

“The Parable of the Sower”

Matthew 13:1-23 (Mark 4:1-20; Luke 8:4-15)

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Why Four Gospels?

The Old Testament abounds with references to Jesus, not as history but as prophecy (Luke 24:27). The Old Testament reveals the person of Christ as the coming King, Servant, Man, and the Son of God (Zech. 9:9; Isa. 42:1; Isa. 7:14; Isa. 9:6).

The Gospels, in similar manner, present Jesus as King, Servant, Man, and the Son of God. We do not have four pictures of Christ, but a four-sided picture of Christ, or a composite of our Savior:

1. Matthew presents Christ as **King**. We see the genealogy of a King. The King who is to assume the throne over Israel must come from the lineage of David.
2. Mark presents Christ as **Servant**. A servant has no need of a genealogy (Mk. 10:43-45; 8:34-37).

3. Luke presents Christ as *Man*. We find the genealogy from Joseph, His legal father, back to the first man, Adam (Luke 19:10).
4. John presents Christ as the *Son of God*. God has no genealogy or beginning. John stresses the preexistence of Jesus (Jn. 1:1, 14; 20:30, 31).

The Gospels contain the account of the birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The Book of Acts continues from the ascension of Jesus, and then records the birth and early growth of the Church. The Epistles contain guidelines for the Church and believers of this age. Revelation is primarily prophecy of the fulfillment of Jesus' Kingdom and His judgment of the earth.

Parables in Matthew

The theme of Matthew is the presentation of the King and His kingdom to the Jewish nation in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.

Outline of Matthew

Dr. S. Lewis Johnson

1. The Preparation of the King (1:1-4:11)
2. The Enunciation of the King's Principles (4:12-7:29)
3. The Demonstration of the King's Power (8:1-11:1)
4. The Revelation of the King's New Program (11:2-13:53)
5. The Preparation for the King's Passion (13:54-19:2)
6. The Repudiation of the King's Person (19:3-26:2)
7. The Presentation of the Passion (26:2-27:66)
8. The Culmination of the King's Passion (28:1-20)

Israel's repeated and progressively more severe rejection of the King and therefore, His kingdom (11:16-19) instigated a change in direction of Jesus' ministry and message. Verse 20: *"Then Jesus began to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not."*

The King and subsequently, the kingdom have been rejected and the kingdom has now been postponed in God's timetable. Jesus then begins to prepare the disciples with instructions on how to conduct themselves during the interim.

In Chapter 13, He begins to speak to them in parables. (Literally, something "cast along side of" so that a comparison could be made). A parable is a saying or a story which draws a comparison between some earthly reality and a spiritual truth that it intends to illuminate. Parables are designed to declare and illustrate truth to the open-minded and to conceal it from the closed-minded (Matt. 13:10-17). He spoke the parables to "great multitudes" (Mt. 13:2, 3), but the mysteries (newly revealed truths) were intended to be understood only by the 12 and the disciples from out of the multitude (Mk. 4:10, 11). Perhaps it is Christ's mercy that causes Him to veil more of the truth from some, lest they, trampling upon pearls, add to their judgment by further rejection of truth plainly spoken.

The disciples were originally told to go only to the "lost sheep of house of Israel" (10:5, 6). In the new dispensation they are told to go to "all nations" (28:19); "into all the world and preach the gospel..." (Mk. 16:15). On the day of Pentecost the disciples began to comprehend the inauguration of the new age; the age of the Church (Acts 1:8; 2:1ff). Though the parable's primary interpretation had to do with Jesus' earthly kingdom, there is pertinent application for us today. They were to be witnesses unto Him, not just to Israel, but unto all the world. This is our task today. Let us not be sidetracked toward more attractive, but less important pursuits.

The Background of "The Parable of the Sower" (Matt. 13:1-23; Mk. 4:1-20; Lk. 8:4-15)

Because of the progressive rejection of the King, the implied question from the disciples is, "In view of the postponement of the Millennial kingdom, what should we as disciples do and what should we expect?" The disciples were to sow the Word. When they did, there were essentially four different reactions they could expect based on the state of preparedness of people's hearts:

1. Unbelief (v4, 19)
2. Falling away because of persecution (v.5-6, 20-21)

3. Unfruitfulness because of worldly cares (v7, 22)
4. Fruitfulness in varying degrees (v8, 23).

They were to understand that when the Word is preached and apparent failure is realized, the problem is not the Word. The problem is in the receptivity of the hearers (i.e. the state of the soil in which the seed was sown). But the disciples are also to expect to see fruit for their labors. The parable guards them from unrealistic expectations and also from discouragement (Psalm 126:6: I Cor. 15:58).

The Parable by Jesus, Matthew 13 (KJV)

- 3 *And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;*
- 4 *And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:*
- 5 *Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:*
- 6 *And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.*
- 7 *And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:*
- 8 *But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.*
- 9 *Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.*

The Questions by the Disciples, “Why Parables?” and “What About This One?” (Also Mark 4:10; Luke 8:9)

- 10 *And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?*
- 11 *He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.*
- 12 *For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.*
- 13 *Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.*
- 14 *And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:*
- 15 *For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.*
- 16 *But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.*
- 17 *For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.*

The Explanation by Jesus

- 18 *Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.*
- 19 *When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.*
- 20 *But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;*
- 21 *Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.*
- 22 *He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.*
- 23 *But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.*

Observations from Jesus’ Explanation

Several facts to be shown from Jesus’ interpretation:

1. This age is to be characterized by the sowing of seed; the Word of God.

2. Within the age there is a marked difference in the preparation of the soils for the reception of the seed sown.
3. The age is marked by opposition to the Word from the world, the flesh, and the devil.
4. During the course of the age there will be a varied response to the sowing of the seed. (e. g. wayside, stony places, thorns bore no fruit; and the good ground bore a hundredfold, sixty, and thirty). Few will respond (Matt. 7:13, 14).

The Various Responses From Each Of The Soils

Wayside	Hear Word, do not understand	Lost
Stony	Hear Word & receive it, no root	Offended
Thorns	Hear Word & receive it, anxious	Unfruitful
Good earth	Hear Word & receive it, understand it	Fruitful

There is conflict among Bible teachers concerning the interpretation of this parable. This conflict usually centers on the middle two soils, the stony places and the soil with thorns; whether or not these two soils represent the saved or the unsaved. Any interpretation that can be accepted must: one; agree with the context, i.e. Jesus’ explanation in verses 18 to 23, and two; agree with clear doctrinal passages elsewhere in the Bible. Those interpretations which do not match these criteria must be rejected.

Various Interpretations of “The Parable of the Sower”

	Arminian	Lordship Salvation or Reformed/Calvinist	What I believe agrees with other Scripture
Soil 1 – Way side	Unsaved	Unsaved	Unsaved – Cannot enter the Kingdom
Soil 2 – Stony Places	Saved, but loses salvation for falling away	Unsaved professor since no perseverance	Saved eternally but no Kingdom benefits because no perseverance under trial
Soil 3 - Thorns	Saved, but loses salvation through worldliness	Unsaved professor since no fruit	Saved eternally but no Kingdom benefits because invests in life of the world
Soil 4 – Good Ground	Saved and fruitful	Saved and fruitful	Saved with moderate to full-share of Kingdom benefits

“The Way Side”

19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

The seed is the word of God (Mk. 4:14; Lk. 8:11). We are to be sowers of God’s word (Psalm 126:6), because he tells us to (II Tim. 4:2) and because faith, salvation and growth come through its power (Rom. 10:17; James 1:18, 21; I Pet. 1:23; I Pet. 2:2; II Tim. 3:16, 17).

Satan is “a deceiver” (Rev. 12:9), and the “father of lies (John 8:44). He deceives the minds of those who do not believe (II Cor. 4:3, 4), and walks about “seeking whom he may devour” (I Pet. 5:8). He is not to be considered an all-around nice guy.

Since a goal of Satan is to blind the minds of the unbeliever so that he will not understand the good news of salvation (II Cor. 4:3, 4), we should become specialists in presenting the gospel in a clear, simple and understandable manner (II Cor. 3:12; 11:3). The vast majority of the people with whom I have spoken concerning Christ had previously heard a counterfeit gospel consisting of faith plus something they must do

themselves to earn salvation. They had *not* understood that it is “Christ plus nothing” for salvation (Eph. 2:8, 9). God loved us “while we were yet sinners” (Rom. 5:8) not just after we had reformed or promised something. Jesus is not just *necessary* for our salvation, He is *sufficient* for our salvation (Titus 2:13, 14; Heb. 10:10, 14). Perhaps if the lost would understand the good news then Satan would not be able to “catch away that which was sown in his heart.” It is God’s job to convict the unbeliever of the sin of unbelief (John 16:7-9) but it is our job to “preach the gospel” (Mark 16:15; I Cor. 3:5-7). “He that winneth souls is wise” (Prov. 11:30). We must speak the truth in love to a lost world (Eph. 4:15).

“Stony Places”

20 *But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon [immediately] with joy receiveth it;*

21 *Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.*

One way that we know that these are believers and not false professors, is from the parallel passage in Luke 8:12, 13.¹ A sensible way to handle an imminent crisis is by knowledge and preparation. We must first arm ourselves in order to then effectively be able to step into the battlefield (Eph. 6:10-17; II Tim. 2:3, 4). Expect that we are going to get shot at. If we are not fired upon, we are probably not being much of a threat to the enemy. It is also essential to realize that much of this battle takes place in our minds (II Cor. 10:3-5; Rom. 12:1,2).

“*Yea, all that will live Godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution*” (II Tim 3:12). One way to avoid persecution is to become a secret-service Christian. If we do not take a stand for the One who gave His life for us then we will not have to bear the stigma of Christ (Gal. 6:17). That is sin and is the coward’s way out. (John 15:17,19; 16:33; II Cor. 7:4; Rom. 8:18; I Pet. 4:12, 14). Unfortunately many believers take the easy way, which is really the hard way (Prov. 14:12). A sad example of this mentality is found in John 12:42 where we read, “Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:” What a sad commentary. Many believers subconsciously try to escape the responsibility of service by willfully refusing to prepare themselves to serve. That excuse does not hold up (Luke 12:47). Do not be a “meringue pie” Christian — one squash and you are through.

We must also seek to avoid unbiblical extremes in our lives. Mankind seems to naturally gravitate toward the “Pendulum Principle.” For example, we should avoid adopting a persecution complex as one extreme, just as we should not be receiving trials because of our own sin or stupidity (I Pet. 4:12-15).

The following passage has helped to prepare me for testings in my life:

¹ Most interpreters claim that those in the middle two groups represent lost people; i.e. false professors. This is due to the mention of them being “withered away” (v6), “offended” (v21), “choked” (v7; 22), and “unfruitful (v22). Some with whom I have spoken assume that these people being represented could not have been saved as they did not “persevere unto the end;” a presupposition that they have imported into the text.

Though many respected Bible teachers adhere to the doctrine of the “perseverance of the saints,” I do not see it as a Biblical doctrine. This is not to be confused with the perseverance of *Christ* or the *preservation* of the saints, i.e. eternal security. There are Bible examples of believers who have *not* persevered until the end: 1st Tim. 2:19 speaks of those who “concerning faith hath made shipwreck.” They had to have been on the “ship” to make a shipwreck. One of these men later, by erroneous teaching, did “overthrow the faith of some” (2 Tim. 2:18). There are believers who “sin unto death.” A few examples are Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5: 1-11); Moses (Deut. 34:6 cf. Num. 20:11, 12); many of the Corinthian church (1 Cor. 11:30); and the warning about the brother (1 John 5:16). These could hardly be considered to have persevered to the end.

Most commentators agree that the *fourth* group represents saved people. We are told that the last three groups similarly “received the word,” as opposed to the first group which was lost. No mention of is made of them receiving the word. It was caught away by the wicked one (13:19).

The companion passage in Luke 8:12, 13, plainly contrasts those by the wayside (the 1st group) who did *not* believe, with those among the thorns (the 2nd group) who *did believe*. If John 3:16 means anything, then this group represents saved people, though not faithful to the end.

“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” (James 1:2-4).

A brief synopsis of this passage is:

1. Trials are for certain, v2: *when*, not *if*.
2. Trials are various, v2: *divers* or *varied*.
3. Trials are unexpected, v2: *fall into*.

Two desired responses of trials (i.e. commands):

1. Count it joy, v2, because we know something; the testing of our faith works patience, v3. (Rom. 5:3).
2. Yield, do not escape, v4, cooperate with endurance. We want instant comfort and control. Our tendency is to become upset with God and we do not remain under. We want to escape. That is natural. When someone is undergoing a trial we pray that they will endure with God’s grace, etc. But when we have a trial we pray to get out. Nothing negative should happen to a Christian. If God has allowed it, it is positive; our response to it may be negative though. We say, “God, if you change these circumstances, I would be happy.” God says, “If you would change your attitude, we would both be happy.”

II Cor. 1:3-7, presents a way that we can honor God in our testings. We can comfort others with the comfort with which God comforted us. Try it. It can put new purpose in our lives as we minister to others in the Body of Christ.

We *will* have trials (I Cor. 10:13). Problems in life do not always come because of our sin or poor judgment. In some ways, the believers who are fighting the spiritual battle will have more trials and persecution than the ones who are sitting on the sidelines (II Tim. 3:12; John 15:20; II Tim. 1:8; 4:5; Heb. 11:24, 25; I Pet. 2:20b). They will also have more rewards. This should alert us to the folly of judging someone who is having more trials than we. They *could* be in the center of God’s will. Perhaps they are being even more humble and moldable in God’s hand than we are. God could be preparing them for a special service that He is not able to work in us because of our pride or our misplaced priorities.

The “health and wealth gospel” that is so popular today is contrary to the teaching of the Bible. Jesus, the Apostle Paul, and other faithful examples in the Bible experienced little of this in their lives. It did not work very well for those who were commended for their faith in Hebrews, chapter 11. The reward side of the issue is presented in other passages (Luke 18:29, 30; I Cor. 3:11-15; II Cor. 5:10, 11; Rev. 22:12).

Jesus has already been there (Heb. 2:18). He understands the *feeling* of our infirmities (Heb. 4:15). Nothing can reach us before it goes across His desk and receives the big “OK rubber stamp.” He knows what is best for us in the long run.

Trials are temporary (I Pet. 1:6; 5:10; II Cor. 4:17; Rom. 8:18). Our rewards are eternal. The trials are to glorify God and to mature us (I Pet. 1:7; 5:10; Rom. 8:18; James 1:2, 3) Our priorities determine our response to trials (Phil. 3:8-10). If our goal is to be comfortable; trials will be a tragedy. If our goal is to be like Christ; trials can be a triumph. Do not doubt in the dark what God has given you in the light.

“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye: for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified” (I Peter 4:12-14).

“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:17, 18).

“Among Thorns”

22 *He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful* (Matt. 13:22; Also Mark 4:19; Luke 8:14).

This verse contains a warning of two factors which can hinder the fruitfulness of the believer;

1. The care of this world.
2. The deceitfulness of riches.

The Care of This World

One important factor which greatly affects our fruitfulness or unfruitfulness as a believer is how we handle the care of the world. What is the “care” of the world (lit. “of the age)? Does this mean that we should not plan ahead? Should we sell everything that we own and go up on a mountain and wait for the end as some extremists have done? This is not what God is telling us to do. The immediate context exhorts us to be fruitful (v23), not to be fanatics.

The word “care” is from the Greek word, “*merimna*, μεριμνα,” and means “anxiety” or “worry.” It comes from a root word meaning “divided.” The verb form, “*merimnao*, μεριμναο,” is translated in the sixth chapter of Matthew six times as “take thought.”

Matthew 6:27-34, tells us (paraphrased): Take no thought, or do not be anxious for our life, our food, our drink, our body, or our clothes (v26). Anxiety will not add to our height or life span (v27). Why be anxious about our clothing? God takes care of the lilies of the field which do not even labor (v28). The presence of anxiety means the absence of faith (v30). Therefore do not be anxious about our food, drink or raiment (v31). Our father knows what we need (v32). In light of all this, we should seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all those things that we might have wasted time and energy worrying about will be added unto us (v33). Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious of itself. The day will have enough evil of itself; we do not need to add to it. Faith in our Christian life is not “psyching ourselves up” to pretend that things are OK. It is acting on facts that we know to be true because God says it is.

We see in Verse 30, the contrast between anxiety and faith. God is honored when we trust Him. It is sin to doubt the only One Whom we can truly trust. (Rom. 14:23; Heb. 11:6). We are saved by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8, 9) How much faith do we need to be saved? The amount of our faith is not the issue, the *object* of our faith is. It is not our faith that saves us. *God* saves us by His grace. Salvation is appropriated through our faith. Though God does speak of great faith (Luke 7:9) and little faith (Matt. 6:30 et al); referring to the magnitude of that which is believed, *any* amount of faith is faith.

If we trust a bank enough so that we deposit our life savings, the safety of our money has nothing to do with how hard or how much that we believe. We can even spend the day worrying about it. The preservation of the money has to do only with the integrity of the bank. If the bank is trustworthy, our money is safe.

In contrast to that, if we place our money in an unsound bank and yet have the greatest amount of faith, even if we knock on doors and tell everyone how sound the bank is, the amount of our faith is irrelevant to the safety of our money. Our funds are only as good as the trustworthiness of the bank. It makes sense to trust the only “Bank” that can never fail.

I have spoken with members of cults and those committed to humanistic philosophies who had great faith in their opinions. Some of their beliefs were in conflict with God’s word and therefore, were in error. It is difficult for us to accept the fact that truth is not determined by how hard one believes. It can still be untrue.

Truth is also not determined by how many people believe it (Matt. 7:13, 14; Prov. 14:12; Jer. 17:9). An old saying states that, “50,000 Frenchmen can’t be wrong.” That is an untrue statement. Not only can 50,000 Frenchmen can be wrong, but so can most of mankind. The majority can be wrong and they usually are. We must stand on God’s word even when, not just the world, but even the “Christian community” opposes us. Jesus’ greatest enemies were the religious leaders whose pride superseded their integrity and good judgment.

We are not only saved through faith, but we are exhorted to live by faith. “*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the lord, so walk ye in Him*” (Col. 2:6). “*For we walk by faith and not by sight*” (II Cor. 5:7). Biblical faith will relieve anxiety.

What is faith? A good example is found in Romans 4:13-21. God had promised Abraham that he would have the child of promise. Humanly speaking, this was ludicrous because of the excessive age of Abraham and Sarah. But Abraham, "...*staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform*" (v20, 21). Faith is simply taking God at His word and acting upon it.

Anxiety is a lack of faith (Matt. 6:30). "...*Whatsoever is not of faith is sin*" (Rom. 14:23). Therefore anxiety is sin. A clear command is given in Philippians 4:6: "*Be careful [anxious] for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*" Note the contrast word, "but." After the negative command we are given a list of positive admonitions so that we may experience the "peace of God" (v7). The theme of the Epistle to the Philippians is "rejoicing, no matter what the circumstances." Paul lived what he wrote as he was in jail at the time of this writing. He learned to be content in whatever state he was placed (4:11). Happiness is superficial and depends upon "happenings." Joy comes from within through the Holy Spirit. Peace *with* God comes by faith in Christ (Rom. 5:1). Peace *of* God comes by obedience to Him (Phil. 4:5-7). God produces the fruit of His Spirit in us as we are yielded and obedient to Him (Gal. 5:16-23). He desires for us to be fruitful (John 15:8).

The Deceitfulness of Riches

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (I Tim. 6:10).

According to Matthew 13:22, the deceitfulness of riches is a tool that is effectively used by Satan's forces to choke the word in believers, rendering them unfruitful. We need to become aware of the Devil's devices so that we may be victorious in the battle (Eph. 6:11). Let us look further into the context surrounding the above verse to learn how to apply God's truths in our lives.

This portion of God's Word, I Timothy 6:3-18, helps to dispel the following misconceptions about riches:

1. The error that godliness should be a means for gain (v5).
2. The error that contentment can come without godliness (v6).
3. The error that we can "take it with us" (v7).
4. The error that contentment can come by material gain (v8).
5. The error that the drive to be rich is healthy (v9).
6. The error that money is intrinsically good or evil (v10).
7. The error that a Godly man should pursue wealth (v11).
8. The error that the rich man should be proud that he has "arrived" (v17).
9. The error that we can trust in our riches (v17).
10. The error that God does not want us to have material things (v17).
11. The error that there is no responsibility to God if we are wealthy (v18).
12. The error that a rich person may not earn eternal rewards (v18).

The error that godliness should be a means for gain

3. *If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;*
4. *He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,*
5. *Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.*

These verses contain a warning about false teachers and false teaching. One of the false teachings mentioned is the belief that gain is godliness. This can be better translated as godliness as a way or source for gain.

This does not mean that one should not be paid in Christian work. This concept *is* endorsed by God. In I Cor. 9:7-18, Paul presents a case for paying the faithful servant of God. He had the right to expect those to whom he faithfully ministered to sacrificially give in order to support him in the ministry. He also chose not to use that privilege for the cause of the gospel (v12). He further states in I Tim. 5:17 that the elders who rule well should "*be counted worthy of double honor.*" That is speaking of financial remuneration.

Our “godliness as a means of gain” concept is referring to an *attitude* of greed. It is motivated by self-gratification instead of love for God and for others. There is a temptation for Bible teachers (or anyone else) to let the desire for financial gain to creep in and compromise motivations and doctrine. Earlier in I Timothy the requirements for a church elder are presented. Among these are, “*not greedy of filthy lucre ... not covetous*” (I Tim.3:2). This quality is essential in order to remain effective in our materialistic and affluent society.

The error that contentment can come without godliness

6. *But godliness with contentment is great gain.*

Why are people willing to compromise their ethics, their health, their families, etc. in order to gain wealth? The answer to that one is easy. It is because they believe that it will bring them the immediate happiness, contentment, joy, or peace that they crave in their lives.

God’s formula for joy and peace comes from first trusting in Jesus as one’s Savior (Rom. 5:1), then obeying God’s Holy Spirit (Phil 4:5-7; Gal. 5:16-23). Because of God’s love, He disciplines His children (Heb. 12:5-11). A disobedient child is not a happy child. There *is* pleasure in sin for a season (Heb. 11:25), but the season is short and we do not like its results (Rom. 6:23; Eccl. 8:11). Do not be deceived by sin (Heb. 3:13) and waste our time seeking God’s joy where it cannot be found.

The error that we can “take it with us”

7. *For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.*

This is such a basic and obvious truth that it is amazing that we frequently do not apply it in our lives. Jim Eliot, a missionary who gave his life trying to share the gospel with South American jungle tribes once stated, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.” He is now with the Lord, reaping the eternal reward of his faithful service while on earth. Matt. 6:19, 20 exhorts us not to lay up treasure on earth where it will be corrupted, but to lay up treasure in Heaven where it will have eternal value. You cannot take it with you but you can send it on ahead.

The error that contentment can come by material gain

8. *And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.*

God can bless us financially or materially and there are obvious benefits to material gain, but material gain in itself does not satisfy. The story is told of a rich man who was asked how much money a man needed to be happy. His insightful answer was, “Just a little bit more.”

Paul said in his letter to the Philippians written while he was in jail, “*...For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where an in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need*” (Phil 4:11, 12). Please note that this is something that he *learned*. He also wrote, “*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed in us*” (Rom. 8:18). He is now reaping the benefit of his Biblically balanced life.

The error that the drive to be rich is healthy

9. *But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.*

This verse is not a condemnation to those who are rich or who are going to be rich. It is a warning of an *attitude* concerning riches. See Luke 12:16-34; Luke 18:18-23; Rev. 3:17. The riches are not condemned. The greed is.

This verse is not even condemning the desire to be rich. The word “will” used here in Greek means a “decree” or “determination” to be rich. The one whose drive in life is to be rich may achieve that goal, but not without bringing devastation upon himself and probably others. This drive to be rich will displace the desire to put Christ first in a believer’s life. This attitude will choke the word and he will become unfruitful.

The error that money is intrinsically good or evil

10. *For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

This verse is a continuation of the exhortation of verse 9. It does not say that “*money* is the root of all evil.” Money is neutral. It can be used for good or evil. Jesus spoke much of wealth and encouraged us to use it properly for His glory. It all came from Him and we belong to Him (I Cor. 6:19, 20).

You might ask, “What does the love of money have to do with me? I don’t have much money.” At least two statements could be made in reply. One; You are richer than 90% of the people in the world. The second; It does not matter if you are rich or do not have two nickels to rub together. The verse is speaking of *attitude, not amount*. You can be broke and have this same sinful attitude about money. God wants us to love Him, not “things.”

The error that a Godly man should pursue wealth

11. *But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.*

12. *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

It is not godly to have much wealth nor to have little. It *is* Godly to flee these sinful attitudes and follow after these virtues. Those who have trusted in Christ and follow these admonitions will have *true* riches, both here and in Heaven (Luke 18:29, 30).

The error that the rich man should be proud that he has “arrived”

17. *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;*

James 4:6 tells us that “...*God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.*” We all know someone who was “born on third base and spends his life acting like he hit a triple.” We are not impressed with this proud spirit. God has similar feelings toward pride. He hates it (Prov. 6:16-19). All we possess comes from God and belongs to Him. Do not let God’s gracious blessings go to your head.

The rich fool in Luke 1:16, was materially blessed. He “had it all together.” He became proud and greedy. God called him a fool (v20). One reason is that he did not realize that riches are transient. So was his life. He left all his wealth to someone else and was “*not rich toward God*” (v21).

The error that we can trust in our riches

Verse 17 warns us not to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who *is* trustworthy. Matt. 6:19, 20 tells us not to lay up treasure on earth where it will be corrupted, but to lay up treasure in Heaven where it will last forever.

It is prudent to save “for a rainy day” but it is foolish to hoard so that we do not have to trust God. Riches are temporary, as is so poignantly illustrated with the rich fool in Luke 12. He had so much material goods that he had to tear down his barns to build bigger ones. God showed him that the riches were temporary and not worthy of his trust.

The error that God does not want us to have material things

Verse 17 also tells us that this living God in whom we trust, gives us “*richly all things to enjoy.*” If God has given you a Geo Metro or a Ferrari to drive; enjoy it. Use it for God’s glory. Just do not grasp it, because it belongs to God. Along with the Apostle Paul, learn how to be content in whatever state in which God allows you to be (Phil. 4:11, 12). There is a contrast presented here between being highminded on account of wealth — cherishing or worshiping it, and rightly enjoying it.

The error that there is no responsibility to God if we are wealthy

18. *That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;*

This is a continuation of the exhortation to the rich of verse 17. The negative is to not be highminded nor to trust in uncertain riches. The positive is to trust in the living God, do good; be ready to give and to share. Enjoy the true riches of good works for the glory of God (Matt. 5:16).

The error that a rich person may not earn eternal rewards

19. *Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*

The rich person who abides by these attitudes and actions will be laying up treasures for himself in Heaven (Matt. 6:20). It is a serious responsibility to have riches entrusted to us. All of us bear some accountability in this area.

The summation of this theme could be presented in the following two verses:

“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon [riches]” (Matt. 6:24).

“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth” (Col. 3:2).

May we not allow the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches to enter in and choke the word, thereby becoming unfruitful. *“Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples”* (John 15:8). This verse introduces the last group, those who understand the Word and bear fruit to varying degrees.

“Into The Good Ground”

23 *But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.*

Not all of the seed that was sown produced fruit. The problem was not the seed (the word of God). The problem was in the types of soils on which the seed was sown (the receptivity of the hearers). In application, this factor is no doubt related to the free will of man. When truth is presented, people make choices. Jesus paid for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2) but only some choose to receive the free gift of eternal life by trusting in Jesus. After receiving this gift, they can also choose whether or not to heed God’s word and become fruitful. Luke’s account states that those in this group “keep” the word.

The Greek word most often translated “fruit” is “karpos, καρπος” It can mean the literal fruit of a tree or vine such as a fig tree producing figs (Matt. 21:19). It can mean the “fruit of the womb” as in progeny. (Luke 1:42).

Most often in the New Testament it is used as “that which originates or comes from something or someone, an effect, result, work, or deed.” In Matthew 3:8, John, the Baptist, exposes the Pharisees and Sadducees by exhorting them to *“Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance,”* or to produce works worthy or suitable to show that they had changed their mind. This was a rebuke to them as they obviously had neglected this important detail.

The word is used in Matthew 7:15-20, where we are warned of false prophets. We are told that *“by their fruits we shall know them”* (v20). The false prophet will produce “corrupt fruit” (v18). It follows that the corrupt fruit of the false prophet will be *false prophecy*.

Galatians 5:22, 23 speaks of the fruit of the Spirit which is *“love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance:...”* This is fruit that God’s Holy Spirit produces in a believer who will *“Walk in the Spirit”* (v16). The fruit that is referred to in the Parable of the Sower is that which comes from believers sowing the word; reproducing other believers. This is not the same as the fruit of the Spirit; though it is related in the sense that as we obey God’s Holy Spirit, we will have the fruit of the Spirit and we will be sowing God’s word and winning others to Christ.

In John 15:8, Jesus exhorts His disciples with the statement, *“Herein is my father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.”* The context is right after the Last Supper, the night before His crucifixion. Jesus presents an illustration of Him being the True Vine and believers being the branches which are in Him. He presents four degrees of fruit-bearing; no fruit, (v2), fruit (v2), more fruit (v2), and much fruit (v5). He states the requirements for bearing fruit; cleansing, v2, 3) and abiding in Him (v4, 5).

The believer cannot bear fruit unless he abides in Jesus (v4). This does not mean that we must try to keep our salvation. That is not necessary and it is not possible. We cannot lose it because we are not keeping it. We are kept by the “power of God” (I Peter 1:3-5). God’s word says that we can *know* that we have eternal life (I John 5:13). We can know this because it is not dependant upon our efforts which will fail, but upon God’s unfailing word.

Abiding in Christ simply means to remain in His precepts which He proclaims, That is; obey Him. The next two verses help to clarify this requirement, “...Continue ye in my love, If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love” (vs 9,10).

How can we bear “much fruit” or bear fruit a “hundredfold?” All these verses make reference to some sort of obedience to Christ. This account of the parable says that they *understood* the word. We cannot seriously understand God’s word without seriously studying it (II Tim. 2:15). This seems to be a major problem in the average church of today. For the most part, Christians seem to be content to live on some pre-digested “baby-food” that is presented on Sunday morning instead consistently digging into God’s word for themselves. There is a great need for churches to expositively teach God’s word, but this type of teaching should motivate and complement personal study; not replace it. Sadly, I have met some pastors who seem personally threatened when their flock begins to grown in God’s word. What a disgrace.

Luke's account states that they *kept* the word. They held fast to His teachings. John 15 tells us that we need to be cleansed and to abide in Christ; that is; keep His commandments. This has to do with service, not our eternal salvation which is settled in Christ.

The parable speaks of four types of soils in which the seed is sown; four types of people in which the Word of God is sown. The first group did not understand the word, Satan snatched it away and they were lost. The second group received the word and, because of tribulation or persecution, fell away or were offended. The third group received the word but became unfruitful because of the care of this age and the deceitfulness of riches. The last group received the word, understood it, and was fruitful to varying degrees. The choice is ours. Contrary to what some Lordship Salvation teachers proclaim; there is no such thing as “cheap grace.” There *is* such a thing as “*free* grace.” Eternal salvation is free to us. It is very costly but the payment has been made. Discipleship is costly to the disciple but is very rewarding, in this life and after this life (Luke 18:29,30; Rom. 8:18). We belong to God and our reasonable service is to obey Him (Rom. 12:1, 2; I Cor. 6:19, 20).

In Joshua 24, Joshua presents his last charge to Israel. He relates many of the blessings and the victories that God had wrought in them. He then challenges them with a Divine command, “*Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth...choose you this day whom ye will serve... but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD*” (24:14,15).

John 15:8; “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

End Notes

(Chart from “The Bible Knowledge Commentary”)

Parables of the Kingdom in Matthew 13		
Parables	References	Meanings
1. The Sower	13:1-23	The good news of the gospel will be rejected by most people.
2. The Wheat and the Tares	13:24-30, 36-43	People with genuine faith and people with a false profession of faith will exist together between Christ's two advents
3. The Mustard Seed	13:31-32	Christendom, including believers and unbelievers, will grow rapidly from a small beginning.
4. The Yeast	13:33-35	People who profess to belong to God will grow in numbers without being stopped..
5. The Hidden Treasure	13:44	Christ came to purchase (redeem) Israel, God's treasured possession.
6. The Pearl	13:45-46	Christ gave His life to provide redemption for the church.
7. The Net	13:47-52	Angels will separate the wicked from the righteous when Jesus comes.

The following distinction between the Kingdom and God and the Kingdom of Heaven may be accurate as the Bible speaks of the saved entering into the Kingdom of God but two of the parables in this context mention both the saved and the lost in the Kingdom of Heaven (13:24-30; 36-43).

Notes on the Kingdom - From Scofield's Notes

[1] {kingdom of God} **Matt. 6:33**

The kingdom of God is to be distinguished from the kingdom of heaven » See Note “Mt 3:2” in five respects: (1) The kingdom of God is universal, including all moral intelligences willingly subject to the will of God, whether angels, the Church, or saints of past or future dispensations # Lu 13:28,29 Heb 12:22,23 while the kingdom of heaven is Messianic, mediatorial, and Davidic, and has for its object the establishment of the kingdom of God in the earth » See Note “Mt 3:2” # 1Co 15:24,25 (2) The kingdom of God is entered only by the new birth # John 3:3,5-7 the kingdom of heaven, during this age, is the sphere of a profession which may be real or false » See Note “Mt 13:3” # Mt 25:1,11,12 (3) Since the kingdom of heaven is the earthly sphere of the universal kingdom of God, the two have almost all things in common. For this reason many parables and other teachings are spoken of the kingdom of heaven in Matthew, and of the kingdom of God in Mark and Luke. It is the omissions which are significant. The parables of the wheat and tares, and of the net # Mt 13:24-30,36-43,47-50 are not spoken of the kingdom of God. In that kingdom there are neither tares nor bad fish. But the parable of the leaven # Mt 13:33 is spoken of the kingdom of God also, for, alas, even the true doctrines of the kingdom are leavened with the errors of which the Pharisees, Sadducees, and the Herodians were the representatives. » See Note “Mt 13:33” (4) The kingdom of God “comes not with outward show” # Lu 17:20 but is chiefly that which is inward and spiritual # Ro 14:17 while the kingdom of heaven is organic, and is to be manifested in glory on the earth. (See “Kingdom (O.T.),” Zech 12:8, note; (N.T.), Lu 1.31-33 1co 15.24, note; Mt 17.2, note.) » See Note “Zec 12:8” # Lu 1:31-33 » See Note “1Co 15:24” » See Note “Mt 17:2” (5) The kingdom of heaven merges into the kingdom of God when Christ, having put all enemies under his feet, “shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father” # 1Co 15:24-28 » See Note “Mt 3:2”

[1] {**kingdom of heaven**} **Matt. 3:2**

(1) The phrase, kingdom of heaven (lit. of the heavens), is peculiar to Matthew and signifies the Messianic earth rule of Jesus Christ, the Son of David. It is called the kingdom of the heavens because it is the rule of the heavens over the earth # Mt 6:10 The phrase is derived from Daniel, where it is defined # Da 2:34-36,44 7:23-27 as the kingdom which the God of heaven will set up after the destruction by “the stone cut out without hands,” of the Gentile world-system. It is the kingdom covenanted to David’s seed # 2Sa 7:7-10 described in the prophets; » See note “Zec 12:8” and confirmed to Jesus the Christ, the Son of Mary, through the angel Gabriel # Lu 1:32,33

(2) The kingdom of heaven has three aspects in Matthew: (a) “at hand” from the beginning of the ministry of John the Baptist # Mt 3:2 to the virtual rejection of the King, and the announcement of the new brotherhood # Mt 12:46-50 (b) in seven “mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,” to be fulfilled during the present age # Mt 13:1-52 to which are to be added the parables of the kingdom of heaven which were spoken after those of Mt. 13., and which have to do with the sphere of Christian profession during this age; (c) the prophetic aspect—the kingdom to be set up after the return of the King in glory. # Mt 24:29-25:46 Lu 19:12-19 Ac 15:14-17 See “Kingdom (N.T.)” # Lu 1:33 1Co 15:28 Cf. “Kingdom of God,” » See Note “Mt 6:33”

[Marg] {saying} See note, # Ac 17:30 See Scofield “Ac 17:30”

Matt 5:2 Principles of the Kingdom

[2] {And he opened his mouth}

Having announced the kingdom of heaven as “at hand,” the King, in Mat 5.-7., declares the principles of the kingdom. The Sermon on the Mount has a twofold application: (1) literally to the kingdom. In this sense it gives the divine constitution for the righteous government of the earth. Whenever the kingdom of heaven is established on earth it will be according to that constitution, which may be regarded as an explanation of the word “righteousness” as used by the prophets in describing the kingdom (e.g.) # Isa 11:4,5 32:1 Da 9:24 In this sense the Sermon on the Mount is pure law, and transfers the offence from the overt act to the motive. # Mt 5:21,22,27,28 Here lies the deeper reason why the Jews rejected the kingdom. They had reduced “righteousness” to mere ceremonialism, and the Old Testament idea of the kingdom to a mere affair of outward splendour and power. They were never rebuked for expecting a visible and powerful kingdom, but the words of the prophets should have prepared them to expect also that only the poor in spirit and the meek could share in it (e.g.) # Isa 11:4 The seventy-second Psalm, which was universally received by them as a description of the kingdom, was full of this. For these reasons, the Sermon on the Mount in its primary application gives neither the privilege nor the duty of the Church. These are found in the Epistles. Under the law of the kingdom, for example, no one may hope for forgiveness who has not first forgiven. # Mt 6:12,14,15 Under grace the Christian is exhorted to forgive because he is already forgiven. # Eph 4:30-32

(2) But there is a beautiful moral application to the Christian. It always remains true that the poor in spirit, rather than the proud, are blessed, and those who mourn because of their sins, and who are meek in the consciousness of them, will hunger and thirst after righteousness, and hungering, will be filled. The merciful are “blessed,” the pure in heart do “see God.” These principles fundamentally reappear in the teaching of the Epistles.

Our Adversary, Satan, And His Demons
Matthew 13:19

Satan is:

Powerful, Acts 26:18; 2 Thess. 2:9; Luke 4:6; Heb. 2:14; Jude 1:9; 1 John 5:19; John 14:30; Eph. 2:2;

Tricky, 2 Cor. 2:11; Eph. 6:11;

Able to perform miracles, 2 Thess. 2:9;

A deceiver, Rev. 12:9;

A liar, the father of lies, John 8:44;

Lustful, John 8:44;

Our enemy, Mt. 13:19, 39;

The wicked one, Mt. 13:38; 1 John 2:13;

A murderer from the beginning, John 8:44;

The father of the Jews who sought to kill Jesus, John 8:44;

A master counterfeiter, 2 Cor. 11:13-15, For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

In regard to people in general, he:

Binds them, Luke 13:16;

Enters them, Luke 22:3; John 13:27;

Beguiles them, 2 Cor. 11:3;

Opresses them; Acts 10:38;

Takes them captive, 2 Tim. 2:26;

Seeks to devour them; 1 Pet. 5:8;

Possesses them, Mt. 9:32; Mr. 5:15; Mr. 7:30; And can cause blindness and deafness by his possession, Mt. 12:22.

In regard to unbelievers, he:

Wishes to condemn them, Job 1:6-12; 1 Tim. 3:6;

Spiritually blinds them, 2 Cor. 4:4;

Maintains a snare for them, 2 Tim. 2:26;

Steals the Word from potential believers, Mt. 13:19; Mr. 4:15, Luke 8:12;

Is active in efforts to keep them from being saved, Mr. 4:15; Acts 26:18; Luke 8:12; 2 Cor. 4:4;

In regard to believers, he:

Resists them, Zec. 3:1;

Accuses them, Rev. 12:10;

Strongly influences them, Mt. 16:23;

Corrupts their mind, 2 Cor. 11:3;

Tempts them, 1 Thess. 3:5; 1 Cor. 7:5; And even tried to tempt Jesus, Mt. 4:1 Mark 1:13;

Desires to sift them, Luke 22:31; John 13:27;

Can fill their heart, Acts 5:3;

Takes advantage of them. 2 Cor. 2:11;

Buffets them, 2 Cor. 12:7;

Hinders them, 1 Thess. 2:18;

Is their adversary, 1 Pet. 5:8;

Conducts ongoing spiritual warfare with them, Eph. 6:10-17;

Maintains a snare for them, 1 Tim. 3:7;

Will cast some believers into prison, Rev. 2:10

He is judged:

John 16:11; John 12:31; 1 John 3:8; Rev. 12:9, 10; Rev. 20:10;

We can have victory over him:

James 4:7; Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (Eph. 6:10-17; 1 Peter 5:8; 1 John 2:13).

Verses Referring to Trials, Suffering, and Persecution

Matthew 13:21

JESUS SUFFERED BEFORE WE DID. HE UNDERSTANDS OUR TRIALS

Heb. 2:18, For in that he himself [Jesus] hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour [help] them that are tempted. Heb. 4:15, For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin. 2 Pet 2:9, The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished: John 15:20, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. 2 Cor. 1:4, [God] Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. Heb. 12:2,3, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Acts 17:3, ...Christ must needs have suffered... Acts 26:23, That Christ should suffer, ...and should shew light unto the people. 1 Cor. 12:26, And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it [Jesus is the Head]. Heb. 5:8 Though he [Jesus] were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

FAITHFUL CHRISTIANS BEFORE US VICTORIOUSLY ENDURED TRIALS

Heb. 11:32-39 speaks of the heroes of the faith who through faith endured trials and “of whom the world was not worthy” (v38). They “obtained a good report through faith” (v39). Jas. 5:10, Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. 1 Pet. 5:9, [Satan] Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

WE *WILL* HAVE TRIALS, DO NOT BE SURPRISED

2 Tim. 3:12, Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. 1 Cor. 10:13, Temptation... as is common to man. 1 Thess. 3:3, That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. 1 Pet. 4:12, Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: Mt. 24:9; Luke 11:49; 21:12 “...they shall... persecute *you*... for my name’s sake. John 15:20, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. 1 Thess. 3:4, “... we told you before that we should suffer tribulation...” 2 Cor. 6:4, But in all *things* approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, 2 Tim. 1:8, Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; 2 Tim. 4:5, But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. Heb. 11:25 [By faith, Moses,] Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. 2 Cor. 1:5, For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. Phil. 1:29, For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

GOD ALLOWS TRIALS IN THE BELIEVER’S LIFE FOR HIS GLORY

1 Pet. 1:7, That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. 1:6, And whether we be afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation... 1 Thess. 3:7, Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith: 2 Tim. 2:10, Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal

glory. Acts 9:16, For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake [Paul]. 1 Pet. 2:19, For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. Rom. 8:17, ...if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together. 1 Cor. 9:12, ...but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. 1 Thess. 2:2, But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention. 1 Tim. 4:10, For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe. 1 Pet. 4:16, Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. 1 Pet. 5:1, The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

GOD IS STILL IN CONTROL

2 Thess. 1:6, Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; Rom. 8:35, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 2 Tim. 3:11, Persecutions, afflictions... I endured: but out of *them* all the Lord delivered me. Rev. 2:9, I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich)... 2 Tim. 1:12, For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. 2 Tim. 2:9, Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, *even* unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. 1 Pet. 5:10. But the God of all grace... after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*.

BELIEVERS ARE EXHORTED TO, AND COMMENDED FOR ENDURING TRIALS

2 Tim. 2:3, Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 2 Tim. 4:5, But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. 2 Thess. 1:4, So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: 1 Thess. 1:6, And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

TRIALS ARE TEMPORARY

1 Pet. 1:6, Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 2 Cor. 4:17, For our light affliction, which is but for a moment... Rom. 8:18, For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 1 Pet. 5:10. But the God of all grace... after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*.

OUR ATTITUDE SHOULD *NOT* BE:

As the ones in the parable of the sower (Mt. 13:21; Mr. 4:17; Lk. 8:13) who have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

TRIALS CAUSED BY OUR WRONGDOING ARE NOT HONORING TO GOD

1 Pet. 3:17, For *it is* better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing. 1 Pet. 4:15, But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. 1 Pet. 2:20, For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God.

GOD ALLOWS TRIALS FOR OUR BENEFIT, THEREFORE OUR ATTITUDE SHOULD BE OF REJOICING

Mt. 5:10-12, Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: ...for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: Rom. 5:3, ...Tribulation worketh patience. 2 Cor. 4:17, For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 2 Cor. 1:5, For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. 2 Cor. 8:2, Great trial of affliction... their joy... abounded. Jas. 1:2,3,12, My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. Blessed

is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. 2 Cor. 12:10, Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. Rom. 12:12, "...patient in tribulation..." 2 Cor. 7:4, ...I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation. Col. 1:24, [I Paul] Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church: Jas. 5:11, Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. 2 Cor. 1:7, And our hope of you *is* steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so *shall ye be* also of the consolation. 1 Pet. 4:13, But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. Rev. 2:10, Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer... be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. 2 Thess. 1:5, [Persecutions and tribulations], a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:

OUR ATTITUDE SHOULD ALSO BE:

Php. 3:8,10, Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ... That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death. Php. 4:12, I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. 1 Pet. 2:21,23, For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps... Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously. 1 Pet. 4:19, Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator. Mt. 5:44, But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you. Rom. 12:14, Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Jas. 5:13, Is any among you afflicted? let him pray... Jas. 1:27, Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, *and* to keep himself unspotted from the world. Acts 14:22, Confirming the souls of the disciples, *and* exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

We should continue on in God's strength for His Glory, the One who loved us and gave us the gift of eternal life.

1 Cor. 6:19,20, ...For you are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. Gal. 6:9, And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. 1 Cor. 15:58, Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Word Study on "Care"

The Care Of This World — Matt. 13:22

Verses Which Use A Form Of "μεριμνα — Merimna"

Mt. 6:25, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

Mt. 6:27, Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

Mt. 6:28, And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

Mt. 6:31, Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

Mt. 6:34, Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Mt. 10:19, But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

Mt. 13:22, He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

Mt. 28:14, And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. [negative form of word; free you from worry or anxiety].

Mr. 4:19, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

Mr. 13:11, But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost. [with "pro" prefix, meaning "before"].

Lu. 8:14, And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

Lu. 10:41, And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

Lu. 12:11, And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:

Lu. 12:22, And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

Lu. 12:26, If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

Lu. 21:34, And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

1 Co. 7:32, But I would have you without carefulness. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: (negative form of word, Lit.: "But I wish you to be un-anxious").

1 Co. 7:33, But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife.

1 Co. 7:34, There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.

1 Co. 12:25, That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

2 Co. 11:28, Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

Php. 2:20, For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.

Php. 4:6, Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

1 Pe. 5:7, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." The first "care" is "merimna" or "anxiety." The second, "careth" is "melo" which means "To care about" or "to take care of." This word is also used in Luke 10:34,35, which tells of the Good Samaritan caring for the wounded man. See John 12:13: caring for sheep; I Cor. 8:9, God taking care of, or supplying the needs of oxen; See also Mk. 4:38; Luke 10:40.