

Learning to Follow God Rather than Living for Pleasure: Choosing God's Righteousness Now for God's Rewards Later

Matt 13:22; Mark 4:18-19; Luke 8:14

Matt 13:22 "Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

Mark 4:18-19 "Now these are the ones sown among thorns; *they are* the ones who hear the word, ¹⁹ 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."

Luke 8:14 "Now the ones *that* fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity."

The Core Concept for Soils #2 (stony) and #3 (thorny) of this Parable:

Life exists, but maturity or fruitfulness do not. These are issues believers face.

Overview of the Thorny Ground Explanations in the Parallel Passages:

1. The Word – hears the word [and grows...]
2. The Problem – choked by 2 or 3 “thorns”
3. The Result –
 - *The word is being choked (Matt/Mark)*
 - *The word is becoming unfruitful (Matt/Mark)*
 - *This believer is being choked (Luke)*
 - *This believer is producing no mature fruit (Luke)*

The 3-Fold Problem that Is Caused by these Thorns:

1. *They divert our focus from the Word*
2. *They become our compass for living*
3. *They prevent our obedience to the Word*

5 Areas in Which God Specifically Commands Us Not to Worry

1. *Do Not Worry About Provisions – Necessities (Matt 6:25-33)*
2. *Do Not Worry About Promotion – Recognition (1 Pet 5:5-8)*
3. *Do Not Worry About Position – Situation (1 Cor 7:20-21)*
4. *Do Not Worry About Persecution – Responding (Luke 12:11-12)*
5. *Do Not Worry About Pressures – Any Difficulties (Phil 4:4-9)*

How Can Riches Choke Us? Riches (or Their Pursuit or Focus) Can...

1. *Motivate Us to Evil and Its Results (1 Tim 6:9-10)*
2. *Master Us & Become Our God (Matt 6:24; Col 3:5)*
3. *Misuse Our Entire Life Chasing Empty Promises (Mt 16:14-28)*

Quick Principles to Avoid Being Led by the Pursuit of Money

1. *Seek to Focus on What Is More Valuable than Money (Col 3:1-6)*
2. *Seek Godly Contentment in God's Riches (1 Tim 6:6-8)*
3. *Seek to Trust in God and Not in Riches (1 Tim 6:17-18)*
4. *Seek to Be Rich in Good Works (1 Tim 6:18)*
5. *Seek to Share Rather than to Obtain (1 Tim 6:18b)*
6. *Seek to Store Up Eternal Treasures in Heaven (1 Tim 6:19)*

Northridge Baptist Church – Pastor Kevin Subra – October 2, 2016

The Problem of Pleasure (& Lust)

1. We Have a Pleasure-Driven _____

Titus 3:3 For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.

Ἦμεν γάρ ποτε καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀνόητοι, ἀπειθεῖς, πλανώμενοι, δουλεύοντες ἐπιθυμίαις καὶ ἡδοναῖς ποικίλαις, ἐν κακία καὶ φθόνῳ διάγοντες, στυγητοί, μισοῦντες ἀλλήλους.

Eph 2:3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the **lusts** of our flesh, fulfilling the **desires** of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

ἐν οἷς καὶ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἀνεστράφημέν ποτε ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν ποιοῦντες τὰ θελήματα τῆς σαρκὸς καὶ τῶν διανοιῶν, καὶ ἡμεθα τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς ὡς καὶ οἱ λοιποί·

2. We Have an Ever-Present Pleasure _____

James 4:1 Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they not come* from your **desires for pleasure** that war in your members?

Πόθεν πόλεμοι καὶ πόθεν μάχαι ἐν ὑμῖν; οὐκ ἐντεῦθεν, ἐκ τῶν ἡδονῶν ὑμῶν τῶν στρατευομένων ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ὑμῶν;

James 4:3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your **pleasures**.

αἰτεῖτε καὶ οὐ λαμβάνετε διότι κακῶς αἰτεῖσθε, ἵνα ἐν ταῖς ἡδοναῖς ὑμῶν δαπανήσητε.

3. We Have a God-Provided _____ in Christ!

Gal 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Gal 5:24 And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and **desires**.

οἱ δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ] τὴν σάρκα ἐσταύρωσαν σὺν τοῖς παθήμασιν καὶ ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις.

4. We Have a Clearly-Communicated _____ from God

Titus 2:11-14 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, ¹² teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly **lusts**, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, ¹³ looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works.

16 Directions from God to Help Us Live for Him

1. Refuse to Yield to the Rule of Lust

Rom 6:12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.

Μη οὖν βασιλευέτω ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῷ θνητῷ ὑμῶν σώματι εἰς τὸ ὑπακούειν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτοῦ,

2. Make Jesus Your Power

3. Refuse to Feed Lust

Rom 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

ἀλλὰ ἐνδύσαθε τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ τῆς σαρκὸς πρόνοιαν μὴ ποιεῖσθε εἰς ἐπιθυμίαις.

4. Walk by the Spirit

Gal 5:16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Λέγω δέ, πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν σαρκὸς οὐ μὴ τελέσητε.

5. Choose to Discard a Life of Lust

Eph 4:22 that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

ἀποθέσθαι ὑμᾶς κατὰ τὴν προτέραν ἀναστροφὴν τὸν παλαιὸν ἄνθρωπον τὸν φθειρόμενον κατὰ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τῆς ἀπάτης,

6. Make Drastic Choices

Col 3:5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

Νεκρώσατε οὖν τὰ μέλη τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, πορνείαν ἀκαθαρσίαν πάθος ἐπιθυμίαν κακὴν, καὶ τὴν πλεονεξίαν, ἣτις ἐστὶν εἰδωλολατρία,

7. Live on Purpose, not by Passion

1 Thes 4:5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;

μὴ ἐν πάθει ἐπιθυμίας καθάπερ καὶ τὰ ἔθνη τὰ μὴ εἰδότα τὸν θεόν,

8. Focus on God, Not on Gold

1 Tim 6:9 But 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.

οἱ δὲ βουλόμενοι πλουτεῖν ἐμπίπτουσιν εἰς πειρασμὸν καὶ παγίδα καὶ ἐπιθυμίας πολλὰς ἀνοήτους καὶ βλαβερὰς, αἵτινες βυθίζουσιν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους εἰς ὄλεθρον καὶ ἀπώλειαν·

9. Run Away from Lust, and Chase After Godliness

2 Tim 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Τὰς δὲ νεωτερικὰς ἐπιθυμίας φεῦγε, δίωκε δὲ δικαιοσύνην πίστιν ἀγάπην εἰρήνην μετὰ τῶν ἐπικαλουμένων τὸν κύριον ἐκ καθαρᾶς καρδίας.

10. Recognize the Controlling Danger of Desire

2 Tim 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;

Ἔσται γὰρ καιρὸς ὅτε τῆς ὑγιαινούσης διδασκαλίας οὐκ ἀνέξονται ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὰς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας ἑαυτοῖς ἐπισωρεύουσιν διδασκάλους κνηθόμενοι τὴν ἀκοήν

11. Say No and Say Yes

Titus 2:12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,

παιδεύουσα ἡμᾶς, ἵνα ἀρνησάμενοι τὴν ἀσέβειαν καὶ τὰς κοσμικὰς ἐπιθυμίας σωφρόνως καὶ δικαίως καὶ εὐσεβῶς ζήσωμεν ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι,

12. Refuse to Conform (because you know the truth)

1 Pet 1:14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance;

ὡς τέκνα ὑπακοῆς μὴ συσχηματιζόμενοι ταῖς πρότερον ἐν τῇ ἀγνοίᾳ ὑμῶν ἐπιθυμίαις

13. Let No Mean No (don't toy with temptation)

1 Pet 2:11 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul,

Ἀγαπητοί, παρακαλῶ ὡς παροίκους καὶ παρεπιδήμους ἀπέχεσθαι τῶν σαρκικῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν αἵτινες στρατεύονται κατὰ τῆς ψυχῆς·

14. Live in God's Will not by Your Want

1 Pet 4:2 that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God.

εἰς τὸ μηκέτι ἀνθρώπων ἐπιθυμίαις ἀλλὰ θελήματι θεοῦ τὸν ἐπίλοιπον ἐν σαρκὶ βιώσαι χρόνον.

15. Recognize the Waste a Lust-Led Life Is

1 Pet 4:3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles--when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.

ἄρκετὸς γὰρ ὁ παρεληλυθὸς χρόνος τὸ βούλημα τῶν ἐθνῶν κατειργάσθαι πεπορευμένους ἐν ἀσελγείαις, ἐπιθυμίαις, οἰνοφλυγίαις, κόμοις, πότοις καὶ ἀθεμίτοις εἰδωλολατρίαις.

16. Know the Word, and Live by the Word

2 Pet 1:4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

δι' ὧν τὰ τίμια καὶ μέγιστα ἡμῖν ἐπαγγέλματα δεδώρηται, ἵνα διὰ τούτων γένησθε θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως ἀποφυγόντες τῆς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ φθορᾶς.