

Are You “Word” Focused or “Problem” Focused?

Part 3

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. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; 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. 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. 13:19-22).

1. God’s Word is full of life and power (Jer. 1:12; Isa. 55:11; Heb. 1:3; 4:12). It was the Word of God that created and later brought restoration to a chaotic universe (Gen. 1; Heb. 11:3). However, this same Word can prove ineffective in our lives if we focus on things other than this.
 - a. Satan knows that the basis of our authority is God’s Word. He knows that he is easily defeated when we take our stand on it. Therefore, he targets our reception of the Word.
 - b. If Satan can keep our focus on anything other than the Word then he has us right where he once us and can systematically destroy us. Therefore, it is essential that we understand (grasp comprehension of) the Word of God..
2. Why do people fail to understand God’s Word, thus giving Satan an open door to take it from them? It is due to their failure to give it their focus and full attention:
 - a. Jesus lays the fault for the failure to understand at the feet of the people themselves:
 - b. *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. (Matt. 13:15)*
 - c. In order to get understanding, the Word must be given full focus:
 - d. *Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law. (Prov. 4:1-2)*
 - e. *My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. (Prov. 4:20-22)*

- f. To attend means to “to devote one's time; apply oneself” (World English Dictionary) and “to pay attention; listen or watch attentively; direct one's thought” (Random House Dictionary).
 - g. "to direct one's mind or energies," from O.Fr. *atendre* (12c., Mod.Fr. *attendre*) "to expect, wait for, pay attention," from L. *attendere* "give heed to," lit. "to stretch toward," from *ad-* "to" + *tendere* "stretch" (see *tenet*). The notion is of "stretching" one's mind (Online Etymology Dictionary. Douglas Harper).
 - h. People do not understand because they do not “attend” to God’s Word: They do not devote or apply themselves to it, direct their thoughts or energies toward it, or basically put the necessary focus on the Word of God.
 - i. Focus is "a central point, as of attraction, attention, or activity" (Random House Dictionary). To focus means "to fix attention (on); concentrate" (World English Dictionary).
3. When People focus on the problems and circumstances that they are faced with, then God’s Word, which can enable them to overcome these problems, becomes ineffective:
- a. Matt. 13:20-22
 - b. *But since they don't have deep roots, they don't last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God's word.* (New Living Translation)
 - c. *Yet it has no real root in him, but is temporary (inconstant, lasts but a little while); and when affliction or trouble or persecution comes on account of the Word, at once he is caused to stumble [he is repelled and begins to distrust and desert Him Whom he ought to trust and obey] and he falls away.* (Amplified Bible)
 - d. *But they don't have deep roots, and they don't last very long. As soon as life gets hard or the message gets them in trouble, they give up.* (Contemporary English Version)
 - e. *The seed cast in the gravel—this is the person who hears and instantly responds with enthusiasm. But there is no soil of character, and so when the emotions wear off and some difficulty arrives, there is nothing to show for it.* (The Message)
 - f. *but he doesn't have much depth in his life, and the seeds don't root very deeply, and after a while when trouble comes, or persecution begins because of his beliefs, his enthusiasm fades, and he drops out.* (The Living Bible)
 - g. *"However, he is not continuing to have a root within himself, but is instead existing for [only] a season (is temporary, or lasts only for that particular situation or occasion), so*

with an occurring (happening; birthing) of pressure (tribulation; distress) or pursuit and persecution – because of the message (the Word; the idea) – he is at once caught in a trap, as though these circumstances were a trap-stick, and so he is made to stumble, being offended. (Jonathan Mitchell New Testament).

4. The Fruit-bearing overcomer is the one who under-stands (takes his stand) on God's Word:
 - a. *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 (Matt. 13:23)*
 - b. The one who understands God's Word is the one who gives it his/her focus and attention over and above all else. They are not moved from and by trials and problems but continue to take their *stand* on it.
 - c. Faith comes by hearing (Rom. 10:17). We are called to fight the good fight of faith (1 Tim. 6:12). Faith is intelligent and not something mysterious and super-spiritual. The fact that we are to understand God's Word proves this.
 - d. The Word of God is a seed. The specific seed of God's Word will bring forth the desired fruit in the lives of those who focus on it – Psalm 1:1-3:
 - e. *And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good (Gen. 1:11-12).*
 - f. Each promise from God has its own particular seed. God's Word on divine healing, when understood, will bring forth fruit in that area. God's Word on victory over sin, when understood, will bring forth fruit in that area. God's Word on financial provision, when understood, will bring forth fruit in that area, etc.
 - g. Understanding and acting upon God's Word will also protect the fruit produced by the Word:
 - h. *Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts (Mal. 3:10-11).*

Conclusion to part 3: The failure to understand God's Word is due to our failure to focus on it. When we fail to focus on it then Satan can take away God's life changing Word and without it we will be completely focused on the problems that confront us. On the positive side, when we place a complete focus on God's Word then we will bring forth fruit for victory over every circumstance that Satan would bring our way.