

Engrafted Word

James 1:21 (KJV)

21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness **the engrafted word**, which is able to save your souls.

Many years ago, as a young man in my early 20's, I moved into my grandmother's home some time after she passed away, my grandfather having preceded her in death. She was always quite the green-thumb, planting a garden wherever they stayed long enough to do so. Her old age did nothing to deter her desire to have something growing. So it was no surprise she had some rose bushes out front in her yard. They were so beautiful and I really wanted to make a point of maintaining them for both their beauty and in honor of her. Not knowing much about it, I emulated what I had seen other people do. I went out and bought a beautiful trellis and put it up and cleaned up and mulched the rose bushes, as they had been somewhat neglected in the previous months.

That winter was a pretty harsh one. Though I don't recall the exact particulars, by harsh I mean very likely 2-3' of snow, and extended times of temperatures below zero. The next spring I noticed the bushes, when they bloomed, had very, very small roses on them and looked nothing like they did before. They had none of the fullness and thick, lustrous petals. Rather than resembling bulbous flowers, they were thin, flat, discordant and looked almost frail. They looked like wild roses. One day my dad came by and I showed him and relayed to him my observations.

"Oh, those *are* wild roses, Son."

I was puzzled.

"How can that be Dad?" I asked. "They were big, beautiful roses just last spring."

"Did you mulch them and cover the base of the plant with sawdust?"

"I did mulch them, but I didn't cover the base of the plant."

"Well, that is what is wrong. They have gone back to their original nature."

I was even more confused. So, he told me: "If you look at the base of the rose bush, you will see the graft line where the wild rose vine was cut off and the domesticated rose was grafted into the wild root system, which is pretty strong and hardy. If the frost goes *below* this graft line the domesticated rose genetics will die and the bush will take on the nature of the wild rose vine.

I never forgot that lesson.

Though this is not a perfect example of what happens with the Gospel - the grafting process being the other way around, it does illustrate a dynamic truth about the process of grafting. It also illustrates that the change is only as good as the protection of the graft during times of great trouble and tribulation.

What is grafted into us *must* be protected or we will revert back to type - our wild nature. We cannot afford to get cold in our soul!

When a person backslides, it doesn't happen because they just couldn't make it through, it happens when they revert back to their original sinful nature. It happens because they allow what was put into them to die because they didn't "cover it with prayer."

We must read the Bible into us, absorb the preaching into us and cover it with prayer. Much like the parable of the sower. The wayside soil, though good, was hard-packed and the seed was left uncovered. There was nothing wrong with the health of the soil and nothing wrong with the seed, it just wasn't covered.

Every man has within him that carnal nature, just waiting to resurrect if we let it. When a person quits praying, that nature creeps back out of the grave and takes them over again.

We must protect the 'engrafted' Word that has been placed into us and not allow the coldness of the world, the winds of doctrine blow upon the place that God put it into our nature and His nature into us. If we do not, we will most certainly revert back to type.

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