

On Money

Weeds to the Fruit of the Spirit

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This message covers

- Lessons from agriculture – the nature of weeds and their effect on fruit crops.
- How money is a weed to the Fruit of the Spirit
- How our generation can fight the snare of money weeds.

Information notice board

- 1) **About me.** Before I became a devoted Christian, I spent 20 years of my life being a hedonist – one who seeks pleasure for the sake of it. My money wasn't for God's purposes but for my pleasure. I spent it on alcohol and a number of girlfriends over the years and I lived for the fun of it because I didn't care about God – after all, my career and life was going well! Since God humbled me to turn me into his servant and I got baptized in May 2017, he has now overhauled my life to run after Him and to live by the Holy Spirit rather than the Flesh. You can read my full testimony [here](#):
- 2) **About these series.** The Lord Jesus gave me a single word "Blossom" as I was praying for a word for this season and series. This word will define a series of 12 topics he has also given me to tell his church about and build Christian character in his Holy Spirit. This lesson is one of those messages, but what does it mean to blossom?
- 3) **Pray for us!** Without the Lord, our effort is in vain. Pray that we remain faithful, humble servants.
- 4) **Subscribe to** our [YouTube Channel](#) and keep up with our videos which support the website.
- 5) **Looking for a ministry to partner with (pray, volunteer, give, subscribe to)? Consider supporting:**

Christ for all nations (CFAN): www.cfan.org.uk

The [evangelistic mission](#) started by Reinhard Bonkke and now led by Daniel Kolenda has to date registered over 75m salvation cards for Jesus.

The above ministry/website has not paid us to provide this recommendation and so the views expressed here do not necessarily represent the views of the ministry promoted above. Likewise the views therein do not necessarily reflect those of this ministry.

Part 1: Basics

In these times of the Corona virus, medical supplies like Infra-red thermometers can give someone extra money. Well, a family member told me a story of what he is going through. His consignment of 500 infra-red thermometers has been withheld from being cleared by the Ugandan revenue authorities. Why? A member of the political elite in Uganda wants him to sell them to her at just a small profit of say 5% but so that she can sell them onwards to the government and make a profit of over 200% herself. The irony is that she is already so wealthy. Why would she want my poor family member's little lamb when she has a whole herd? The truth about money is that if it has a hold on you, when you have it, it can suck you in and corrupt you - you want more and more and more... Like it's father, Satan of the bottomless pit. But how can you escape this?



So, we are in a series called “Blossom” in which the Holy Spirit is teaching us how to bear Fruit. To understand the process, we use an example of an orange tree.

For an orange tree to bear fruit, there is a period of about 5 years in which it goes through a number of stages:

1. Planting;
2. Sprouting;
3. Growing;
4. Blossoming (flowering);
5. Pollination; and
6. Bearing fruit.

One of the first problems that arises when trying to grow fruits is the problem of weeds!

Why does Jesus in this series call money “weeds”? Isn’t money good then? If it’s bad like weeds, why then does Jesus ask us to be faithful stewards of talents, which could include money management’?

Why then if money is a weed does the church keep asking for us to give? They are always telling us: Each of you should give for God loves a cheerful giver, Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over and “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse. ⁱⁱ

To help you understand, let’s first start with the basics of what weed are all about. ⁱⁱⁱ

1. Weeds are plants that are unwanted in a given situation and may be harmful, dangerous or economically detrimental.
2. They come in different types. Some are annual (grow, produce and die within a year), others are perennial (lasting a long time).
3. The roots of some weeds are able to penetrate and emerge from deep in soil.
4. Weeds by their nature compete with fruit crops for nutrients and water,
5. They also provide a moist environment for disease organisms, often harbour insects-pests and act as source for the disease spread. For orange trees this includes fruit sucking moth pests and the dangerous nematodes which cause slow decline.
- 6. In agriculture, weeds generally lower fruit yield up to 50 per cent.**
7. Weed control includes ploughing – to remove the weeds from their roots. Other controls include herbicides.
8. The critical period when fruit trees should be “weed free” is usually the time of planting and the time of flowering, especially when the flower bud is starting. This is often in the months of Spring to Summer.
- 9. If the fruit is kept weed free during the critical weed free period, no reduction in yields emerge but if the weeds appear during this critical period, the effects will last for years, typically the entire life of the orchard (fruit garden). Which means once the weeds attack in this period, the orchard is no use and should be cut down and the trees thrown into the fire to be burnt!**

So, you can see the key lessons are:

- **Weeds are competitive by nature.** As the fruit tree is growing, they grow and so they steal the nutrients and water meant for the plant, while at the same time hosting pests and diseases.
- **Weeds are very rebellious.** They will fight control – such as from herbicides. They also don’t give up. Some are annual (short term) and some are perennial (long term).

- **The most critical time to control weeds is to prevent them in the first place** – for example through ploughing and then during critical “weed free stages” – such as at planting and at flowering.
- **If not controlled, weeds reduce fruit yields by up to 50%** and their effect will often last the entire lifetime of the fruit orchard, which means the best option might be to cut down all the trees and burn them – in the outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Examples from the bible

Here are two parables from Jesus to help us understand the connection between fruit growth and money, aka weeds.

Example 1: The parable of the sower

“A farmer went out to sow his seed. And as he was sowing, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. Some fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly because the soil was shallow. But when the sun rose, the seedlings were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the seedlings. Still other seed fell on good soil and produced a crop—a hundredfold, sixtyfold, or thirtyfold. He who has ears, let him hear.”

Explanation for the parable of the sower.^{iv}

Jesus then explained the parable of the sower as follows to show the 4 categories of people:

- **Unresponsive people:** *When anyone hears the message of the kingdom but does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path.*
- **Fair weather people:** *The seed sown on rocky ground is the one who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he remains for only a season. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.*
- **Distracted people.** *The seed sown among the thorns is the one who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.*
- **Receptive and faithful people.** *But the seed sown on good soil is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and produces a crop—a hundredfold, sixtyfold, or thirtyfold.”*

Example 2: The parable of weeds^v

“The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was asleep, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and slipped away. When the wheat sprouted and bore grain, then the weeds also appeared. The owner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’ ‘An enemy did this,’ he replied. So the servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’ ‘No,’ he said, ‘if you pull the weeds now, you might uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat into my barn.’”

Understanding the parable of weeds

- In the parable of the sower, our Lord spoke about four different kinds of soil. Now it is as if the camera zooms in on the good soil. The other three – the path, the rocky ground, and the

thorns drop out of sight. So now we are looking at the experience of a true believer in this world.

- Jesus (the owner) – sows good seed.
- The owner has an enemy – Satan, who comes and sows weeds. The good seed is the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one. (Matthew 13:38)
- The field is the world – the Christian in the world.
- The good is sometimes inevitably forced to grow together with the bad until the end of time. Evil will grow alongside the good until the return of Christ.
- This therefore calls for endurance.

Bringing it all together

- **When starting your Christian journey** – watch out for the weed of money, it will choke the development of the fruit of the spirit. Ensure the love of money doesn't take root in your heart.
- **Once you have started on your Christian journey and are faithful** – watch out for the weeds of evil men (and their evil money), planted by your great enemy the devil, they will be side by side with you, you must be in daily combat – and you must endure.

How do you know when the good fruit of the Lord has blossomed and how do you know when you need herbicide from the Lord to remove the weed of money? It is in the fruit and you need to examine yourself to see the difference.

The Fruit of the Spirit contrasted with the Fruit of the World

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other. Galatians 5: 16 – 26 (NIV).

Our generation's snare: the god of weeds (money)

Our generation, driven by all the bling we see on TV from celebrities, the growing gap between the poor and the wealthy and the income inequalities is making us increasingly hungry for money because we see that those who have it – are gods!

Is money causing you to:

- **Pursue sexual immorality** – you use your money like a sugar daddy to lure innocent victims to fall into your trap. Use money to purchase pornographic material, to host wild “Bunga Bunga” parties for orgies and all sorts of debauchery.
- **Buy alcohol** and get into in drunkenness all because you are “buying rounds for the bar” “mr money bags” – yet in the process, you are violent (fits of rage) and you quarrel (dissensions, factions and envy).
- **Seek to climb up the corporate ladder** at the expense of others (selfish ambition) so you can earn all the money you can, keeping all the corporate profits for yourself and forgetting the less well off, refusing to pay taxes so you can keep it all for yourself?

These things are evil and the Lord Jesus says, repent from where you have fallen.

The Great Lord says to our generation as he says to all generations...

1. Don't look at people with money with envy.

Man looks at the external appearance, but God looks at the heart^{vi}.

We look at people with money and think someone is successful. God instead looks at the heart and sees someone consumed by money and then He says:

‘You fool! You will die this very night. Then who will get everything you worked for?’ Luke 12: 20 (NLT).

2. Focus your energies on the right thing.

“Do not wear yourself out to get rich; do not trust your own cleverness. Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle.” Proverbs 23:4-5 NIV

4. As for borrowed weeds – debt...

These too are a distraction from bearing fruit. The borrower is slave to the lender^{vii}. It means you can't fulfil your mandate fully if all your spare money goes to paying debt ... So aim to free yourself of other people's money (OPM).

5. Rely on Jesus even in the area of your finances.

Jesus said:

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. John 15: 5 (NIV).

If you steward money without Jesus, your work will come to nothing. If you want to develop fruit without Jesus, your work will come to nothing. It might seem like a Mountain to man, but the things of man and the things of God are different.

6. See money from God's perspective - give it away and free yourself from the love of money.

God says, why worry? I will clothe you. Instead give money away to those who need it and instead build yourself a treasure in heaven!

Here's the lesson: Use your worldly resources to benefit others and make friends. Then, when your possessions are gone, they will welcome you to an eternal home. Luke 16: 19 (NLT).

Also:

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. Matthew 6: 21.

If you give money away to God's kingdom, your heart will be there – you will be concerned about Kingdom affairs. Perhaps, It's the reason a pastor, said "[don't you dare stop giving](#)". When he said this, he was demonised. Now his delivery in these times of Corona Virus probably seemed greedy and it doesn't help that he is said to be one of promoters of the dangerous "Prosperity Gospel" but resistance to his message notwithstanding, there is biblical precedent to his statement, if you hold on to it, it can very cunningly set up a throne in your heart... Before you know it, it is a god in your life!

As for what that person does with the money, when you give them, for example some dishonest pastors, as a rule of thumb, I say, it's not for you to worry, that is someone's servant. God will discipline him accordingly, if indeed he is of God and not the Devil. God says, don't worry about them, for you follow me! ^{viii}

Next steps

Do not forget these critical lessons on how to overcome the snare of money:

- **When starting your Christian journey** – watch out for the weed of money, it will choke the development of the fruit of the Spirit. Ensure the love of money doesn't take root in your heart. Pursue the fruit of the Spirit instead of the fruit of the flesh.
- **Once you have started on your Christian journey and are faithful** – watch out for the weeds of evil men (and their evil money), planted by your great enemy the devil, they will be side by side with you, you must be in daily combat – and you must endure.
- You must not let the desire for money become a stumbling block so:
 - Don't envy the rich
 - Don't focus your energy trying to get rich.
 - Treat money as God does – it's simply a tool. Don't worry about your life.
 - Rely on God to help you manage the weed problem, he is the gardener.
 - When you feel money is taking a hold on you, give it away – cut the weeds down!

Notes

ⁱ The Parable of talents is dealt with in Matthew 25: 14 - 30

ⁱⁱ These verses on giving include:

- 2 Corinthians 9: 7 (Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver)
- Luke 6: 38 (Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.)
- Malachi 3: 10 ("Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.")

iii The material in this section extracted from:

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327528378 Weed Management Strategies for Tropical and Subtropical Fruit Orchards](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327528378_Weed_Management_Strategies_for_Tropical_and_Subtropical_Fruit_Orchards)

iv See: <https://www.biblehub.com/bsb/matthew/13.htm> and <https://unlockingthebible.org/2019/09/4-different-responses-sower-sees/>

v See <https://biblehub.com/bsb/matthew/13.htm> and <https://unlockingthebible.org/2019/09/7-elements-jesus-parable-weeds/>

vi 1 Samuel 16: 7

vii Proverbs 22: 7

viii See John 21: 22