



Dear Friends,

Again it's May and I still remember walking into Alpha's little office that first day and thinking "What have I gotten myself into?" That was 1990!

So very much has changed since then! The 90's were rather peaceful and prosperous and we had no idea what life would be like in the 2020's. With the possible implosion of the government's handling of the country's finances and the rampant increase of the price of everything it's easy to get overwhelmed with thoughts about our future.

I recently read an article about the ways people from other countries and cultures see Americans. The observation that stood out to me the most was our casual attitude about debt. It was noted that other countries don't allow borrowing indiscriminately and saving for items is more common.

My attention has been drawn to Mark 4 and the parable of the Sower. The seed is described as falling in four areas around the field and each area has a significant effect on the seed. The one that caught my full attention was when the seed fell among the thorns. The first two areas do not really have much to do with me but the seed that falls among thorns as spoken to me!

In Mark 4:14 Jesus makes it clear the seed represents the Word of God and then in verses 18-19 He says the thorns represent the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the desire for things enter in and choke the word and it proves unfruitful. I am afraid that many Christians are forgetting that our focus is to be on Jesus and the Word of God and not primarily on putting gas in the car and buying groceries this week. Yes we need gas and food but our focus is to be in prayer looking for God to supply what we need.

I have heard people angry at God for not doing what they want so they charge it on their credit card. The pressure to have what we want when we want it is huge. Every commercial on TV or the WEB is pressure to have what they are selling and it's interesting that almost every ad uses the phrase GET IT NOW!!

The final place the seed (the Word of God) falls is on good ground. The good ground represents the heart that receives the Word of God with joy and trust that God will keep His promises. True devotion to Jesus will help us to be a light to others when things get dark. The temptation is still there but we refuse to yield to it. I Corinthians 10:13 emphatically states God will never allow you or me to be tempted beyond your ability to say NO! My interpretation of this verse says that "**the way of escape** from temptation is to run to the WAY for strength. John 14:6 says that Jesus is the WAY. So building our relationship with Him strengthens us when the thorns are growing around us. Please focus time to have daily devotions and read your Bible it is the seed mentioned in Mark 4.

In all the violence and trouble we see daily in the news please continue to pray for Alpha. Debi and I desire to be a little light that helps people walk by faith and learn to trust Jesus as Savior, Lord, and Life!

Thank you for your prayers and financial help so that a light continues to shine for those looking for help.

Richard

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