

Becoming Fruitful Disciples: Avoiding the Pleasure Trap (Pt 3)

Core Understanding of Seed & Sower: LIFE Exists, But MATURITY Does Not

The issues addressed by the story and weedy ground are issues believers face and which must be overcome for believers to be fruitful and mature. (cp. Col 2:6-8; Phil 4:6-8)

Becoming Fruitful Disciples: By Developing Roots

Luke 8:13 But the ones on the rock *are those* who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. (Eph 4:11-16; Col 2:6-8)

Becoming Fruitful Disciples: By Eliminating Worry

PROBLEM: Cares (or Worry) Distract and Ruin Our Christian Walk

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. (cp. Mark 4:9; Luke 8:14; 21:34) **Keep us from growing spiritually mature – Keep us from producing eternal fruit**

4 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 or Advancement (*1 Peter 5:5-8*)
3. Do Not Worry About Position – Situation or Circumstances (*1 Cor 7:20-21*)
4. Do Not Worry About Persecution (*Luke 12:11-12*)

God's Instruction on How to Handle Worry

1. Put God's Work and Ways First (*Matt 6:22-33*)
2. Prompt Yourself About God's Care for You (*1 Pet 5:7*)
3. Pray Instead of Worry – Give Everything to God (*Phil 4:4-8*)
4. Point Your Care Toward Others (*1 Cor 12:24-25*)
5. Prioritize Worship Before Work (*Luke 10:38-42*)

Becoming Fruitful Disciples: By Avoiding Greed (Covetousness)

The Definition and Danger of Greed (Covetousness)

The DEFINITION of Greed (Covetousness)

- the obsession with accumulating money and/or material goods (*1 Tim 3:3; 3:8; Titus 1:7*)
- the valuing & pursuing material goods more than valuing & pursuing God (*2 Tim 3:2*)

The DANGERS of Greed (Covetousness)

1. Riches Are Deceitful (*Matt 13:22; Mark 4:19; Lu 8:14*)
2. Loving Riches Leads Us in Many Wrong Ways (*1 Tim 6:10*)
3. Riches Can Make Us Think We Can Live Without God (*Lu 18:18-25; Rev 3:17*)
4. Riches Can Cause Us to Focus On Riches and Not Upon God (*Lu 12:15-21; 16:19-31; Col 3:5*)
5. Riches Can Cause Us to Treat People According to Their Wealth (*Lu 14:12; James 2:1-4*)

The Believer's True Riches: Understanding Our True Wealth

1. We Have a Different Focus – Toward God and Not Toward Earthly Things (*Col 3:1-2*)
2. We Have a Perfect Pattern – Jesus Sacrificed Now for Eternal Benefit (*2 Cor 8:9*)
3. We Have a Better Type of Riches – Spiritual Riches from God
 - a. The Riches of God's Grace to Provide the Forgiveness of Our Sins (*Eph 1:7*)
 - b. The Riches of God's Grace to Save Us (*Eph 2:1-10; Titus 3:3-7*)
 - c. The Riches of God's Grace for Christian Living (*Rom 10:12; Eph 1:15-21; 3:8-19*)

Becoming Fruitful Disciples: By Avoiding the Pleasure Trap

The Pleasure Problem

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.

Mark 4:18 "Now these are the ones sown among thorns; [they are] the ones who hear the word, 19 "and the ... desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

1. **Our Past** – "serving various lusts and pleasures" (*Titus 3:3; Eph 2:3*)
2. **Our Problem** – "your desires for pleasure that war in your members" (*James 4:1,3*)
3. **Our Position** – "those [who are] Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." (*Gal 5:24; 2:20*)
4. **God's Plan** – "teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age" (*Titus 2:14*)

16 Ways to Respond to Lust

1. **Refuse to Yield to the _____ of Lust**
Rom 6:12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.
2. **Make Jesus Your _____**
3. **Refuse to _____ Lust**
Rom 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts.
4. **_____ by the Spirit**
Gal 5:16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.
5. **Choose to _____ 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,
6. **Make Drastic _____**
Col 3:5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.
7. **Live on _____, not by Passion**
1 Thes 4:5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;
8. **_____ 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.
9. **Run _____ from Lust, and Chase _____ 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.
10. **Recognize the Controlling _____ 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;
11. **Say _____ and Say _____**
Titus 2:12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,
12. **Refuse to _____ (because you know the truth)**
1 Pet 1:14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in your ignorance;
13. **Let _____ 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,
14. **Live in God's _____ not by Your _____**
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.
15. **Recognize the _____ 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.
16. **Know the _____, and Live by the _____**
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.