

CARES OF LIFE

Read: Matthew 13:3-9

Explanation: Matthew 13:18-23

I. Verse 7 Talks about thorns choking out the growth.

Verse 22 Explains that the word can take root in our lives, then we let the worries of life and the desire for things, or riches, choke the word right out of our life. I have always considered this in terms of new converts. However, the cares of this life can burden us down years after our initial obedience.

II. All of us have struggles in our lives that cause us great concern

A. Health issues

B. Financial hardship

C. Family problems

D. Worldliness or immorality

E. Some have problems that seem minute to some, yet they are insurmountable to the one who struggles with it. Look at Rich and say, "I wish I had his problems." No you don't.

III. At some point in all our lives, we are too much in this world and put our spirituality on the back burner.

A. It doesn't matter how old you are or at what point of spirituality you are at, Satan will always be there to hurl darts at you and attempt to weaken you. You see, he knows what our weaknesses are and will attack us there.

B. If Satan knows our weaknesses and exploits them, surely we know what they are and we must constantly work on them to overcome them.

C. There are times in each of our lives when our faith is strong, then there are those times when our faith is as weak as a kitten.

1. Peter, in Matthew 14, had great enough faith to answer Jesus' call and step out of the boat and walk on water. The very next moment his faith weakened and he began to sink. Who rescued him? Jesus! Peter had that inner battle going on.

D. Paul admits in Romans 7:14-25 that this inner battle took place in his life. He knew what was right and what he should do, he didn't always do that.

1. In verse 24, he asks who am I and who will set me free from the body of sin or death. In verse 25, he give us these comforting words. It is God, through Christ, who would make us free.

2. He also shares with us in Philippians 4:13 where he and where we can draw our strength to overcome and do what is right. *“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”*

IV. When we become self –satisfied and complacent and think we have all the answers and are in control of our lives, that’s when we, like Peter out on that water, will become weak.

- A. Paul set a tone for us when it comes to how strong we think we are in our spiritual maturity in Philippians 3:11-16:

“in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet: but one thing I do; forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let us, therefore, as many as are perfect, have this attitude; and if in anything you have a different attitude, God will reveal that also to you; however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained.”

- B. He warned the Corinthian brethren in I Corinthians 10:12 to be careful and not be self-satisfied, because that’s when we can be most vulnerable to Satan and end up falling.

V. Christ talks about letting the cares of this life interfere with our service to Him in Luke 9:57-62:

“And they were going along the road, someone said to Him, ‘I will follow you wherever you go.’ And Jesus said to him, ‘The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head. And He said to another, ‘Follow Me.’ But he said, ‘Permit me first to go and bury my father.’ But He said to him, ‘Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God.’ And another also said, ‘I will follow You, Lord but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home.’ But Jesus said to him, ‘No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

Excuses!! They heard the cost and were not willing to pay it. They let the cares and duties of this life choke out their service to Christ and His Kingdom. What am I and what are you letting interfere??

VI. I know what you are thinking: My problems are real, the anxieties in my life are caused by real, everyday, problems. I know, I know. There are times in each of our lives when it just seems that everything is spinning out of control. What I have to ask myself is “Out of Whose Control?” Am I turning my life over to God and letting Him take the rudder or am I trying to do this alone? I’ll tell you folks. When I try to take over and run the show on my own, that’s when it often goes terribly wrong.

- A. Okay, so we are to let God have control. Simple, right? Not if you don’t work hard at it. First and foremost, we must subject our will to the will of God. Romans 12:1-2:

“I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do

not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Are you taking advantage of the transforming power of the gospel?

B. Christ begs us in Matthew 11:28 to come to Him for rest and peace:

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”

VII. Peter was a man who was told by Christ that he would lose his life because of his service to Christ. A man knew of the impending persecution that would come to those his loved simply because they were Christians. Peter had problems in his life, like each and every one of us. Listen to what he told those about to suffer and die for serving God in I Peter 5:6-7 and it should give us comfort when we deal with the what I think are lesser problems than theirs:

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you.”

And what did Paul tell the Philippians brethren in Philippians 4:6-7:

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension shall guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”

A. Now we know that God always requires of His people something in return for what He will do for us. Look at verses 8 and 9 there in Philippians 4:

“Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received, and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace shall be with you.”

B. You see. Both Peter and Paul are telling us how to get rid of all this baggage that weighs us down.

1. Pray
2. Dwell on God's word
3. Dwell on good things

In other words, fill your life up with what is good and pure and dwell in God's word, and we won't have time to let the cares of this world eat us up and choke the word out of us. We will say to ourselves and to Satan, we will not be overcome by the cares of this world because God, through the blood of Christ has bought us out of our slavery to this world.

John writes in I John 5:4:

“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world, and this is the victory that overcomes the world – our faith.”

- VIII. Do you think you will be able to handle your problems? Will it be easy? No; at least, it's not for me. It takes effort. It takes pressing on. It takes God.
- A. Remember the words of Christ in Matthew 11, "Come unto me."
 - B. Don't wait for the right time or circumstance to start the road to obedience and start receiving the gift of the peace that passes understanding.
 - C. Don't wait to have more knowledge of God's word.
 - D. Don't wait for some catastrophe to strike you.
 - E. That day your waiting on will never come. Don't make excuses to yourself and to God.
 - F. II Corinthians 6:2 tells us today is the day of salvation.
 - G. I ask you like Ananias asked Saul, "why wait, arise and be baptized."
 - H. Grab on to and hold on to the "peace that passes all understanding."
 - I. Brethren, if you are a child of God and are like me and have struggled with the cares of life, come let us pray for each other.