Peter 2:4-8

AS
SAVIOR
OF MY SOUL...

AS
LORD
OF MY LIFE...

HE IS



"THE ROCK OF
MY SALVATION..."

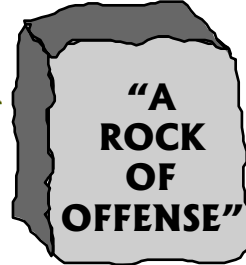
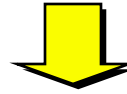


WILL
BRING

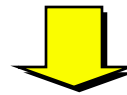
COMFORT

TO ME...

HE CAN BECOME



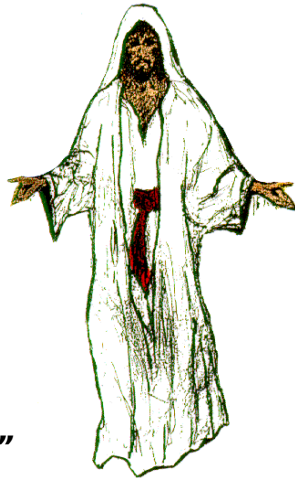
"A STONE OF
STUMBLING..."



WILL

CONFRONT

ME...



Just as the parable of the Sower does not deal solely with the saved and the unsaved, neither does this concept from 1st Peter. Jesus intends to have a two-fold ministry in our lives. As the Chief Cornerstone, He is our Savior. However, Jesus did not come just in this role. He also is to be the Lord of our lives. In this capacity, He will often confront us with the Word and not merely comfort us with it. Herein lies the understanding of this second heart. Here is the one who initially receives the Word (Jesus as Savior) with joy, but later on, being confronted with a call to Lordship, becomes offended at the cost of embracing the Word.

The mandate to “rightly divide the word of truth”

(2 Tim.2:15), finds its best fulfillment in realizing that God has placed a delicate balance in the Bible of:



“RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH”

“WORDS THAT COMFORT and WORDS THAT CONFRONT.”

Let us consider a few comparisons of Paul’s epistles to illustrate this truth:

THE BOOK OF HEBREWS:

WORDS THAT

COMFORT

“LET US COME BOLDLY TO THE THRONE OF GRACE, THAT WE MAY OBTAIN MERCY AND FIND GRACE TO HELP IN TIME OF NEED

(4:16) “THAT WE MIGHT HAVE STRONG

CONSOLATION...TO LAY HOLD OF THE HOPE SET BEFORE US. THIS HOPE WE HAVE AS AN ANCHOR OF THE SOUL, BOTH SURE AND STEADFAST...”

(6:18-19) “FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE”

(8:12)...

HE HIMSELF HAS SAID, I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU”. SO WE MAY BOLDLY SAY: “THE LORD IS MY HELPER; I WILL NOT FEAR...”

Hebrews 13:5-6

WORDS THAT

CONFRONT

“WE MUST GIVE THE MORE EARNEST HEED TO THE THINGS WE HAVE HEARD, LEST WE DRIFT AWAY...HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE IF WE NEGLECT SO GREAT A SALVATION...”

(2:1,3)

BWARE, BRETHREN, LEST THERE BE IN ANY OF YOU AN EVIL HEART OF UNBELIEF IN DEPARTING FROM THE LIVING GOD...LEST YOU BE HARDENED THROUGH THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN” (3:12-13) ...NOT FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER...”

(10:25)

“...LAYING ASIDE EVERY WEIGHT AND THE SIN... LET US RUN WITH ENDURANCE THE RACE THAT IS SET BEFORE US...”

Hebrews 12:1

THE BOOK OF ROMANS:

WORDS THAT

COMFORT

"...HAVING BEEN JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, WE HAVE PEACE WITH GOD THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THROUGH WHOM ALSO WE HAVE ACCESS BY FAITH INTO THIS GRACE IN WHICH WE STAND, AND REJOICE IN HOPE OF THE GLORY OF GOD"

(5:1-2) "FOR WHEN WE WERE STILL WITHOUT STRENGTH, ...CHRIST DIED FOR THE UNGODLY...GOD

DEMONSTRATES HIS OWN LOVE TOWARD US, IN THAT WHILE WE WERE STILL

SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US...HAVING BEEN JUSTIFIED BY HIS BLOOD, WE SHALL BE SAVED FROM WRATH

THROUGH HIM...HAVING BEEN RECONCILED, WE SHALL BE SAVED BY HIS LIFE." (5:6-10)

"...THOSE WHO RECEIVE ABUNDANCE OF GRACE AND OF THE GIFT OF

RIGHTEOUSNESS WILL REIGN IN LIFE THROUGH THE ONE, JESUS CHRIST." (5:17-18)

"THERE IS THEREFORE NOW NO CONDEMNATION TO THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST JESUS..." (8:1) **"LIKEWISE THE**

SPIRIT HELPS IN OUR WEAKNESSES...HE MAKES INTERCESSION FOR THE SAINTS ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF

GOD." (8:26-27) **"WE KNOW THAT ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD TO THOSE WHO LOVE GOD..."**

(8:28)

WORDS THAT

CONFRONT

"THEREFORE DO NOT LET SIN REIGN IN YOUR MORTAL BODY, THAT YOU SHOULD OBEY IT IN ITS LUSTS. AND DO NOT PRESENT YOUR MEMBERS AS INSTRUMENTS OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS TO SIN, BUT PRESENT... YOUR MEMBERS AS INSTRUMENTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS TO GOD."

(6:12-13)

"...JOINT HEIRS WITH CHRIST IF INDEED WE SUFFER WITH HIM..."

(8:17)

"BRETHREN...PRESENT YOUR BODIES A LIVING SACRIFICE, HOLY

ACCEPTABLE TO GOD, ... AND DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THIS

WORLD, BUT BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND..." (12:1-2)

"LET US WALK PROPERLY...NOT IN REVELRY AND

DRUNKENNESS, NOT IN LICENTIOUSNESS AND LEWDNESS, NOT IN

STRIFE AND ENVY. BUT PUT ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND

MAKE NO PROVISION FOR THE FLESH, TO FULFILL ITS LUSTS."

(13:13-14).

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS:

WORDS THAT

COMFORT

"...BLESSED BE THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO HAS BLESSED US WITH EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING ... HE CHOSE US IN HIM...PREDESTINED US TO ADOPTION AS SONS BY JESUS CHRIST TO HIMSELF...HE HAS MADE US ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED...IN HIM WE HAVE REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS....YOU WERE SEALED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE WHO IS THE GUARANTEE OF OUR INHERITANCE..."

(1:3-14 EXCERPTS)

GOD, WHO IS RICH IN MERCY, BECAUSE OF HIS GREAT LOVE WITH WHICH HE HAS LOVED US...MADE US ALIVE TOGETHER WITH CHRIST...MADE US TO SIT IN THE HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST JESUS...FOR BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED THROUGH FAITH... IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD..."

(2:4-8 EXCERPTS)

"IN CHRIST JESUS YOU WHO ONCE WERE FAR OFF HAVE BEEN MADE NEAR BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST." (2:13) THROUGH HIM WE HAVE ACCESS BY ONE SPIRIT TO THE FATHER."

(2:18)

WORDS THAT

CONFRONT

"...YOU SHOULD NO LONGER WALK AS THE REST OF THE GENTILES WALK..." (4:17)

"...IF INDEED YOU HAVE HEARD HIM AND HAVE BEEN TAUGHT BY HIM...PUT OFF CONCERNING YOUR FORMER CONDUCT, THE OLD MAN WHICH GROWS CORRUPT ACCORDING TO THE DECEITFUL LUSTS, AND BE RENEWED IN THE SPIRIT OF YOUR MIND, AND PUT ON THE NEW MAN...PUT AWAY LYING, EACH ONE SPEAK THE TRUTH...GIVE NO PLACE TO THE DEVIL...

LET NO CORRUPT COMMUNICATION PROCEED OUT OF YOUR MOUTH...AND DO NOT GRIEVE THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD BY WHOM YOU WERE SEALED FOR THE DAY OF REDEMPTION..."

(4:21-30 EXCERPTS)

"FORNICATION AND ALL UNCLEANNESS OR COVETOUSNESS, LET IT NOT EVEN BE NAMED AMONG YOU AS FITTING FOR SAINTS; NEITHER FILTHINESS, NOR FOOLISH TALKING, NOR COURSE JESTING, WHICH ARE NOT FITTING..."

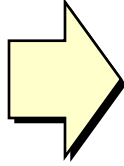
(5:3-4)

The examples given on the last three pages are applicable to any of the New Testament epistles. It is the specific manner in which the Holy Spirit authored the Word of God. The context, when a word of comfort is found, often is surrounded by its counter-part, a word that confronts. Consider this example from Peter:

WORDS THAT COMFORT

**“WHEN THEY HEAR
THE WORD, THEY
IMMEDIATELY
RECEIVE IT WITH
GLADNESS”**

Mark 4:16 Amp.

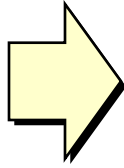


**“THEREFORE GIRD UP
THE LOINS OF YOUR
MIND, BE SOBER, AND
REST YOUR HOPE FULLY
UPON THE GRACE THAT
IS BROUGHT TO YOU
AT THE REVELATION OF
JESUS CHRIST;**

WORDS THAT CONFRONT

**“IMMEDIATELY
THEY ARE OFFENDED,
DISPLEASED,
INDIGNANT,
RESENTFUL...”**

Mark 4:17 Amp.



**AS OBEDIENT
CHILDREN, NOT
CONFORMING
YOURSELVES TO THE
FORMER LUSTS, AS IN
YOUR IGNORANCE; BUT
AS HE WHO HAS
CALLED YOU IS HOLY,
YOU ALSO BE HOLY IN
ALL YOUR CONDUCT...”**

1 Peter 1:13-15

The above pattern is consistent throughout the New Testament. In Titus 3:7 Paul talks about being justified by His grace. In the very next verse he says “Those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works” (vs.8). In Eph. 2:8-9, Paul proclaims, “For by grace you have been saved-not of works...” In the very next verse he points out that we were prepared beforehand to walk in good works” (vs.10).

It is quite apparent that the Holy Spirit has purposely inter-mingled words of comfort with words that confront in order that they not be separated from one another. However, we live in times in which the words of comfort are purposefully being isolated from the words that confront. One must wonder if this is being done in order to fill the pews and the coffers. The parable of the Sower is warning about what will happen when the full counsel of God is proclaimed!

Paul reminds us that “All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine...” (2 Tim.3:16). Consider what the Holy Spirit recorded in the life of Jesus pertaining to this contrast of comforting and confronting words:

WORDS THAT

COMFORT

**“ALL WHO WERE
IN THE
SYNAGOGUE...
BORE WITNESS TO
HIM, AND
MARVELED AT THE
GRACIOUS WORDS
WHICH
PROCEEDED OUT
OF HIS MOUTH”**

Luke 4:22

WORDS THAT

CONFRONT

**“THEN ALL THOSE
IN THE
SYNAGOGUE,
WHEN THEY HEARD
THESE THINGS,
WERE FILLED WITH
WRATH, AND
ROSE UP AND
THRUST HIM OUT
OF THE CITY...”**

Luke 4:28

If you take the time to read the setting of the above contrast, you will find that at first Jesus spoke several beautiful promises to them in a general sense. Further down in the story He placed some specific restrictions on those promises. Luke 4:22 is the result of hearing the general promises spoken, and Luke 4:28 is how they reacted to Jesus when he revealed the specific restrictions attached to those promises. Consider the scenario below. Is it not happening today?

COMFORT

**“ALL WHO WERE
IN THE
“CHURCH”
BORE WITNESS TO
HIM, AND
MARVELED AT THE
GRACIOUS
WORDS...”**

CONFRONT

**“THEN ALL THOSE
IN THE
“CHURCH”
WHEN THEY HEARD
THESE THINGS,
WERE FILLED WITH
WRATH, AND ROSE
UP AND (LEFT) ...”**

It is quite difficult to imagine someone getting offended at the words of Jesus. After all, He was sinless and perfect. Being the sinless Son of God, we must assume what He spoke was never spoken in a wrong spirit or in haste. Yet, we find another amazing truth recorded for our learning:

“...MANY OF HIS DISCIPLES, WHEN THEY HEARD THIS, SAID, THIS IS A HARD SAYING...JESUS SAID TO THEM, DOES THIS OFFEND YOU?...FROM THAT TIME MANY OF HIS DISCIPLES WENT BACK AND WALKED WITH HIM NO MORE.”

John 6:60-66



I find it quite ironic that the statement, "...From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more" , is John 6:66. I pray that you ponder well the concept of "rightly dividing the word of truth" as consisting of a delicate balance of



THE **ENSNARED** HEART



**“AND THE ONES
SOWN AMONG THORNS ARE
OTHERS WHO HEAR THE
WORD; THEN THE CARES AND
ANXIETIES OF THE WORLD,
THE DISTRACTIONS,
PLEASURES, DELIGHTS,
GLAMOUR OF RICHES,
THE CRAVING, PASSIONATE DESIRE FOR OTHER THINGS CREEP
IN AND CHOKER AND SUFFOCATE THE WORD,
AND IT BECOMES FRUITLESS.”** MARK 4:19 Amplified

It can be stated of God that He is a God of firstfruits. Israel was required to :

**“...BRING THE FIRSTFRUITS OF OUR GROUND AND THE
FIRSTFRUITS OF ALL FRUIT TREES...TO BRING THE
FIRSTFRUITS OF OUR SONS...THE FIRSTFRUITS OF OUR
DOUGH...TO THE HOUSE OF GOD...AND WE WILL
NOT NEGLECT THE HOUSE OF OUR GOD.”**

Nehemiah 10:35-39 excerpts

Jesus Christ became the “...firstfruits of the dead” (1 Cor.15:20). James says of the followers of Christ “...He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures” (Jm. 1:18). God has a firstfruit mentality, and He expects His children to follow suit as well. The mandate from Jesus’ lips to His followers still remains a high priority:



**“BUT SEEK FIRST
THE
KINGDOM OF GOD
AND HIS
RIGHTEOUSNESS ...”**

Matt. 6:33

**“THE CARES AND ANXIETIES OF THE
WORLD, THE DISTRACTIONS,
PLEASURES, DELIGHTS, GLAMOUR OF
RICHES, THE CRAVING, PASSIONATE
DESIRE FOR OTHER THINGS
CREEP IN...”**

MARK 4:19 Amplified

The parable of the Sower is prophetically depicting what would happen in the hearts of believers to the Kingdom of God mandate to seek first the kingdom of God. It would become replaced by other things creeping in. Instead of offering to God the firstfruits He deserves, multitudes of His people serve him leftovers:



**“LEFTOVERS ARE HUMBLE THINGS.
WE WOULD NOT SERVE THEM TO A GUEST,
AND YET WE SERVE THEM TO THE LORD WHO
DESERVES THE VERY BEST.
WE GIVE HIM LEFTOVER TIME,
STRAY MINUTES HERE AND THERE,
LEFTOVER CASH WE GIVE TO HIM, SUCH AS WE
CAN SPARE. WE GIVE OUR YOUTH UNTO THE
WORLD, TO HATRED, LUST AND STRIFE; THEN IN
OUR DECLINING YEARS WE GIVE GOD THE
REMNANT OF OUR LIFE.”**

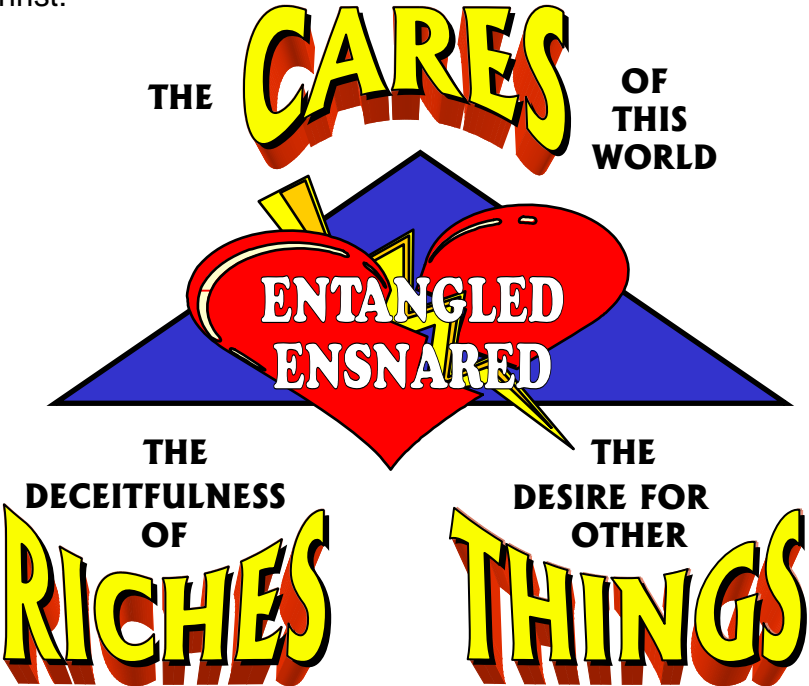
-Author unknown

The concept of reserving leftovers for God is not new. God accused Israel of this very sin:

“A SON HONORS HIS FATHER AND A SERVANT (HONORS) HIS MASTER. IF THEN I AM THE FATHER, WHERE IS MY HONOR? AND IF I AM A MASTER, WHERE IS MY REVERENCE? SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS TO YOU PRIESTS... YOU OFFER DEFILED FOOD ON MY ALTAR...YOU OFFER THE BLIND AS A SACRIFICE, IS IT NOT EVIL? AND WHEN YOU OFFER THE LAME AND THE SICK, IS IT NOT EVIL? OFFER IT TO YOUR GOVERNOR! WOULD HE BE PLEASED WITH YOU? WOULD HE ACCEPT YOU FAVORABLY? ...AND YOU BRING THE STOLEN, THE LAME, AND THE SICK; THUS YOU BRING AN OFFERING! SHOULD I ACCEPT THIS FROM YOUR HAND? SAYS THE LORD...CURSED BE THE DECEIVER (WHO) SACRIFICES TO THE LORD WHAT IS BLEMISHED-FOR I AM A GREAT KING...”

Malachi 1:6-14 excerpts

God expects us to give to Him our very best and not what is left over. This third form of spiritual heart attack is Satan’s greatest assault upon believers. Jesus describes three categories which lead to un-fruitfulness among those who name the name of Christ:



THE CARES OF THIS WORLD

“...LEST SATAN SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF US... WE ARE NOT IGNORANT OF HIS DEVICES.”

2 Cor. 2:11



“PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD, THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO STAND AGAINST THE WILES OF THE DEVIL.”

Eph.6:11

How serious is this snare of the wicked one?
Jesus tells us:

“BUT TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES, LEST YOUR HEARTS BE WEIGHTED DOWN WITH DRUNKENNESS AND CAROUSING, AND THE CARES OF THIS LIFE, AND THAT DAY COME ON YOU UNEXPECTEDLY. FOR IT WILL COME AS A SNARE... WATCH AND PRAY ALWAYS THAT YOU BE COUNTED WORTHY TO ESCAPE ALL THESE THINGS... AND TO STAND BEFORE THE SON OF MAN.”

Luke 21:34-36



It is quite sobering that the cares of this life are listed by Jesus among the sins of drunkenness and carousing as things that will ensnare people on the earth. In context, we see that the seriousness of this ensnarement can lead to not being worthy to escape the tribulation that is coming on the earth. Jesus is telling us what are some of the marks of the foolish virgins that will be left behind at the rapture (see Mat. 25:1-13, Luke 12:45-46).

The cares of this life can make us so earth-bound that we will not be wise virgins, looking and watching for the coming of the Bridegroom as we are instructed to do (Mat.25:1-13, Rev. 3:1-3, Rev. 16:15, Heb. 10:28).

What are the cares of this life/world? These include all excessive weights, worries, anxieties, fears, concerns, causes, duties and responsibilities for temporal, earthly things. This is a hard saying, but we have specific instruction in the Word of God about these areas:

**“NO ONE ENGAGED IN WARFARE
ENTANGLES HIMSELF
WITH THE AFFAIRS OF THIS LIFE,
THAT HE MAY PLEASE HIM
WHO HAS ENLISTED HIM AS A SOLDIER.”**

2 Tim. 2:4

**“...WE DO NOT LOOK AT THE THINGS WHICH
ARE SEEN, BUT AT THE THINGS WHICH ARE
NOT SEEN. FOR THE THINGS WHICH ARE
SEEN ARE TEMPORARY, BUT THE THINGS
WHICH ARE NOT SEEN ARE ETERNAL.”**

2 Cor. 4:18

**“ (THEY) CONFESSED THAT THEY WERE STRANGERS
AND PILGRIMS ON THE EARTH...IF THEY HAD
CALLED TO MIND THAT COUNTRY FROM WHICH
THEY HAD COME OUT; THEY WOULD HAVE HAD
OPPORTUNITY TO RETURN. BUT NOW THEY
DESIRE A BETTER...A HEAVENLY COUNTRY.
THEREFORE GOD IS NOT ASHAMED TO BE CALLED
THEIR GOD...”**

Heb. 11:13-16

**“FOR HERE WE HAVE NO CONTINUING CITY,
BUT WE SEEK THE ONE TO COME.”**

Heb. 13:14

**“FOR OUR CITIZENSHIP IS IN HEAVEN,
FROM WHICH WE ALSO EAGERLY WAIT
FOR ...THE LORD JESUS CHRIST...”**

Phil. 3:20

Scriptures like the above cause us to seriously question the validity of such earthly religious causes such as constitutional rights, anti-abortion, anti-pornography, political Christian coalitions, and the like. These things must be classified as among the affairs of this life, and are not to be the priorities of strangers and pilgrims. We are rather to be focused upon desiring a better country and confessing that our citizenship is in heaven.



**“MARTHA, MARTHA,
YOU ARE WORRIED AND
TROUBLED ABOUT MANY
THINGS. BUT ONE THING IS
NEEDED, AND MARY HAS
CHOSEN THAT GOOD
PART...”**

Luke 10:41-42

Jesus spoke these words to a woman whom He had observed was distracted with much serving while her sister sat at His feet and heard His words” (Luke 10:39-40). Let us not forget that we are looking at this very condition in the parable of the Sower. This third heart condition is about distractions:

**“THE
CARES AND ANXIETIES OF THE WORLD,
THE DISTRACTIONS...CREEP IN AND CHOKE
AND SUFFOCATE THE WORD,
AND IT BECOMES FRUITLESS.”**

Mark 4:19 Amplified

Francis of Assisi uttered a prayer to God centuries ago which is still applicable for us today:



**“O MERCIFUL FATHER,
GRANT ME THE COURAGE TO
CHANGE THE THINGS I CAN,
THE SERENITY TO
ACCEPT THE THINGS I CANNOT CHANGE,
AND THE WISDOM TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE”**

Large segments of Christianity in America has become dull to the concept of knowing the difference between the things God wants them to change. We are not called to legislate morality upon immorality through the abundance of current religious anti-causes. Rather, God wants changed lives among His people which will influence the world toward the gospel rather than alienating them from it through religious causes.

THE DECEITFULNESS OF

RICHES

“...LEST SATAN SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF US... WE ARE NOT IGNORANT OF HIS DEVICES.”

2 Cor. 2:11



“PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD, THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO STAND AGAINST THE WILES OF THE DEVIL.”

Eph.6:11

The second ensnarement of Satan which Jesus singles out is the deceitfulness of riches. As we did with the cares of this life, let us first consider how serious is this form of ensnarement? Paul answers this question for us:



“...THOSE WHO DESIRE TO BE RICH FALL INTO TEMPTATION AND A SNARE, AND INTO MANY FOOLISH AND HARMFUL LUSTS WHICH DROWN MEN IN DESTRUCTION AND PERDITION. FOR THE LOVE OF MONEY IS A ROOT OF ALL KINDS OF EVIL, FOR WHICH SOME HAVE STRAYED FROM THE FAITH IN THEIR GREEDINESS, AND PIERCED THEMSELVES THROUGH WITH MANY SORROWS.”

1 Timothy 5:9-10

Paul believed the pursuit of the deceitfulness of riches could lead even a believer to perdition (“eternal misery”). Notice that it includes believers who stray from the faith in their greediness. It is also important to note that Paul is describing those who desire to be rich, those who have a love of money. Note well that he is not condemning the rich, nor those who possess money :

“COMMAND THOSE WHO ARE RICH...NOT TO BE HAUGHTY, NOR TO TRUST IN UNCERTAIN RICHES, BUT IN THE LIVING GOD...LET THEM DO GOOD...RICH IN GOOD WORKS, READY TO GIVE, WILLING TO SHARE...”

1 Tim.6:17-18

THE PURSUIT OF... THE POSSESSION OF...



**“THOSE WHO DESIRE
TO BE RICH...”**

1 Tim.6:9



**“THOSE WHO
ARE RICH...”**

1 Tim.6:17

The possession of riches is not condemned by Paul, but the pursuit of wealth is. Although the possession of riches can also be ensnaring, it is far more dangerous to be in a state of desiring to be rich according to the words of Paul:

**I
D
O
L
A
T
R
Y**

**ENTER TEMPTATION...
ENTER A SNARE...
FOOLISH, HARMFUL LUSTS...
STRAY FROM THE FAITH
THROUGH GREEDINESS...
PIERCE YOURSELF THROUGH
WITH MANY SORROWS...
DROWN YOURSELF...
IN SELF DESTRUCTION...
EVEN PERDITION...**

The desire to be rich is covetousness. In Colossians Chapter 3 and verse 5, Paul tells us “covetousness... is idolatry.” So dangerous is this sin that Paul reminds us “...no covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words...” (Eph.5:5-6)

The principles of the Word
are always in direct opposition to the principles of the world.
The spirit of discontentment is actively promoted
by the merchants of the earth.
God's word calls us to cultivate a spirit of contentment.

DISCONTENTMENT



One only need to ponder a string of television commercials to see that there is a spirit of discontentment behind them.

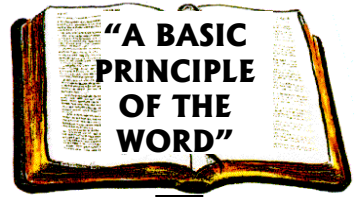
Happiness can be found in some new thing or better thing.

America's basic premise is bigger is better.

In Ephesians 2:2, Paul reveals that the course of this world is according to the prince of the power of the air. The apostle John tells us "...the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one" (1 Jn. 5:19).

When Mystery Babylon is destroyed by God the "merchants of the earth weep and mourn...for no one buys their merchandise anymore" (Rev.18:11).

CONTENTMENT



"LET YOUR CONDUCT BE WITHOUT COVETOUSNESS, AND BE CONTENT WITH SUCH THINGS AS YOU HAVE..."

Hebrews 13:5

"BUT GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT IS GREAT GAIN...AND HAVING FOOD AND CLOTHING, WITH THESE WE SHALL BE CONTENT."

1 Tim.6:6,8

"...I HAVE LEARNED IN WHATEVER STATE I AM IN, TO BE CONTENT..."

Phil. 4:11

"...DO NOT INTIMIDATE ANYONE OR ACCUSE FALSELY, AND BE CONTENT WITH YOUR WAGES."

Luke 3:14



**“TAKE HEED AND BEWARE OF
COVETOUSNESS, FOR ONE’S LIFE DOES
NOT CONSIST IN THE ABUNDANCE OF
THE THINGS HE POSSESSES.”** Luke 12:15

**“...IF YOU HAVE NOT BEEN FAITHFUL IN
THE UNRIGHTEOUS MAMMON (MONEY),
WHO WILL COMMIT TO YOUR TRUST
THE TRUE RICHES?”** Luke 16:11

The parable of the Sower warns about the deceitfulness of riches because it is a deceptive counterfeit of Satan for what the Bible presents as true riches. I have listed them below for you personal study. I will not be able to elaborate upon them within the confines of this booklet.

THE SEVEN TRUE SPIRITUAL RICHES

- 1. THE RICHES OF HIS GOODNESS** (Rom.2:4)
- 2. THE RICHES OF HIS GLORY** (Rom.9:23)
- 3. THE RICHES OF THE WISDOM AND
KNOWLEDGE OF GOD** (Rom.11:33)
- 4. THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE** (Eph.1:7)
- 5. THE RICHES OF THE GLORY OF HIS
INHERITANCE IN THE SAINTS** (Eph.1:18)
- 6. UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST** (Eph.2:7)
- 7. THE RICHES OF THE FULL UNDERSTANDING
OF THE MYSTERY OF GOD** (Col.2:2)

God intends that we be good stewards of riches. Jesus is stating that such stewardship will open the door to greater riches. We must also ponder the reverse. Failure in stewardship of money means that greater riches will be denied. In reality, money is a test.

It is quite astounding that two-thirds of the Kingdom parables deal with the right and wrong use of money. We are tested with the tithe as to whether we will give it back to God. We must carry it a step further. We must be good stewards of the ninety percent we keep as well. May God help us to resist the spirit of discontentment!

THE DESIRE FOR OTHER

THINGS

"...LEST SATAN SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF US... WE ARE NOT IGNORANT OF HIS DEVICES."

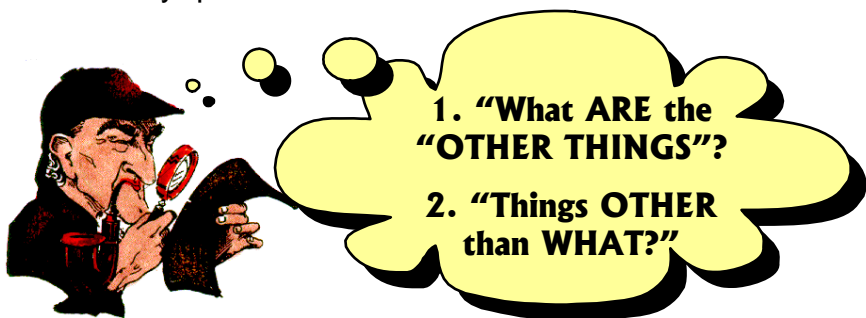
2 Cor. 2:11



"PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD, THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO STAND AGAINST THE WILES OF THE DEVIL."

Eph.6:11

The third area Jesus lists, that causes no fruit to be brought to perfection, is the diversion of the desire for other things. Applying a little Sherlock Holmes mentality to that statement causes two key questions to arise:



If God warns us about the danger of other things, it implies that there are things that are good and that are from Him for us. Other things are merely Satan's subtle substitutes for the things God has for us.

GOD OFFERS US



THINGS

"THINGS WHICH GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM..."

1 Cor. 2:9

SATAN OFFERS US



OTHER THINGS

"ALL THESE THINGS WILL I GIVE TO YOU..."

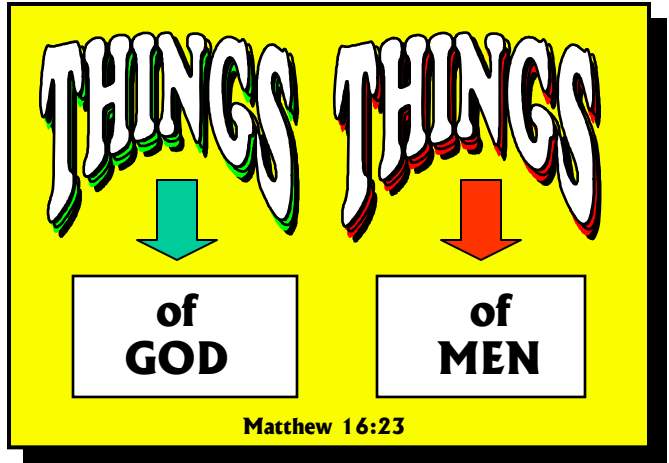
Matt. 4:9

Satan knows that if he can get us to be mindful of his offer of other things, we will become forgetful of God's better things.

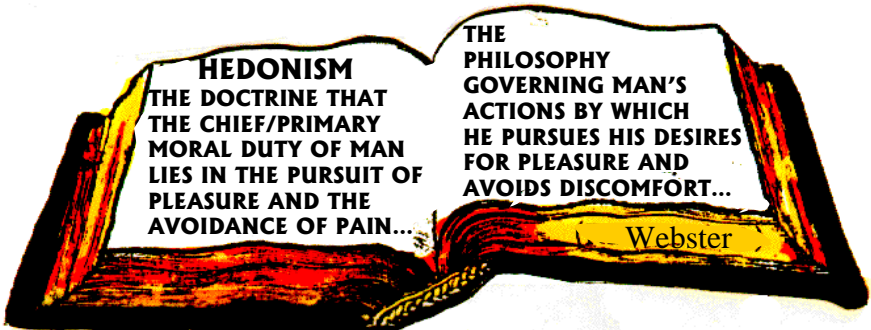
There are 610 references in the New Testament to "things." Out of this multitude there are ten (# of testing) which are very significant in that they contain a contrast of Satan's other things against God's things. In the confines of this little booklet we will only be able to speak briefly about each one. They are studies within themselves. My purpose here is merely to identify what other things consist of what prohibit fruitfulness in the Kingdom of God.

**"GET BEHIND ME,
SATAN!
YOU ARE AN
OFFENSE TO ME,
FOR YOU ARE
NOT MINDFUL
OF
THE THINGS
OF GOD,
BUT
THE THINGS
OF MEN."**

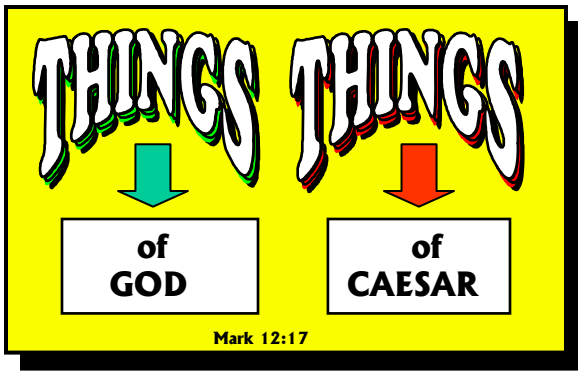
Matthew 16:23



Peter was seeking to shield Jesus from suffering. However, Jesus recognizes that Satan is speaking through Peter's sincere desire to protect his master. One of the things of men, which stimulates such a response as Peter's is "hedonism" :



We certainly can recognize that this is a prevalent mentality in America, even among Christians. Such philosophy is in opposition to the call to deny self, take up your cross, and follow Christ as instructed in Luke 9:23. The pathway of suffering leads to the things of God. It was so for Jesus, and is appointed for us as well (1 Pet.2:21-23).



**“RENDER TO
CAESAR
THE THINGS THAT
ARE CAESAR’S,
AND
(RENDER) TO GOD
THE THINGS THAT
ARE GOD’S.”**

Mark 12:17

The alternate meaning of the word translated as kingdom is government. Jesus said “...My Kingdom (government) is not of this world...” (Jn.18:36). The second other thing that Satan offers as a substitute for the things of God is the things of Caesar.

We are told that if we desire to please God, we must not become “entangled in the affairs of this life” (2 Tim.2:4). This includes all causes, rights and anti-movements that currently obsess God’s people and their leaders. The political/social Christian coalition is centered upon the things of Caesar instead of the things of God. Why do I say that? Because America is one of Caesar’s kingdoms. It is not the Kingdom of God as the Puritans advocated.

The great commission of Jesus (Matt. 28:19-20) has become the great omission. There is a move to fulfill the latter half of that commission apart from the first half. Much of American Christianity is seeking to “...go and teach them to observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:20). The call to “...go and make disciples...baptizing them...” (Matt. 28:19) has been omitted. The result is the attempt to legislate morality upon immorality by teaching the unregenerate the things Jesus has taught the believer (such as the Ten Commandments). This is ideology. It is also being entangled in the affairs of this life. Hear this well: The laws of God are for the people of God. The government of God is for the citizens of the Kingdom. They were not given to heathen unbelievers or given to be legislated in the halls of Congress. Paul reminds us, “...our citizenship is in heaven” (Phil. 3:20). We are to confess that “Here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one which is to come” (Heb.13:14). The confession God loves is when His people claim to be “strangers and pilgrims on the earth” (Heb.11:13), a people that are no longer mindful of the country from which they have come out (Heb.11:15).

Today, there is a great danger for Christians to be classified in the same category as the people of Paul's day who were captivated by all that was going on around them:

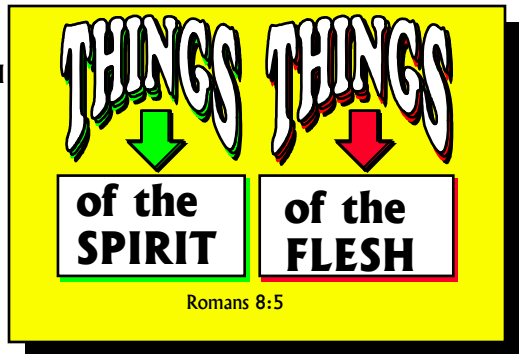
“FOR ALL THE ATHENIANS AND THE FOREIGNERS WHO WERE THERE SPENT THEIR TIME IN NOTHING ELSE BUT TO TELL OR TO HEAR SOME NEW THING.”

Acts 17:21

There is an obsession with the current wave of talk radio. Like the Athenians, multitudes of people today also spend their time in nothing else but to tell or hear some new thing. Far too many of God's people are guilty of this waste of time in the hour when we should be “redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Eph.5:16)

“THOSE WHO LIVE ACCORDING TO THE FLESH SET THEIR MINDS ON THE THINGS OF THE FLESH, BUT THOSE WHO LIVE ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT, (SET THEIR MINDS ON) THE THINGS OF THE SPIRIT.”

Romans 8:5



We do not lack for a vivid definition of these two categories:

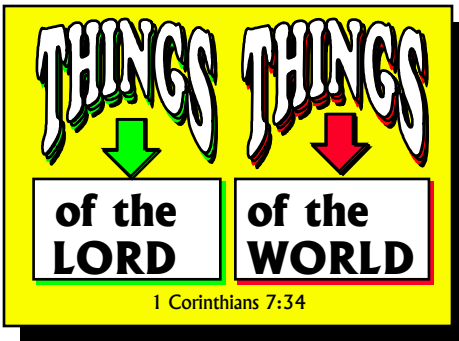
“...THE WORKS OF THE FLESH ARE EVIDENT, WHICH ARE: ADULTERY, FORNICATION, UNCLEANNESS, LICENTIOUSNESS, IDOLATRY, SORCERY, HATRED, CONTENTIONS, JEALOUSIES, OUTBURSTS OF WRATH, SELFISH AMBITIONS, DISSENSION'S, HERESIES, ENVY, MURDERS, DRUNKENNESS, REVELRIES AND THE LIKE...”

Gal. 5:19-21

“BUT THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS LOVE, JOY, PEACE, LONG-SUFFERING, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, FAITHFULNESS, GENTLENESS, SELF-CONTROL...”

Gal. 5:22-23

As far as these other things of the flesh, they are deadly substitutes. To practice them will cost you the Kingdom of God (Gal.5:21, 1 Cor.6:9, Eph. 5:3-7). They make us enemies of God (Rom.8:6-8). We are clearly warned not to be deceived in this area (Eph.5:6, 1 Cor.6:9).



“...I WANT YOU TO BE WITHOUT CARE.. HE WHO IS UNMARRIED CARES FOR THE THINGS THAT BELONG TO THE LORD- HOW HE MAY PLEASE THE LORD. BUT HE WHO IS MARRIED CARES ABOUT THE THINGS OF THE WORLD- HOW HE MAY PLEASE HIS WIFE... I SAY THIS FOR YOUR OWN PROFIT... THAT YOU MAY SERVE THE LORD WITHOUT DISTRACTION.”

1 Cor.7:32-35 excerpts

Paul is not condemning marriage. Further on, in these passages, he remarks that the one who marries does not sin (vs.36). What he is trying to convey is how easy it is to be distracted from serving the Lord with worldly things. He balances out his position with the instruction that, “Those who use this world as not misusing it. For the form of this world is passing away” (vs.31). Paul also spoke of one of his closest companions, “...Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world...” (2 Tim.4:10).

The apostle John gives similar instruction pertaining to the world:



“DO NOT LOVE THE WORLD OR THE THINGS IN THE WORLD. IF ANYONE LOVES THE WORLD, THE LOVE OF THE FATHER IS NOT IN HIM...AND THE WORLD IS PASSING AWAY, AND THE LUST OF IT...”

1 Jn. 2:15-17

The apostle James also gives us strong admonition:

“ADULTERERS AND ADULTERESSES! DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT FRIENDSHIP WITH THE WORLD IS ENMITY WITH GOD? WHOEVER THEREFORE WANTS TO BE A FRIEND OF THE WORLD MAKES HIMSELF AN ENEMY OF GOD.”

James 4:4



Neither of these two great men speak of the physical world itself. John is quite clear, “For all that is in the world- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life- is not of the Father but is of the world” (1 Jn.2:16). It is this present evil age which God condemns (Gal.1:4). It is this subtle substitute Satan offers to side-track and even derail the people of God!

We have only briefly looked at four of Satan's "other things" he offers in place of the "things of God."

We can now see what it is that he is after. It is our relationship and fellowship with God himself!

MEN	→	AN OFFENSE TO GOD
<small>Matthew 16:23</small>		
CAESAR	→	DO NOT PLEASE GOD
<small>2 Timothy 2:4</small>		
FLESH	→	ARE AT ENMITY WITH GOD
<small>Romans 8:7</small>		
WORLD	→	NO LOVE OF THE FATHER IN THEM
<small>1 John 2:15</small>		

THINGS ↓	THINGS ↓
NOT SEEN...	ARE SEEN...

2 Corinthians 4:18

"...WE DO NOT LOOK AT THE THINGS WHICH ARE SEEN, BUT (WE LOOK) AT THE THINGS WHICH ARE NOT SEEN..."

2 Cor. 4:18a

"...FOR THE THINGS WHICH ARE SEEN ARE TEMPORARY, BUT THE THINGS WHICH ARE NOT SEEN ARE ETERNAL."

2 Cor. 4:18b

THINGS ↓	THINGS ↓
which are ETERNAL	which are TEMPORAL

2 Corinthians 4:18

We can consider these two together since they are found in the same verse. God wants his people to have eternal vision for things that can only be seen with eyes of faith.

Satan wants us to have tunnel vision, only able to see things in front of our eyes that pertain to this present temporal world.

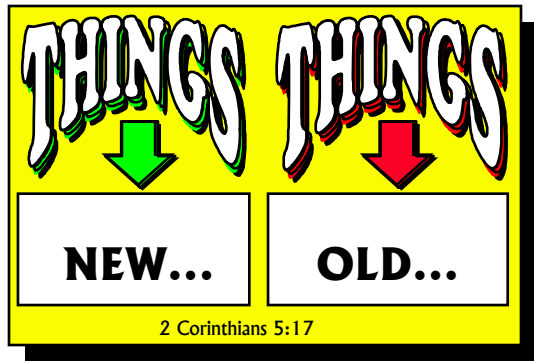


One of the major themes of the apostles is that what we can presently see is going to pass away (1 Jn. 2:17, 2 Pet. 3:10-13).

As God's people, we must cultivate the co-existence of another world running parallel to this present one. Either through death or the rapture, we will one day exchange worlds. God wants us to know what the one to come is all about (1 Cor. 2:9-10, Rev. 21:1-5).

**“...IF ANYONE IS
IN CHRIST, HE IS
A NEW CREATION;
OLD THINGS HAVE
PASSED AWAY;
BEHOLD, ALL THINGS
HAVE BECOME NEW.”**

2 Cor.5:17



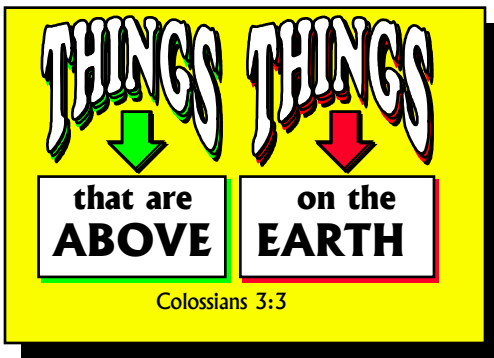
God makes all things new (Rev.21:5). Through the new birth we put on a new man (Eph.4:23). Jesus taught that new wine must be put in new wine skins (Mark 2:22). Paul tells us to purge out the old leaven that we may be a new lump (1 Cor.5:17). God wants His new things to replace the old things. He will carry this theology right into eternity when he makes a New Jerusalem and New Heavens and a New Earth (Rev. 21:1-2). Therefore He instructs his people:

**“DO NOT REMEMBER THE FORMER THINGS,
NOR CONSIDER THE THINGS OF OLD.
BEHOLD, I WILL DO A NEW THING,
NOW IT SHALL SPRING FORTH...”**

Isa.43:18-19

How pungent this instructive word is in light of all the current emphasis upon Christians needing “inner-healing of past memories.” God says, Forget it! You are new creations in Christ!

What lies in the past cannot be altered, only forgiven and forgotten. God says of our sins, “...I will remember (them) no more” (Heb.8:12). He tells us that He will subdue our iniquities and cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. (Micah 7:18-19). We should adopt the same philosophy. Far too many of God’s people are bend on remembering what God forgets. Peter describes a people that have “...forgotten that they were purged from their old sins” (2 Pet.1:9). Peter uses this illustration of a people who are “short-sighted, even to blindness” (vs.9). They are not actively adding to their faith those things that Peter tells them to do (2 Pet.1:5-8). God’s new things are designed to cause us to be a people of vision focusing on the race that is set before us (Heb.12:1-2, Hab. 2:2), not dwelling on painful things that have happened to us in the past.



**“ IF THEN YOU WERE
RAISED WITH CHRIST,
SEEK THOSE THINGS
WHICH ARE ABOVE...
SET YOUR MIND
ON THINGS ABOVE,
NOT ON THINGS ON
THE EARTH.”**

Col. 3:1-2

Among the things Paul has on his mind in writing the above text, is the danger of covetousness. In verse 5 he says, “Put to death your members which are on the earth...covetousness, which is idolatry.” There is a principle given in the gospel of John that clearly states the core message:

**“HE WHO COMES FROM ABOVE IS ABOVE ALL;
HE WHO IS OF THE EARTH IS EARTHLY
AND SPEAKS OF THE EARTH.”**

John 3:31

The great conflict of Christianity is centered upon the fact that although we live on the earth, we are now, like Jesus, from above. Therefore Paul gives us the call to set our mind on things above. Jesus also gives similar counsel:

**“DO NOT LAY UP FOR
YOURSELVES TREASURE ON
EARTH...BUT LAY UP
TREASURES IN HEAVEN...
FOR WHERE YOUR TREASURE
IS, THERE YOUR HEART WILL
BE ALSO...NO ONE CAN SERVE
TWO MASTERS...YOU CANNOT
SERVE GOD AND MAMMON.”**

Matthew 6:19-24 excerpts

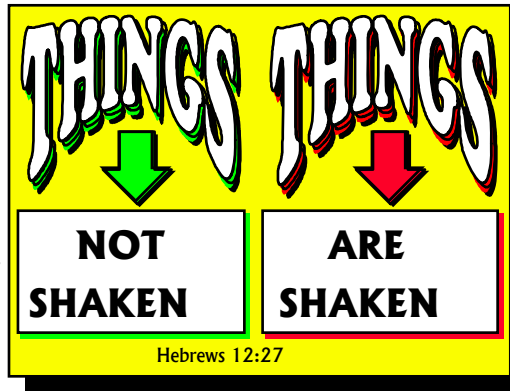


The things of the earth eventually will be burned up (2 Pet. 3:10). It takes a mind set on things above to be able to keep focused upon the temporality of earthly things. Herein lies the great contest between the believer and Satan:

Where shall our affections be, on things above or on things on the earth? Unless our answer is in the former, we shall be among those who bring no fruit to maturity.

“...THE REMOVAL OF THOSE THINGS THAT ARE BEING SHAKEN, AS OF THINGS THAT ARE MADE, THAT THE THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN MAY REMAIN... WE ARE RECEIVING A KINGDOM WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN...”

Hebrews 12:27-28



The Kingdom of God is the only unshakable kingdom. All the kingdoms of this world have been, and will continue to be shaken. It was such temporal kingdoms that Satan offered Jesus:

“THEN THE DEVIL...SHOWED HIM ALL THE KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD IN A MOMENT OF TIME...ALL THIS AUTHORITY I WILL GIVE TO YOU, AND THEIR GLORY...”



...FOR THIS HAS BEEN DELIVERED TO ME, AND I WILL GIVE IT TO WHOEVER I WISH... WORSHIP ME, AND ALL WILL BE YOURS.”
 Luke 4:5-7

Satan’s tactics have not changed. He offers to us the same temporal kingdoms he offered to Jesus. What shall your answer be to his offer?



1. "What ARE the "OTHER THINGS"?"
2. "Things OTHER than WHAT?"

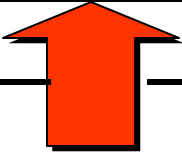
We can now see clear answers to the two initial questions posed earlier about the topic of other things:

OTHER THINGS

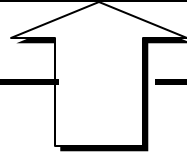
THINGS of MEN.
THINGS of CAESAR
THINGS of the FLESH.
THINGS of the WORLD
THINGS which ARE SEEN
THINGS that are TEMPORARY
THINGS that are OLD
THINGS which are BEHIND
THINGS on the EARTH
THINGS that are SHAKY

THINGS OTHER THAN

THINGS of GOD
THINGS of the SPIRIT
THINGS of the LORD
THINGS which are NOT SEEN
THINGS that are ETERNAL
THINGS that are NEW
THINGS that are AHEAD
THINGS that are ABOVE
THINGS that are UNSHAKABLE



THESE ARE ALL OF THE
SUBTLE SUBSTITUTES
THAT THE GOD OF
THIS AGE OFFERS TO
WHOSOEVER WILL.
THEY ARE DESIGNED
TO SUBVERT,
PERVERT,
DISTORT,
DISTRACT AND DIVERT
GOD'S PEOPLE FROM
THE REAL THING.



THESE ARE THE THINGS
GOD HAS PREPARED FOR
THOSE WHO LOVE HIM
(1 COR.2:9). NOTICE I DID
NOT SAY THEY WERE ALL
PREPARED FOR THOSE
WHOM GOD LOVES.
GOD IS LOOKING FOR A
PEOPLE WHO HAVE EYES
TO SEE AND EARS TO
HEAR, AS WELL AS A
HEART PREPARED TO
RECEIVE IT BY FAITH.

OTHER THINGS

THINGS of MEN ...
THINGS of CAESAR ...
THINGS of the FLESH ...
THINGS of the WORLD ...
THINGS which ARE SEEN ...
THINGS that are TEMPORARY ...
THINGS that are OLD ...
THINGS which are BEHIND ...
THINGS on the EARTH ...
THINGS that are SHAKY ...



**THORNY
GROUND**

The final point I would like to establish will lead us into our fourth and final heart which Jesus depicts in the Parable of The Sower.

If the ten other things indeed constitute a thorny heart that hinders the manifestation of Kingdom fruit, then the other side of the coin should identify for us what produces a good heart.

THINGS OTHER THAN:

THINGS of GOD
THINGS of the SPIRIT
THINGS of the LORD
THINGS which are NOT SEEN
THINGS that are ETERNAL
THINGS that are NEW
THINGS that are AHEAD
THINGS that are ABOVE
THINGS that are UNSHAKABLE



**GOOD
GROUND**

**THESE ARE
THE ONES
SOWN ON**



GOOD GROUND



**“...WHO HEAR THE WORD
AND RECEIVE AND ACCEPT
AND WELCOME IT AND
BEAR FRUIT-SOME THIRTY
TIMES AS MUCH AS WAS
SOWN, SOME SIXTY TIMES
AS MUCH, AND SOME A
HUNDRED TIMES AS
MUCH.”**

Mark 4:20 Amplified


The first three hearts were unfruitful. This fourth heart is the fruitful one. If this parable bears any significant truth, it is simply that upon hearing the Word of God, only one out of four believers becomes fruitful. This is a fearful truth. It conveys the reality that the majority of fruitless believers will out-number the minority that are fruitful. The norm in life is usually measured by what the multitudes are doing. The multitude will usually condemn the minority, as being radical, fanatical, legalistic or even cultic, simply because they do not go with the flow. God is calling for a people who will go against the flow by becoming Kingdom fruit-bearers in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation that lies under the sway and control of Satan, the god of this world. If this is your heart's desire, then read on!

The first point we need to see that Jesus brings out is the varying degrees of fruitfulness of this heart. The emphasis of the word “some” indicates that He is not speaking of one individual who progressively grows fruit.

4 **THESE ARE THE ONES
SOWN ON**

GOOD GROUND

**HEAR THE WORD,
ACCEPT IT,
AND BEAR FRUIT;
SOME THIRTY-FOLD,
SOME SIXTY, AND
SOME A HUNDRED .”**



Mark 4:20

Jesus is describing various people that bring forth different amounts of fruit. In other words, they are not all equally fruitful. Some are more productive than others. We do not lack for a reason why this is so: in context with the revelation of the varying degrees of fruit, Jesus brings forth the reason why:

**“IF ANY MAN HAS EARS TO HEAR,
LET HIM BE LISTENING AND LET HIM PERCEIVE
AND COMPREHEND.
AND HE SAID TO THEM, BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU ARE
HEARING. THE MEASURE OF THOUGHT AND STUDY
YOU GIVE TO THE TRUTH YOU HEAR, WILL BE THE
MEASURE OF VIRTUE AND KNOWLEDGE THAT COMES
BACK TO YOU-AND MORE WILL BE GIVEN...”**

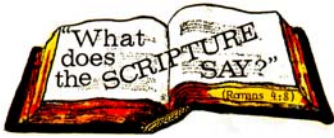
Mark 4:23-24 Amplified



Ask any valedictorian why he or she received such a special honor. It is because of a mind to work (Neh. 4:6). The simple truth is one of sowing and reaping (Gal.6:7, 2 Cor.9:6, Luke. 6:38).

What God records about money is also applicable to fruit-bearing. We cannot reap what we do not sow. Remember, it is the Word of God that is being sown! Jesus is telling us that the amount of thought and study we give to the truth we hear, will determine the measure of virtue and knowledge that comes back to us! If we put out a thirty percent effort toward what we hear, that is what we shall reap! If we apply what we hear in a sixty percent manner, that is what we shall reap. Those who apply one hundred percent of energy and response to what they hear, shall be spiritual valedictorians in the Kingdom of God!

The fruitful Christian has this testimony when it comes to the Word of God:



The apostle James also gives admonition in this area of meekness toward what we hear:

“OF HIS OWN WILL HE BROUGHT US FORTH BY THE WORD OF TRUTH... RECEIVE WITH MEEKNESS (TEACH- ABILITY) THE IMPLANTED WORD...BUT BE DOERS OF THE WORD, AND NOT HEARERS ONLY, DECEIVING YOURSELVES...”

James 1:18-22 excerpts



4 THESE ARE THE ONES SOWN ON **GOOD GROUND**

1. HEAR THE WORD, 2. ACCEPT IT, AND 3. BEAR FRUIT; SOME THIRTY-FOLD SOME SIXTY, AND SOME A HUNDRED.”

Mark 4:20

The act of hearing is not what is meant by bearing fruit. James tells us a “hearer only” will deceive himself. The first three hearts of the Parable of the Sower are guilty of self-deception. They must be classified as hearers only. Fruit bearing is the result of what we do with what we hear. Later on in James epistle we find this admonition given to believers:

“TO HIM WHO KNOWS TO DO GOOD AND DOES NOT DO IT, TO HIM IT IS SIN.”

James 4:17

Have you ever given thought to the fact that not bearing fruit is considered sin by God? Let us not forget that it was for unfruitfulness that Jesus took away the kingdom from the Pharisees and Saducees:

“THEREFORE, I SAY UNTO YOU, THE KINGDOM OF GOD WILL BE TAKEN FROM YOU AND GIVEN TO A NATION BEARING THE FRUITS OF IT.”

Matt. 21:43

The church is that nation!

We may all desire to look like this picture as Christians, but it will take some effort on our part. It is not just God who works in us. We are reminded of this by Jesus and Paul:



"...HE WHO ABIDES IN ME, AND I IN HIM, BEARS MUCH FRUIT; FOR WITHOUT ME YOU CAN DO NOTHING...IF YOU ABIDE IN ME AND MY WORDS ABIDE IN YOU..."

John 15:5,7

"FOR WE ARE GOD'S FELLOW WORKERS; YOU ARE GOD'S FIELD..."

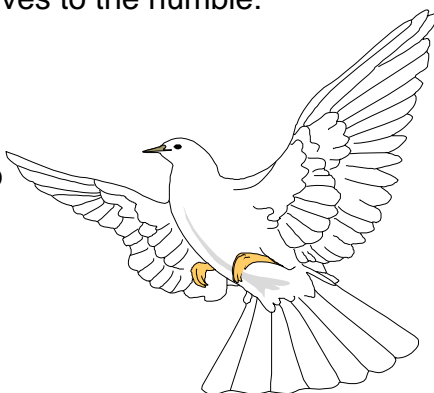
1 Cor. 2:9



I want to take time to emphasize that fruit-bearing is what we are to do. We bear or manifest (make evident) the fruit of the Holy Spirit as we yield ourselves to Him. We do not grow fruit, but rather we manifest what we receive from the Holy Spirit. God's Word does not tell us to grow in love, but rather "put on love..." (Col.3:14). Where do we get love to put on? We obtain it as part of the more grace the Holy Spirit gives to the humble:

"...THE SPIRIT WHO DWELLS IN US YEARNs JEALOUSLY...HE GIVES MORE GRACE...GOD RESISTS THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE...HUMBLE YOURSELVES IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD AND HE WILL LIFT YOU UP."

James 4:5-10



**"GROW
IN THE
KNOWLEDGE
OF OUR
LORD AND
SAVIOR,**

2 Pet. 3:18b

JESUS CHRIST

**"GROW
UP
IN ALL
THINGS
INTO
HIM..."**

Eph. 4:15

**SPIRITUAL
GROWTH**

FAITH

GROWS...

2 Thess. 1:3

GROW IN

GRACE

2 Pet. 3:18a

The above passages contain all the references to spiritual growth. We are to grow in faith, in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. If we do this, the result or evidence, will be the bearing of much fruit. The method by which we grow in these three areas is by means of:

JESUS CHRIST

**SPIRITUAL
GROWTH**

FAITH

GRACE

“...AND HIS NAME IS CALLED THE WORD OF GOD”

Rev. 19:13

“ AS HIS DIVINE POWER HAS GIVEN US ALL THINGS NECESSARY FOR LIFE AND GODLINESS THROUGH THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIM..... YOU WILL BE NEITHER BARREN OR UNFRUITFUL IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.”

2 Pet. 1:3,8



“FAITH COMES BY HEARING, AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD.”

Romans 10:17

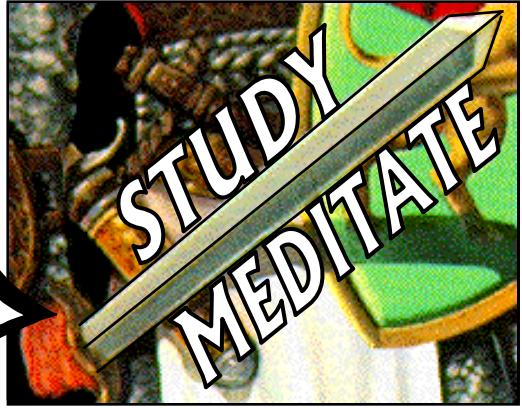
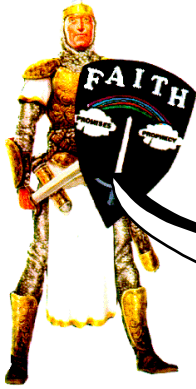
“...I COMMEND YOU TO GOD AND TO THE WORD OF HIS GRACE, WHICH IS ABLE TO BUILD YOU UP...”

Acts 20:32

It is the Word of God which produces growth. Peter reminds new-born babes to “...desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby” (1 Pet. 2:2). Let us ponder this thought for a moment. Paul identifies the Word of God as part of the armor of God (Eph.6:17). Notice that contained within the word “sword” is the “word.” The Word was authored by the Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21).



The Word of God as the sword of the Spirit is a two-edged sword (Heb.4:12). I believe that the dual-mandate to study the Word, and to meditate in it, represents the two edges of the sword, the Word of God:



**“BE DILIGENT TO
(STUDY) TO PRESENT YOURSELF
APPROVED TO GOD, A WORKER
WHO DOES NOT NEED TO BE
ASHAMED, RIGHTLY DIVIDING
THE WORD OF TRUTH.”**

2 Tim. 2:15

**“...AND IN HIS LAW
HE MEDITATES DAY AND
NIGHT...HE SHALL BE LIKE A TREE
PLANTED BY RIVERS OF WATER
THAT BRINGS FORTH ITS FRUIT
IN ITS SEASON...”**

Psalms 1:2-3

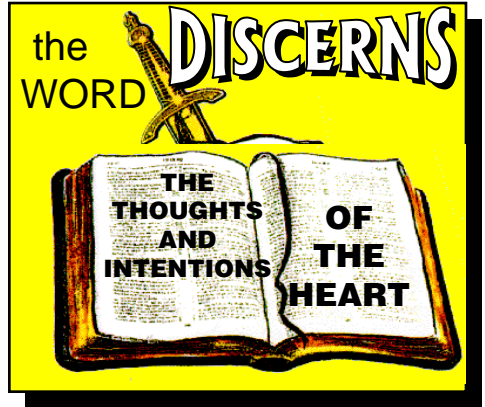
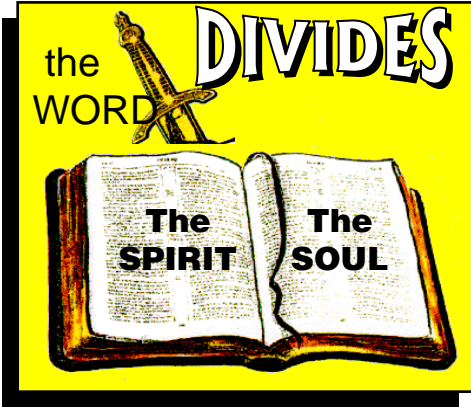
We are to study God’s Word to learn His will and His priorities. Most importantly, we study His Word that we may gain knowledge of God. Proverbs tells us “The knowledge of the Holy One is understanding” (Prov. 9:10). Paul admonished some of the saints “Knowledge puffs up... he knows nothing yet as he ought to know” (1 Cor.8:1-2). It is so easy to major in minors or to minor in majors. The mature saint of God will place the same degree of emphasis as God does Himself in His Word. In other words, he will not make mountains out of molehills. Major in what is emphasized in God’s Word. Don’t create your own emphasis where it does not exist.

To meditate means to “ponder by speaking to one’s self.” The purpose of meditation is for personal examination as to whether we are doers of the Word or merely hearers only (Jm. 1:22.)

I believe we all know that God’s Word places great emphasis upon the danger of deception. We can be deceived by others or we can deceive ourselves. God’s two-edged sword is in function in our lives in this dualistic manner: I Study God’s Word so that no one deceives me. I meditate in God’s Word so that I do not deceive myself.

“FOR THE WORD OF GOD IS LIVING AND POWERFUL, SHARPER THAN ANY TWO-EDGED SWORD, PIERCING EVEN TO THE DIVISION OF SOUL AND SPIRIT, AND...IS A DISCERNER OF THE THOUGHTS AND INTENTS OF THE HEART.”

Hebrews 4:12



The spirit of man is born of God and cannot sin (1Jn.3:9). This new man (or nature) does not need to grow. It is already perfect because it was “created according to God, in righteousness and true holiness” (Eph. 4:24).

The salvation process begins in the spirit (past), is presently being worked out in the soul (present), and will be finalized in the body (future).

The soul (mind, will and emotions) is not perfect, but rather is in the process of being renewed through the study and meditation of God’s Word (Rom.12:2, Psm. 23:3, Eph.4:23, Phil. 2:5).

Motives stem out of the heart (Hebrew word, “leb-the center”).

God makes a distinction between sin and iniquity (Psm. 32:5). Sin is performed in either the body (1 Cor. 3:18), or in the soul (Ezk. 18:20). Iniquity is the heart motive which results in the manifestation of sin.

In dealing with sin, God intends that the ax is laid to the root of the tree (Matt. 3:10).

We must deal with iniquity in the heart, not merely with the sin that it produces.

It is only the Word of God that is able to discern the thoughts and intents (the iniquity) of the heart.

“...THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, WHICH ARE ABLE TO MAKE YOU WISE FOR SALVATION THROUGH FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS. ALL SCRIPTURE IS GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD, AND IS PROFITABLE FOR DOCTRINE, FOR REPROOF, FOR CORRECTION, FOR INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, THAT THE MAN OF GOD MAY BE COMPLETE, THOROUGHLY EQUIPPED FOR EVERY GOOD WORK.”


2 Timothy 3:15-17

The above passages prove that the Word of God is profitable for more than just the act of salvation. There are seven (# of perfection) things Paul lists as being the purpose for giving the Holy Scriptures to mankind:



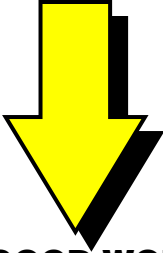

PROFITABLE

1. for **SALVATION ...**
2. for **DOCTRINE ...**
3. for **REPROOF ...**
4. for **CORRECTION**
5. for **RIGHTEOUSNESS ...**
6. for **COMPLETENESS ...**
7. for **GOOD WORKS ...**



PROFITABLE

1. for **SALVATION ...**
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
7. for **GOOD WORKS ...**

By removing the middle of this list, we can see God’s ultimate intention.

The Word of God is to take those who have become saved unto good works. Paul told the church at Ephesus that they were “...saved by grace through faith, and not of works” (Eph. 2:8-9).

However, that was not the end of his comments about works. He went on in the very next verse to tell them that they were “...created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that they should walk in them” (Eph.2:10). We must ask why the latter thoughts of Paul do not get equal emphasis with the previous. The truth is that we cannot do good works to be saved, but please note that good works are to follow after the act of salvation.

Paul repeats this position in Titus that good works follow salvation:



“FOR THE GRACE OF GOD THAT BRINGS SALVATION HAS APPEARED TO ALL MEN TEACHING

US.....
.....
.....

HIS OWN SPECIAL PEOPLE, ZEALOUS FOR GOOD WORKS.”

Titus 2:11-14

Paul sandwiches in-between the act of salvation and good works, all kinds of things to do. they are all important. However, there is this repetitious pattern in Paul’s letters of good works following salvation. He emphatically states:



“THIS IS A FAITHFUL SAYING, AND THESE THINGS I WANT YOU TO AFFIRM CONSTANTLY, THAT THOSE WHO HAVE BELIEVED IN GOD SHOULD BE CAREFUL TO MAINTAIN GOOD WORKS. THESE THINGS ARE GOOD AND PROFITABLE TO MEN” Titus 3:8

Paul seems to have the concept of profitability on his heart. Earlier he said that “The Word of God is profitable....”. Now it is good works which are profitable.

PROFITABLE

1. for **SALVATION** ...
2. for **DOCTRINE** ...
3. for **REPROOF** ...
4. for **CORRECTION** ...
5. for **RIGHTEOUSNESS** ...
6. for **COMPLETENESS** ...
7. for **GOOD WORKS** ...

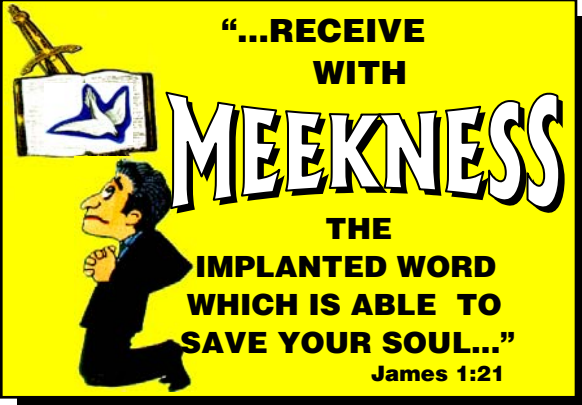
The main point I am after is simply that the Word of God is the means to prepare us for good works. It requires that we embrace God’s intent for all Scripture to bring us to the point of embracing reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness as well as being the agent God uses in saving us.

“...RECEIVE WITH MEEKNESS THE IMPLANTED WORD WHICH IS ABLE TO SAVE YOUR SOULS. BUT BE DOERS OF THE WORD, AND NOT HEARERS ONLY, DECEIVING YOURSELVES...”

James 1: 21-22

James is expressing the same thought that is conveyed in the Parable of the Sower.

We must not only hear the Word, we must receive it as it is implanted. It is able to save our soul!



“...RECEIVE WITH MEEKNESS THE IMPLANTED WORD WHICH IS ABLE TO SAVE YOUR SOUL...”
James 1:21

Notice it must be received with meekness. Luke sheds light on what this implies in his comments about the church at Berea:

“THESE WERE MORE FAIR-MINDED THAN THOSE IN THESSALONICA, IN THAT THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL READINESS, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY TO FIND OUT WHETHER THESE THINGS WERE SO. THEREFORE MANY OF THEM BELIEVED...”

Acts 17:11

The above description of the church at Berea is a good synopsis for this fourth heart of the Parable of the Sower.

They not only heard and received the Word of God, but they also searched the Scriptures in order to validate what they heard!



THESE ARE THE ONES SOWN ON GOOD GROUND
HEAR THE WORD ACCEPT IT AND BEAR FRUIT SOME THIRTY-FOLD SOME SIXTY, AND SOME A HUNDRED”
Mark 4:20

Another aspect that we might ponder briefly is the identification of fruit. What is meant by bearing fruit? The word does not leave us without direction. there are three (# of divine completeness) categories of fruit listed in the New Testament:

**THESE ARE THE ONES
SOWN ON
GOOD GROUND**

4

**HEAR THE WORD ,
ACCEPT IT ,
AND BEAR FRUIT ;
SOME THIRTYFOLD ,
SOME SIXTY , AND
SOME A HUNDRED ."**

Mark 4:20



FRUIT OF THE

HOLY SPIRIT

Eph. 5:9

Gal.5:22-23



FRUITS OF

REPENTANCE

FRUITS OF

RIGHTEOUSNESS

Mat. 3:8 2 Cor. 7:11

Phil. 1 :11 Titus 2:11-14

Let us now take a brief look at these various groups of fruit. We shall only take the time to identify them and make brief comments about them. They all are an in-depth studies in themselves, but are beyond the scope and intent of this little booklet.

“...BEAR FRUITS WORTHY OF REPENTANCE...”

(Matt. 3:8)

“GODLY SORROW PRODUCES REPENTANCE...YOU SORROWED IN A GODLY MANNER: WHAT DILIGENCE IT PRODUCED IN YOU, WHAT CLEARING OF YOURSELVES, WHAT INDIGNATION, WHAT FEAR, WHAT VEHEMENT DESIRE, WHAT ZEAL, WHAT VINDICATION!...”

(2 Cor. 7:9-11)

“...THAT YOU MAY APPROVE THE THINGS THAT ARE EXCELLENT...BEING FILLED WITH THE FRUITS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH ARE BY JESUS CHRIST, TO THE GLORY AND PRAISE OF GOD.”

(Phil. 1:10-11)

“...THE GRACE OF GOD... CAME TEACHING US...”

(Titus 2:11-14)

FRUITS OF

REPENTANCE

2 Cor.7:11

1. DILIGENCE...
2. CLEARING OF YOURSELF...
3. INDIGNATION...
4. FEAR...
5. VEHEMENT DESIRE...
6. ZEAL...
7. VINDICATION...

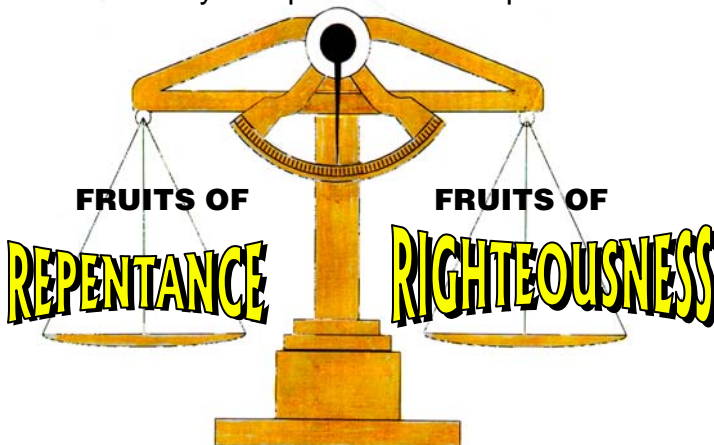
FRUITS OF

RIGHTEOUSNESS

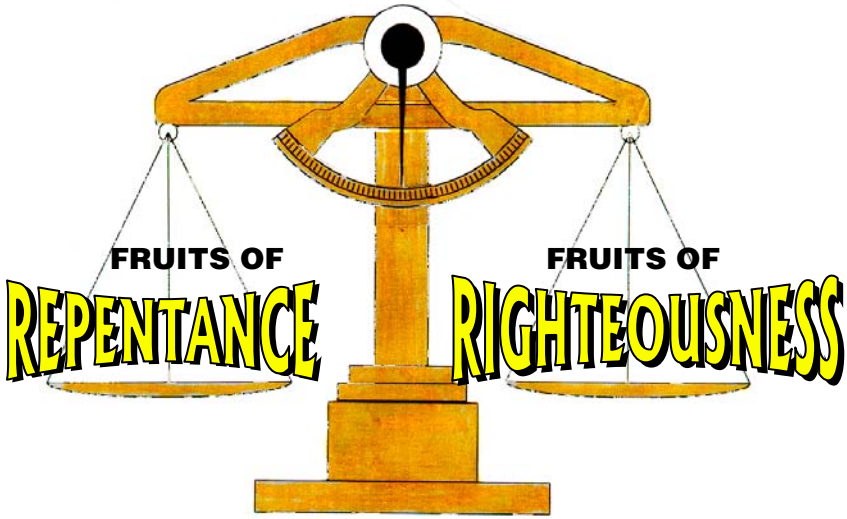
Titus 2:11-14

1. DENYING UNGODLINESS
2. DENYING WORLDLY LUSTS
3. LIVING SOBERLY
4. LIVING RIGHTEOUSLY
5. LIVING GODLY
6. LOOKING FOR HIS APPEARING
7. ZEALOUS FOR GOOD WORKS

The delicate balance of the Christian walk is vividly expressed by the chart above and below. We are called to live soberly and righteously as Titus 2 instructs us. If we fail, we are to repent and then bear fruits worthy of repentance as depicted in 2 Cor. 7:11.



“THE NORMAL CHRISTIAN LIFE”



God bore this testimony of David, “I have found David...a man after My own heart, who will do all My will” (Acts 13:22). We know that he did not walk in a state of sinless perfection. In his sin with Bathsheba alone, David broke numerous of the Ten Commandments. Still, he had a heart for God and knew how to repent. Read Psalm 51 and Psalm 32 for examples.

God expects of those who have received His grace that “...we should bear fruit to God” (Rom. 7:4). He expects that sin shall not have dominion over you, and that you should not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey its lusts (Rom. 6:12-14). We are to become slaves of righteousness with the same intensity that we were once slaves of sin (Rom. 6:18).

The apostle John tells us, “...do not sin. and if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 Jn. 2:1).

**“IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS,
HE IS FAITHFUL AND JUST TO FORGIVE US OUR SINS
AND TO CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.”**

1 Jn. 1:9

Repentance is God’s cure for all unrighteousness. When we submit to the chastening hand of the Lord, we will return to yielding the peaceable fruits of righteousness (Heb.12:11)

FRUITS OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT

1. LOVE	5. KINDNESS
2. JOY	6. GOODNESS
3. PEACE	7. FAITHFULNESS
4. LONG-SUFFERING	8. GENTLENESS
9. SELF-CONTROL	

CHARACTER
OF CHRIST

The fruits of the Holy Spirit are found in these two categories.
We are perhaps more familiar with the list above
than the one below.

However, both are depicting Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit was sent forth to
take the things that belong to Jesus and reveal them to us
(Jn.16:14).

FRUITS OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT

THE SPIRIT OF

1. THE LORD...	5. KNOWLEDGE
2. MIGHT...	6. COUNSEL...
3. WISDOM...	7. FEAR OF
4. UNDER- STANDING...	THE LORD...

ANOINTING
OF CHRIST

CHARACTER

OF CHRIST

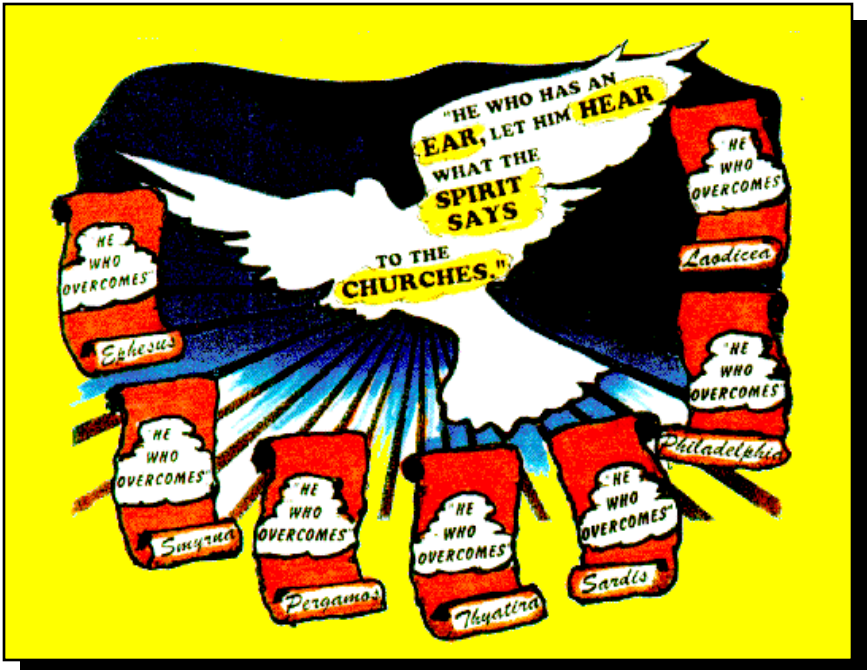
LOVE
JOY
PEACE
LONG-SUFFERING
KINDNESS
GOODNESS
FAITHFULNESS
GENTLENESS
SELF-CONTROL

ANOINTING

OF CHRIST

THE LORD
MIGHT
WISDOM
UNDERSTANDING
KNOWLEDGE
COUNSEL
FEAR OF
THE LORD

To examine the fruit of the Spirit is to have Jesus brought forth in a greater way. Jesus told His disciples, "I still have many things to say to you..." (Jn.16:12). Those sayings have been given to the Holy Spirit to speak. The message today is, "he who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Rev.2:29).



In the study of our previous heart condition (“the thorny heart”), I made a comparison between Satan’s “other things” which he seeks to substitute for the “things of God”. Let us now ponder the statement that I made earlier that these are the fruitful things which comprise a good heart:

FRUITFUL THINGS

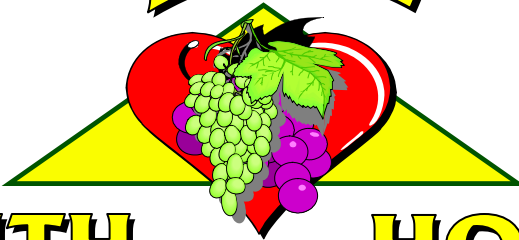


- THINGS of GOD**
- THINGS of the SPIRIT**
- THINGS of the LORD**
- THINGS which are NOT SEEN**
- THINGS that are ETERNAL**
- THINGS that are NEW**
- THINGS that are AHEAD**
- THINGS that are ABOVE**
- THINGS that are UNSHAKABLE**

In our concluding thoughts, I want to take this list of fruitful things and categorize them under the three great abiding doctrines: faith, hope and love.

**“AND NOW ABIDE
FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE,
THESE THREE...”**
1 Cor.13:13

LOVE



FAITH

HOPE

The doctrine of faith apprehends the reality of the first three items of our list of things that produce fruit. Notice that these three items depict the triune Godhead itself:



1. **THINGS** of **GOD**...
2. **THINGS** of the **SPIRIT**...
3. **THINGS** of the **LORD**...
4. **THINGS** that are **NOT SEEN**...
5. **THINGS** that are **ETERNAL**...
6. **THINGS** that are **NEW**...
7. **THINGS** that are **AHEAD**...
8. **THINGS** that are **ABOVE**...
9. **THINGS** that are **UNSHAKABLE**...

Fruitful believers have experienced the reality of God entering into their hearts. They have a personal relationship with God the Father, with God the Son, and with God the Holy Spirit. It is their prime source of motivation.

The mandate Jesus gave to have faith in God (Mark 11:22), has become a reality to this good heart. It has been said, “it isn’t **WHAT** you know, but **WHO** you know”. This is certainly true in the spiritual realm. The whole intent of God in the giving of His Word to us centers upon gaining the knowledge of Him:

“...FOR ALL SHALL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST OF THEM TO THE GREATEST OF THEM.”

(Heb.8:10)

“AND THIS IS ETERNAL LIFE, THAT THEY MAY KNOW YOU, THE ONLY TRUE GOD, AND JESUS CHRIST WHOM YOU HAVE SENT.”

John 17:3

“...THAT THE GOD OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE FATHER OF GLORY, MAY GIVE TO YOU THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND REVELATION IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIM.”

Eph.1:17

“LET NOT THE WISE MAN GLORY IN HIS WISDOM... LET HIM WHO GLORIES GLORY IN THIS, THAT HE UNDERSTANDS AND KNOWS ME...”

Jeremiah 9:23-24

“...LET US KNOW, LET US PURSUE THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LORD...I DESIRE THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD (SAYS GOD TO US) MORE THAN BURNT OFFERINGS (TO ME).”

Hosea 6:3,6

1. **THINGS** of **GOD**...
2. **THINGS** of the **SPIRIT**...
3. **THINGS** of the **LORD**...
4. **THINGS** that are **NOT SEEN**...
5. **THINGS** that are **ETERNAL**...
6. **THINGS** that are **NEW**...
7. **THINGS** that are **AHEAD**...
8. **THINGS** that are **ABOVE**...
9. **THINGS** that are **UNSHAKABLE**...

THINGS NOT SEEN... THINGS ETERNAL... THINGS AHEAD... THINGS ABOVE... THINGS NEW...

THE KEY OF HOPE

THE REALITY GOD'S WORD ENTERS

The next five things in our list fall under the doctrine of hope. They all have to do with the future. More specifically, they have to do with eternal vision. These areas encompass “The things God has prepared for those who love Him” (1 Cor.2:9). Paul goes on to say that they are “...revealed to us through His Spirit” (vs.10).



The Holy Spirit has been sent to place in our hearts the reality of those things that eye has not seen, nor ear heard (1 Cor. 2:9).

The purpose of hope is to make us a people of perseverance. Consider Paul's exhortation in this area:



“...BUT WE WHO HAVE THE FIRSTFRUITS OF THE SPIRIT...EAGERLY WAIT FOR THE...REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY. FOR WE WERE SAVED IN THIS HOPE, BUT HOPE THAT IS SEEN IS NOT HOPE; FOR WHY DOES ONE STILL HOPE FOR WHAT HE SEES? BUT IF WE HOPE FOR WHAT WE DO NOT SEE, THEN WE EAGERLY WAIT FOR IT WITH PERSEVERANCE.”

Romans 8:23-25

LOVE
OF GOD
FOR YOU

THROUGH
THE REALITY
OF

LOVE
OF GOD
BY
YOU

LOVE

**THINGS
UNSHAKABLE**

1. THINGS of GOD...
2. THINGS of the SPIRIT...
3. THINGS of the LORD...
4. THINGS that are NOT SEEN...
5. THINGS that are ETERNAL...
6. THINGS that are NEW...
7. THINGS that are AHEAD...
8. THINGS that are ABOVE.. .
9. THINGS that are UNSHAKABLE...

The last item on our list of fruitful things is things unshakable. This solidly falls under the banner of love. Paul tells us “Love bears all things...endures all things...love never fails” (1 Cor. 13:7-8).

Two aspects of love are needful in order that we are able to bear fruit. We must have a reality of God’s love for us and there must be a reality of our love for God. The Scriptures tell us that the first produces the second:

“WE LOVE HIM BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US.”

1 John 4:19

The apostle Paul states that this two-fold love affair between God and us is unshakable:

“AND WE KNOW THAT ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD TO THOSE WHO LOVE GOD....IF GOD IS FOR US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US? HE WHO DID NOT SPARE HIS OWN SON, BUT DELIVERED HIM UP FOR US ALL, HOW SHALL HE NOT WITH HIM ALSO FREELY GIVE US ALL THINGS?...WHO SHALL BRING A CHARGE AGAINST GOD’S ELECT?...WHO IS HE WHO CONDEMNS?...WHO SHALL SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST? SHALL TRIBULATION, OR DISTRESS, OR PERSECUTION, OR FAMINE, OR NAKEDNESS, OR PERIL, OR SWORD?... IN ALL THESE THINGS WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS THROUGH HIM WHO LOVED US...(NOTHING) SHALL BE ABLE TO SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD...”

Romans 8:28-39 excerpts

This is the profession of a man with a good heart. He knows God’s love for him but he also demonstrates his love for God by being willing to embrace the likes of the things Paul describes as the normal Christian life.

**"BY THIS
IS MY FATHER GLORIFIED,
THAT YOU BEAR MUCH FRUIT..
I CHOSE YOU AND APPOINTED YOU
THAT YOU SHOULD GO AND BEAR
FRUIT AND THAT YOUR FRUIT
SHOULD REMAIN..."**

John 15:8,16

FRUITFULNESS



"SOME 30 , SOME 60 , SOME 100 ..."

Pastor Randy Shupe

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



"THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE TABERNACLE"
was founded in Pastor Shupe's home in 1980 after serving as a
lay teacher in the Assemblies of God for several years.

The church now resides in this building at
5690 Yukon Street,
in "Olde Town Arvada", Colorado, 80002.

Deeply impressed by the
illustrated teachings of the late
Clarence Larkin, and convinced that
"a picture is worth a thousand
words", Pastor Shupe has combined
his artistic talents with his God-given
gift of revelational teaching.

The illustrations in his books and
videos represent some of the visual
aids he prepares for the
feeding of his flock.



Pastor Randy Shupe

You may reach him by phone at 303-423-1325,
or write to the address above.

His website location is
PastorRandyShupe.com

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER



Pastor Randy Shupe

Jesus said to His disciples:

**“DO YOU NOT UNDERSTAND
THIS PARABLE? HOW THEN WILL
YOU UNDERSTAND ALL THE
PARABLES?”**

Mark 4:13

This parable unlocks all the other parables Jesus taught about the condition of the Kingdom of God on earth.

This is not a story just about salvation. The Parable of the Sower depicts what happens within the heart of man whenever the Word of God is sown. Only one out of four who hear the same Word bring forth fruit in their lives. I believe this parable holds the key to what is wrong with modern-day Christianity.

the **WAY**, ^{the} **TRUTH**, ^{the} **LIFE**
TABERNACLE

Pastor
Randy Shupe



423-1325

5690 YUKON ST. ARVADA CO. 80002
www.PastorRandyShupe.com