

THE TAKE AWAY

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Sunday, January 16, 2022

Message Summary:

This week, Pastor John Carter taught us about the thorns described in Mark 4. Thorny soil chokes the progress of the Word with the deceitfulness of riches, the cares of this world and the desire for other things. If you struggle with thorny soil, it doesn't mean you don't have good soil or real faith, but you have other things that have entered in to rob you from experiencing the fruit of your faith. You have to remove those things (those thorns) that are choking the word to make room for the Word of God to grow in your heart. Whenever you don't completely remove what God tells you to remove, it will provoke and harass and affect your destiny. Like a thorn in the eye, it will hinder you from seeing clearly. That is the nature of thorns. To deal with the thorns, you have to love God more than you love anything else. Keep the Lord first in your life, or you will cling to the "other things" that creep into your life. This is especially needed for the first type of thorn: the cares of this world. These are the cares, worries or concerns of this present age and culture that distract us. They rob our attention away from God and the Word. Be careful how much you are feeding on outside cares or how you medicate yourself from those cares with news, social media, digital technology, etc. When you are focused on the worries of this world, you are not focused on the promises of God. Faith is a condition of the mind, and you must keep the Word at the center of your focus in order to drive back the cares of this world.

Key Scriptures:

- **[Mark 4:18-19 NKJV]** 18 "Now these are the ones sown among thorns; [they are] the ones who hear the word, 19 "and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.
- **[Luke 21:34-36 NKJV]** 34 "But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and **cares of this life**, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. 35 "For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 "**Watch therefore**, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."
- **[Matthew 11:28-30 NKJV]** 28 "Come to Me, all [you] who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 "For My yoke [is] easy and My burden is light."

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the three types of thorns described in Mark 4?
2. What are some of the cares of this world, and what do those cares look like in your life?
3. How do you remove the "cares of this world" thorns in your life?

Life Application:

This week as you study the key scriptures, consider what Pastor John said, "Whenever you don't completely remove what God tells you to remove, it will provoke and harass and affect your destiny." What do you need to remove? What cares of this world are distracting you or robbing your attention away from the Word of God? If you want to see the fruit of your faith, you have to remove or cut away those things that are taking up space in your life that do not belong to them. Make room in your life for the Word to grow! What needs to go, even for a season, if you want to see the fruit of your faith? Fast to make room for faith!