

forward further, not having to go back and get the primary principles over again. The steady, persistent continuance is tremendously important. Much more important than the sudden spurt that shows a great result over a brief time.

We in America particularly need this lesson. We need the lesson of sticking to it. Perhaps only a little at a time, but keeping at it, keeping at it, keeping at it. Instead of doing a lot and then forgetting about it. And then looking back and thinking about all the fine resolutions we made which we kept up for only a brief time.

It is so easy for our soil to be like the rocky soil where the plants come up quickly but they don't have enough soil to last.

Then the third. The seed fell among thorns which grew up and choked the plants so that they did not bear grain. How many ministers are there who study the Word to prepare a sermon. They study the Word to get something to give to others. That's vital and important. But if that's all they do, they do not develop it in their own lives and hearts, that shows in their effectiveness --at least their true effectiveness as God sees it. To watch for others things that crowd out the Word of God. To take time every day to study the Word, not simply to meet an assignment, not simply to fulfill a certain task, not only to prepare a sermon, but for the blessing for our own souls.

God has endless blessings He wants to give each one of us from every one of the 66 books of the Bible. But Oh how easy it is for us to get interested in the TV perhaps, or in an interesting story, or interest in reading the paper-- all of these have their proper places. God wants us to have a certain amount of relaxation. How easy it is for them to come in and to take time which should be given to the study and application of our hearts to the Word of God!

The thorns grow up and choke the plant. Thorns are sometimes very pretty. They sometimes have beautiful flowers. They have their proper place in the world, or God would not have them here. But they can assume a place far beyond what they deserve. They can choke out the Word of God from having its full effect in our hearts and in our lives.

God wants us to sow the seed and to know that God brings the results. He does not reward us for effectiveness; He rewards us for faithfulness. Faithfulness in constantly endeavoring to serve Him. Faithfulness in thinking out the best we can ways of serving Him and then pushing forward vigorously on them. The results are in His hands, and we must not become discouraged if they are not what we would like them to be.

Equally vital in this parable of the sower is the fact of our own heart, our own life as the field in which we are sowing the necessity that each sow in his own heart and life, and also the duty of each of us to sow as we spread the Word of God to others and try to reach them.