

CARES OF THIS LIFE

(Luke 8:11-15)

I. Resources that are choked out.

- a. Gardens are kept tended because the weeds rob the plants we want to grow of needed nutrients and life.
 - i. In other words, they choke out the good plants.
 - ii. The cares of this world choke out those resources we need to make produce the fruit God intends for Christians to grow in their lives.
- b. Cares choke out our time.
 - i. How many wasted minutes have been spent in worry about things we don't control?
 - ii. How much wasted time has been spent in front of TV or on Facebook that could have been spent in study of God's word or doing some good deed?
 - iii. We don't have a lot of time in the grand scheme of things and we are going to be held accountable for the way we use what we have.
 - iv. This is why we are told to redeem the time.
 - v. Ephesians 5:15-16.
- c. Cares choke out spiritual growth.
 - i. When we are focused on things of this world constantly, we have no time for Bible study and prayer.
 - ii. We are told to desire God's word like a baby desires milk.
 - iii. When we don't study, the thing we most need to produce fruit is absent and we spiritually starve ourselves to death.
 - iv. We become like the Hebrews that needed someone to reteach them first principles (Hebrews 5:12).
 - v. Those brethren were so malnourished that they didn't know good from evil.
 - vi. James 1:22-25 – spiritually malnourished people often deceive themselves into thinking they are okay when they aren't.
- d. Cares choke out our giving.
 - i. Do we spend more on entertainment than we give to God?
 - ii. How about what we spend on athletics and things like that?
 - iii. Our bank statements reveal our priorities.
 - iv. Could we prove the idea that we are seeking the kingdom first by what is found on those statements or not?
 - v. Are we laying up treasure on earth or are we striving to be rich toward God (Luke 12:21).
- e. Cares choke out our energy.
 - i. 1 Corinthians 15:58.

- ii. How many good works have we left undone because we gave our energy to some care of this life?
- iii. Some of us will work diligently for some man-made organization or school project but won't help someone get to heaven.
- iv. We are called to produce fruit for God, not for the Mason's, the Civitan Club, the local Chamber of Commerce, or anything like those things.
- v. This isn't to say we can't be involved in certain organizations, we can.
- vi. But if we are giving more of ourselves to those things than to the Lord and His church, we are choking out God's word in our hearts.
- f. Cares choke out our ability to reach the lost.
 - i. How many people have you led to the Lord?
 - ii. If the answer is very few or none, ask yourself why that is.
 - iii. Is it because we are so caught up with other things that we don't have time?
 - iv. Is it because we are so caught up with other things that we don't have the knowledge?
 - v. We are to fulfill the Great Commission and we can't do that if the word of God is being choked out of our lives.

II. The result of having the word choked out of us.

- a. The result is that we are unfruitful.
- b. God's word cannot produce what He intends for it to produce because there is no room in that heart for God's word.
- c. Notice John 15:1-8.
 - i. Did you notice what happens to unfruitful branches?
 - ii. If we fail to produce fruit, we will fail to reach heaven.
- d. God is glorified when we produce the fruit the word of God will allow us to produce.
 - i. Being a disciple is not just having knowledge.
 - ii. Being a disciple is a lifestyle.
 - iii. We are to become like our Master.
- e. When the cares of this life, the weeds, don't allow the seed to grow in our hearts as it should, we never mature and are incapable of producing fruit, in the form of other disciples.

III. The recipe for revival.

- a. We must determine where our hearts are going to be focused.
 - i. Difficult times come in the lives of us all.
 - ii. If our minds aren't focused on following God through thick and thin, we are not going to be the fruit producers God wants and needs.
 - iii. Hebrews 2:1-3.
 - iv. A Christian who never studies his Bible has no advantage over the one who has no Bible.

- b.** We must examine ourselves and see if we are in the faith or not (2 Corinthians 13:5).
 - i.** Growth is intentional (2 Peter 3:18).
 - ii.** We don't learn anything by luck or osmosis.
 - iii.** We must put forth the effort to learn God's word.
 - iv.** This requires time and diligence.
 - v.** Athletes train to get better.
 - vi.** Christians must study to get better (1 Corinthians 9:25-26).
- c.** We must follow Philippians 4:4-9 to have a mind at peace with God.

Sermon outline from an unknown source