



Lights and Perfection, Inc.

Go and make disciples!

E-votional 74

Rocky Ground

Mark 4:16-17 (ESV),

And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: the ones who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy. And they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away.

Have you ever received a word from God about something you may have been going through in life? Maybe this word was about a work of holiness or sanctification in your life, or maybe it was about a promise that God had for you and how He was calling you to persevere until the reception of it and even more, it could have been something the Lord was calling you to do specifically.

Anyways, do you remember that moment you received it and all of the sudden great joy filled your heart because you knew that at that moment you heard directly from God about your situation? From that moment you had a new inner confidence and were walking tall only to be confronted not too long after with trouble and tribulation or even persecution on account of that word or revelation. And then all of a sudden you seemed to have dropped it from your heart and that revelation just sort of flew out of the window.

If we were all honest, there have assuredly been times in our lives where we all have experienced something like this. In fact, I remember a time where I was in a place of new growth in the Lord and He had been dealing with me on love. I remember praying and asking for the ability to love the way Jesus did. One day, I was actually reading the love chapter, 1 Corinthians 13, and was approached by someone who tested that love. I seemed to have dropped the word of God right out of my heart upon this test. I remember being so ashamed that I dropped the ball and immediately began repenting and asking for the Lord to show me a way to remedy this. The Lord then led me to approach the one who approached me and apologize for the way I acted and further seek to show love to this person. Now, to clarify, this person I was called to show love to was a person that would

try to manipulate that situation for their own benefit. However, the Lord was calling me to love the way He did, in complete trust and confidence in Him alone. Very simply, this exact obedience was not based on my idea of what I should do but on the Lord's idea. Honestly, it was not easy, but I had to predetermine that whatever the Lord was calling me into was in His good and perfect will and in His best interest. In short, I needed to show by obedience that I fully believed in Him above all else and not my own personal safety and security.

Another point of this parable is that there is something far deeper going on and that with God's help we can overcome it to become disciples of Jesus Christ who will move on to maturity and perfection in the Lord.

Basically, that something far deeper is the fact that when we have experienced that in our lives it is because we had no root in ourselves. Now a quick disclaimer here is that if we are truly desiring to please God and to walk in humility before Him these situations can become glory moments where we gain new growth in the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, if we are this type of person, we have to also realize that God is faithful and will not leave us or forsake us because of this. The point is that the rocky ground that this parable is talking about is one who does not bear fruit. So, in short, they heard the same word and even received it, yet it did not bear fruit. Jesus said that we will know a tree by its fruit which brings me to the good soil at the end of this parable, where the word was still heard and received, yet this time it bore fruit. It is important to understand that there is another type of person who always hears what God is saying and even receives it and rejoices over it yet never bears fruit. We must, at all costs, ensure that we are not that person. It is ok to make mistakes as long as we grow from them and keep moving from glory to glory. The moment we cease to apply the word is the moment that could ultimately end up in a complete turning away if we are not careful to seek God to remedy the situation of disobedience.

Have you ever met anyone who seems to be joyful when hearing the word of God only to succumb to testing and tribulation by turning away from said word? In short, when trouble comes they quickly turn away from exact obedience. One such case in Scripture was of King Saul when for example in 1 Samuel 15:10-23 he was told to devote everything after a battle to destruction and instead because in his own words he feared the people had kept back some of the spoils and then offered them to the Lord. The point is that while at other times this act may have been the right thing to do, at this point and time, God did not require this. So it is, Saul receives a word from God about what He wanted him to do but Saul failed to keep it because he feared the people and obeyed their voice rather than the voice of the Lord.

I was reminded of this story after reading about Jesus' interpretation of the word

being sown on those who had rocky soil and also who had no root in themselves. Now, I am not going to sugar coat this message but only going to bring the truth out of it. It is never a good thing to disobey the voice of the Lord even because of trouble and persecution. In short, if God said it, that simply settles it. I say that because I believe today in mainstream Christianity we seem to have forgotten this aspect of our salvation in Christ. We acclaim rather that when we disobey it's ok because God knows our hearts and His grace will cover us. However, I pose this, brothers and sisters is that not forsaking the covenant of blood paid for by Jesus Christ if we take that mindset? I would have to answer with a bold yes.

Something must be said about the grace of God at this point. There is a difference in the mindset of one who continuously trades God's word for the lie in contrast with one who genuinely loves God but makes mistakes and is yet growing. The overall idea is that of bearing fruit. The one who humbly accepts God's correction will also inherit life. However, the one who refuses to accept that God requires exact obedience will be led away in pride of heart against the very One who is ready to pour out grace. Yet if we would develop an attitude towards God in His holiness and majesty we would quickly realize that the same God who desires exact obedience as found in all areas of Scripture is also the same God that pours out in abundance the grace, power, and love to adhere to such revelation of truth towards obedience. I hope this is making sense because we really need to return to exact obedience and start teaching others the same. We may have become callous to the truth in this area. Yet at the same time, if we graciously accept this and come to God with all of our hearts, He will in no way cast us off. He is gracious and merciful and bears with us long so that we might turn to Him with all of our hearts so that we might receive times of refreshment by His Presence and Spirit.

Very simply, we need to be those who through the power of Jesus Christ have roots deep and wide and to not just be those who rejoice for a moment and then fall way. This message is about realizing the need for deep roots because when trouble comes these roots will sustain us in times of drought and storm.

My heart in this message is that we need to be strong in Christ because in this nation it is going to become increasingly difficult for Christians. I believe that our religious freedoms while being good, have also taught us subconsciously that we don't need to realize that persecution is right around the corner, and as such we have more confidence in our religious freedoms than in what Christ Himself taught us. I hope I am not being too sobering here. My aim is to prepare the bride of Christ for the day He returns. At this point in history, this is Christian encouragement. It is encouragement because we do not want to see anyone fall away, we want to see all of God's children inherit eternal life in the Presence of

God with exceeding joy. We see the urgency of being prepared as a bride for the return of our Lord and Savior and will continue in this ministry as the Lord our God wills and empowers.

As always we just want to pray for you, that our God would strengthen you with all power and give you a depth of discernment so that you can see what is on the horizon. May our God richly bless you this very hour as He unfolds His Word in this earth, in Jesus name.

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In Christ's Love,
Chris and Jeanne
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