

Matthew 13:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

He also that received seed among the thorns (οἱ εἰς τὰς ἀκάνθας σπαρεῖς)—thorny ground where weeds compete with crops for nutrients, water, sunlight. Unlike stony ground (which withers), thorny ground grows but remains unfruitful. **The care of this world** (ἡ μέριμνα τοῦ αἰῶνος)—merimna means 'anxiety, worry, distraction.' **The deceitfulness of riches** (ἡ ἀπάτη τοῦ πλούτου)—apatē means 'delusion, fraud.' Wealth promises security but delivers anxiety; promises satisfaction but delivers craving.

Choke the word (συμπνίγει τὸν λόγον)—sumpnigō means 'to strangle completely, suffocate.' Thorns don't uproot the word; they slowly suffocate it through competition. **He becometh unfruitful** (ἄκαρπος γίνεται)—fruitlessness, not apostasy, characterizes thorny-ground hearers. They may remain 'in the church' but produce nothing for God's kingdom, spiritually strangled by divided loyalties.

Historical Context

Palestinian thornbushes (probably darnel or thistles) had extensive root systems that aggressively competed with crops. Farmers fought constant battles against thorns reclaiming cultivated land. Jesus's audience in prosperous Galilee faced real temptation toward materialism—Rome's Pax Romana brought economic

opportunity that could distract from kingdom priorities, just as modern affluence chokes Western Christianity.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What 'cares of this world' are slowly choking your spiritual fruitfulness—what worries dominate your thoughts?
2. How does wealth deceive—what false promises does materialism make that steal your devotion to Christ?
3. Where is your life unfruitful despite hearing God's word—what thorns need removing to restore productivity?

Interlinear Text

ο	δὲ	εἰς	τὰς	ἀκάνθας	σπαρεῖς,	οὗτός	ἐστιν	
G3588	He also	among	G3588	the thorns	that received seed	he that	is	
	G1161	G1519		G173		G3778	G2076	
ο	τὸν	λόγον	ἀκούων	καὶ	ἡ	μέριμνα	τοῦ	αἰῶνος
G3588	G3588	the word	heareth	and	G3588	the care	G3588	world
		G3056	G191	G2532		G3308		G165
τούτου	καὶ	ἡ	ἀπάτη	τοῦ	πλούτου	συμπνίγει	τὸν	
of this	and	G3588	the deceitfulness	G3588	of riches	choke	G3588	
G5127	G2532		G539		G4149		G4846	
λόγον	καὶ	ἄκαρπος	γίνεται					
the word	and	unfruitful	he becometh					
G3056	G2532	G175	G1096					

Additional Cross-References

1 Timothy 6:17 (Parallel theme): Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

Luke 8:14 (Parallel theme): And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

Luke 12:15 (Parallel theme): And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

2 Timothy 4:10 (Parallel theme): For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

Psalms 52:7 (Parallel theme): Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and strengthened himself in his wickedness.

Matthew 13:7 (Parallel theme): And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

Luke 12:21 (Parallel theme): So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

Psalms 62:10 (Parallel theme): Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.

Proverbs 11:28 (Parallel theme): He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

Jeremiah 4:3 (Parallel theme): For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns.