

Rick Warren: 3 Things That Keep You From Hearing God

“The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature” (Luke 8:14, NIV).

You can’t hear God if your mind is crowded with other thoughts or concerns—particularly worries, plans and activities. If we’re always listening to the radio or watching TV, the circuits are going to be busy when God calls us. We have to eliminate distractions.

Jesus says in Luke 8:7, “Yet some [seed] fell among thorns. And the thorns sprang up with it and choked it.”

The kind of soil with weeds in it was actually planted with a crop that begins to grow. But as it grows, weeds grow up around it, and the weeds begin to choke out the life of the vegetable or the plant, so it never bears fruit.

Here’s what Jesus says is the meaning of Luke 8:7: “The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature” (Luke 8:14 NIV).

There are three things that choke out hearing God:

Worry. Worries are weeds. When you’re so busy with the problems and pressures of daily living, it makes it harder to hear God.

Riches. You can be so busy trying to pay your bills, so busy trying to get out of debt, so busy trying to make more and so busy making a living that you don’t make a life.

Pleasure. There’s nothing wrong with pleasure, but be careful

that you don't become so busy pursuing fun that you miss God and His plans for your life.

You don't have to cultivate weeds. They grow automatically, don't they? In fact, weeds are a sign of neglect. If you see weeds in your yard or garden, it means you're not tending it. The weeds in your spiritual life reveal that you're neglecting time with God.

When all the circuits are busy, you need to get quiet.

Talk It Over

- What distractions in your life keep you from spiritual growth?
- How can you eliminate those distractions?
- How much of your day is spent in silence? What might change about your life if you made more time for silence and quiet moments? {eo}

Rick Warren is the founding pastor of Saddleback Church. His book, *The Purpose Driven Church*, was named one of the 100 Christian books that changed the 20th century. He is also founder of *LifeWay*, a global internet community for pastors.

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