

But the Bible clearly teaches a personal devil. It clearly teaches (there are) demons, and God for His own inscrutable purposes allows them to exist and to continue. We should be aware that they are anxious to snatch away the vital seed.

How often do you hear a fine message, someone takes a great truth from the Word of God and presents it, and it enters into your heart and you feel it is tremendously important, I must do something about this, I must make this vital in my life, and then immediately when the service is over something comes along to distract your attention and turn it in another direction. You may even completely forget the effect that was made upon you. Satan is anxious to keep the Word of God from affecting us. He is ready to snatch away the Word.

How do we prevent him from snatching it away? By constant reading of it, by keeping our attention on it, by thinking what this message has meant to me, and trying to make it definite in our lives, so that it will not disappear as Satan sends in other thoughts and ideas, other things to drag us away from it. Satan is ever ready and seeking for ways of snatching away the seed that has been sown.

We perhaps cannot protect the people to whom we speak from having Satan take it away from them. We can only pray God to help them, but we certainly can watch out ourselves and can resist Satan and seek to make the Word such in our minds and hearts that it will stay there, and that it will have the effect upon us that God intends it to have.

Then, there is the second class: that which falls upon rocky soil. It doesn't have much soil, and it springs up quickly. Then when the sun comes up the plants are scorched and withered because they have no root. It is a common joke-- or at least it used to be years ago--that people made many good New Year's resolutions on New Year's Day.

I think when I was a young fellow, there must have been 4 or 5 times when I began a diary. I kept it up for 5 or 6 days, sometimes only 2 or 3. The good resolution was made but it did not last. It is very easy for us to become enthused about some truth, some vital thing we have gathered from the Word of God, and carry it on and emphasize it for a while, and then to completely forget it!

So perseverance, pressing on, sticking to it, not allowing our soil to be shallow so that it springs up quickly but does not last, is something that the Lord wants us to emphasize. I used to, when I taught Hebrew, used to urge students to do a little Hebrew every day during the summer. Take at least 5 days a week and do a little bit. Don't start in and put in a whole day and then forget it, But put in for sure a few minutes every day and keep it up. And you'll come back in the fall ready to go