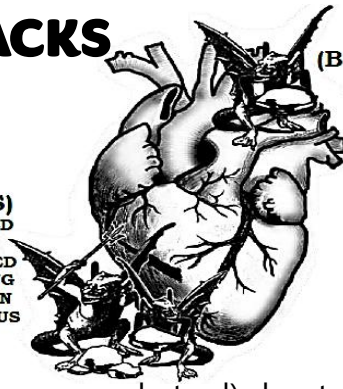


# SPIRITUAL HEART ATTACKS

**(Hebrews 12:15 KJV)** Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

**(Hebrews 12:15 AMPC)** Exercise foresight and be on the watch to look [after one another], to see that no one falls back from and fails to secure God's grace (His unmerited favor and spiritual blessing), in order that no root of resentment (rancor, bitterness, or hatred) shoots forth and causes trouble and bitter torment, and the many become contaminated and defiled by it—

(SCARS)  
HARDENED  
STONY  
CALLOUSED  
UNFEELING  
STUBBORN  
REBELLIOUS



(BLOCKAGES)  
OFFENSES  
BITTERNESS  
ANGER  
JEALOUSY  
ETC...

## CONTAMINATED AND DEFILED

**(Hebrews 12:15 AMPC)** Exercise foresight and be on the watch to look [after one another], to see that no one falls back from and fails to secure God's grace (His unmerited favor and spiritual blessing), in order that no root of resentment (rancor, bitterness, or hatred) shoots forth and causes trouble and bitter torment, and the many become contaminated and defiled by it—

- ☐ Rancor - bitterness or resentfulness, especially when long-standing (bitter grudge)
- ☐ Bitterness - anger and disappointment at being treated unfairly; resentment
- ☐ Hatred - intense dislike or ill will
- ☐ Contaminated - having been made impure by exposure to or addition of a poisonous or polluting substance
- ☐ Defiled - to make unclean or impure, to corrupt the purity



### 1. Why do you believe the author of Hebrews wrote this warning to believers?

## PURE IN HEART (PURITY)

**(Matthew 5 KJV)** (8) Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. (10) Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (11) Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. (12) Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

## PURE (CLEAN, BLAMELESS, AND UNSTAINED FROM GUILT)

1. NOT just wanting forgiveness and mercy BUT wanting grace and deliverance.

- ☐ **(Hebrews 4:16 KJV)** "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

2. Deep desire for spiritual cleansing (David sinned with Bathsheba and pinned **Psalms 51**)

- ☐ **(Psalm 51:7-10 KJV)** (7) "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. (10) Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

3. Purity (cleansing) comes from the Blood, Word (water), and the Spirit (fire)

- ☐ **(Hebrews 9:22 AMP)** ...without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness [neither release from sin and its guilt, nor cancellation of the merited punishment].
- ☐ **(Ephesians 5:26 AMP)** so that He might sanctify the church, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word [of God],
- ☐ **(Matthew 3:11 KJV)** ...He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:



## THE PHYSICAL HEART

Our PHYSICAL HEARTS pumps the necessary oxygen and nutrients throughout the body. It also assists in removing waste. But for our hearts to function and pump properly, they need a constant flow of blood filled with oxygen. Blood vessels (to and from the heart) supply this steady stream of blood and transport wastes for removal.

However, there are conditions when these blood vessels (arteries) become restricted by plaque (fat, cholesterol, proteins, etc...). When these plaques break down and open, blood clots form around them. These blood clots can block the arteries and stop the flow of vital blood and oxygen - causing a heart attack. The amount of damage done to the heart due to a heart attack depends on the amount of blockage and the time it takes to be treated appropriately.

In other words, the bigger the blockage, plus the longer it takes before it is treated, equals the greater the damage to the heart. Even if the heart is appropriately treated after a heart attack, a scar will form over the affected area. Scars will lessen the ability of the heart to pump efficiently because this new tissue does not contract as well as the original muscle tissue. Excessive scarring will cause abnormal heartbeats and can lead to death.

1. **What is the purpose of our physical hearts?**
  2. **What causes physical heart attacks?**
  3. **What are scars and how do they affect the heart?**
- 

## OUR SPIRITUAL HEARTS MUST BE GUARDED

Our spiritual hearts constantly respond to life's ever-changing events and circumstances (joy, happiness, sadness, loss, heartache, and pain). Every event and situation in our lives will produce either positive or negative emotions (feelings) or reactions. These stored up emotions and feelings will affect our responses, behaviors, and actions either in a positive (productive) way or in a negative (destructive) way.

**(Proverbs 4:23 AMPC)** Keep and guard your heart with all vigilance and above all that you guard, for out of it flow the springs of life.

- ☐ Emotions, feelings, reactions, behaviors, actions, and character

**(Proverbs 4:23 NIV)** Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.

- ☐ The heart is considered as sort of the center of the volitional part of man, the will of man. There is a difference made in the scripture with the believing in your mind and the believing in your heart. **"That if thou shall confess with thy mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord, and believe in your heart" (Rom\_10:9).** What you believe in your heart affects the way you live, what you believe in your mind can pass by and have no effect upon the way you live. But when it's down deep within your heart, then there is the effect upon your life. – **Chuck Smith Commentary**

1. **What does it mean to guard your heart with all vigilance?**
  2. **Every event in our lives will produce either positive or negative emotions or reactions.**
  3. **Stored up emotions and feelings will affect our responses, behaviors, and actions either in a positive (productive) way or in a negative (destructive) way.**
- 

## SCARS AND BLOCKAGES

**(Proverbs 4:23 NLT)** Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.

- ☐ **(Matthew 12:34 NLT)** ...For whatever is in your heart determines what you say.

- ❑ **(Luke 6:45 NLT)** A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart.
- ❑ **(Proverbs 18:21 NLT)** The tongue can bring death or life; those who love to talk will reap the consequences.

If we do not appropriately deal with and address our negative emotions (feelings) or reactions with prayer and forgiveness but continue to allow them to reside in our hearts, they will create unhealthy conditions.

- ❑ Conditions where our negative emotions (feelings) will become compounded and reinforced with bitterness, offenses, anger, jealousy, etc... and form blockages.
- ❑ These emotional and spiritual blockages will restrict and eventually cut off the necessary and vital flow of air and nutrition (the Ruach / Pneuma - the Wind, Breath, Spirit of God) to and thru our hearts.

1. **What can cause a spiritual heart attack?**
2. **Why does the enemy attack our hearts? What is his purpose?**
3. **Is it possible for emotional / spiritual blockages to hinder or separate us from God?**

## HEART ATTACKS

If God's Spirit is continually restricted and deprived of flowing to and thru our hearts; the Adversary can freely attack our hearts with Bitterness, Offenses, Anger, Jealousy, etc... Spiritual heart attacks occur when blockages and wastes (Bitterness, Offenses, Anger, Jealousy, etc...) continue to reside within us and essential air and nutrition (the Wind, Breath, Spirit of God) are restricted from us. The longer this unhealthy condition is allowed to remain – the greater the damage the Adversary can afflict upon our hearts.

- ❑ Blockages can lead to heart attacks, and heart attacks will produce scars.
- ❑ Scar tissues form over those areas that the enemy has attacked.  
Scarring will cause our hearts to become hardened and stony (calloused, unfeeling, stubborn, and rebellious).
- ❑ A scarred heart (a hardened heart) will decrease our ability to receive (hear, see, and understand) the things of God and can eventually cause spiritual death.

## SEEDS, ROCKS, ROOTS, AND THORNS

**(Luke 8:11-15 Amplified Bible)** (11) "Now [the meaning of] the parable is this: The seed is the word of God [concerning eternal salvation]. (12) Those beside the road are the people who have heard; then the devil comes and takes the message [of God] away from their hearts, so that they will not believe [in Me as the Messiah] and be saved. (13) Those on the rocky soil are the people who, when they hear, receive and welcome the word with joy; but these have no firmly grounded root. They believe for a while, and in time of trial and temptation they fall away [from Me and abandon their faith]. (14) The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, but as they go on their way they are suffocated with the anxieties and riches and pleasures of this life, and they bring no fruit to maturity. (15) But as for that seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word with a good and noble heart, and hold on to it tightly, and bear fruit with patience.



## BIRTHED FROM SEEDS

Most plant seeds have tiny dormant embryos enclosed by protective coats. These dormant (inactive) seeds can awaken with just a little water and the proper environment (temperature, water, oxygen, and lighting). Roots emerge from the seeds first. Roots are part of the seedling plant that lies hidden underground.

If roots are allowed to continue to grow, they will anchor the plant firmly into the ground, making its removal difficult. Even if the plant's surface is broken and torn down, it can and will resurface and continue to grow if the roots are not completely removed or destroyed. Roots absorb and store food and water to support plant reproduction. The seeds also sprout upward, producing stems and grow through and above the ground where budding and fruit develop.

In the form of a parable, Christ illustrates how spiritual seeds take root, sprout, and bear spiritual fruit.

**Luke 8:11-15, Mark 4:14-20, and Matthew 13:1-23** document the parable of the sower. A common theme is shared among all three Gospel writers. The growth of the seed (the Word of God) depends on the condition of the ground (the condition of the heart) it is sown into.

- ❑ Seeds are dormant (inactive) embryos that can awaken, give birth and grow when exposed to the proper environment. The growth of the seed is dependent upon the condition of the ground (or the condition of the heart) it is sown into.
- ❑ Spiritual Seeds can be sown by messengers of God or by the Adversary.
- ❑ Spiritual Seeds can be either the Word of the Kingdom (repentance, righteousness, rebirth, etc...) or Offenses (unresolved feelings and emotions from abuse (physical or mental), mistreatment, abandonment, hurts or trauma).
- ❑ Roots emerge from the seeds first; then they anchor firmly into the ground (or in our hearts) making its' removal difficult.
- ❑ Roots will allow a plant (or a spiritual seed) to continue to grow even if the surface is broken and torn down. If the roots are not completely removed or destroyed and survive in the smallest sense, the plant (or a spiritual seed) can re-surface and continue to grow.

---

### PARABLE OF THE SOWER (Mark 4:14-20)

**(Mark 4:14-20 AMPC)** (14) **The sower sows the Word.** (15) **The ones along the path** are those who have the Word sown [in their hearts], but when they hear, Satan comes at once and [by force] takes away the message which is sown in them. (16) And in the same way **the ones sown upon stony ground** are those who, when they hear the Word, at once receive and accept and welcome it with joy; (17) And they have no real root in themselves, and so they endure for a little while; then when trouble or persecution arises on account of the Word, they immediately are offended (become displeased, indignant, resentful) and they stumble and fall away. (18) And **the ones sown among the thorns** are others who hear the Word; (19) Then the cares and anxieties of the world and distractions of the age, and the pleasure and delight and false glamour and deceitfulness of riches, and the craving and passionate desire for other things creep in and choke and suffocate the Word, and it becomes fruitless. (20) And **those sown on the good (well-adapted) soil** are the ones who hear the Word and receive and accept and welcome it and bear fruit...

## SEEDS, ROOTS, AND FRUIT

In this parable, we see the sower sowing the Word of the Kingdom (repentance, righteousness, rebirth, etc...) in the hearts of men. We then observe how the Word can ONLY grow in good well-adapted ground (in an honest and good heart). Next, we see the Word when it is heard, understood, and received in an honest and good heart; it takes root and becomes firmly planted and nourished in the things of God. Finally, we see the Word flourishing, reproducing, and bringing forth spiritual fruit (**Gal 5:22-23**) into perfection and with patience – converting the hearer into a disciple of Christ (**John 15:8**).

**(Galatians 5:22-23 AMP)** (22) But the fruit of the Spirit [the result of His presence within us] is love [unselfish concern for others], joy, [inner] peace, patience [not the ability to wait, but how we act while waiting], kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law.

**(John 15:8 NLT)** When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.

1. **Who is the Sower? What is the seed? Where do these seeds go?**
  2. **What environment does the seed grow in?**
  3. **Is it necessary to be firmly rooted?**
  4. **What is the fruit (are the fruits) in this parable?**
- 

### PARABLE WARNING

However, in this same parable, we are WARNED that the Word can be sown among thorns!

- ☐ **Who sowed these thorns in the hearts of men?**
- ☐ **When did these thorns take root, grow, and produce?**
- ☐ **Where did they come from?**

Not only are we warned of thorns springing forth in the hearts of men, but in Hebrews 12:15 we are also warned of bitter roots springing forth and defiling many.

- ☐ **(Hebrews 12:15 KJV)** Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

So, where do these thorns and bitter roots spring forth from? They all originate from seeds sown by the Adversary. Recall that roots, plants, and fruit originate from tiny seeds that awaken and grow when exposed to the proper environment!

1. **Who sows these ungodly seeds that produce thorns and roots of bitterness in our hearts?**
  2. **What are the thorns in this parable?**
  3. **Why do you believe the writer of Hebrews calls it a root of bitterness (resentment)?**
  4. **What do we know about roots?**
  5. **What causes these ungodly seeds, roots, and thorns to grow in our hearts?**
- 

### STRATEGY OF THE ADVERSARY

In the parable of the sower, we see the Adversary relentlessly contesting the Word by using 3 strategies.

- ☐ **1st strategy** He steals the WORD from our hearts by force.
- ☐ **2nd strategy** Temptation, trouble, and persecution arise; we gradually fall away in disbelief.
- ☐ **3rd strategy** Worldly cares/anxieties, distractions, pleasures, delights, the deceitfulness of riches, cravings / passionate desires for other things creep in, choke and suffocate the Word.



Regardless of the strategy or method the enemy may use, his desired outcome is the same. The Adversary wants to affect our hearts either by hardening them or by producing ungodly seeds, roots, and thorns within them so that the Word won't penetrate, grow, and bring forth Godly fruit. Often, bitter roots spring forth from seeds called Offenses. Offenses are unresolved feelings and emotions from abuse (physical or mental), mistreatment, abandonment, hurts, or trauma in our lives. These seeds (as well as others) can literally grow roots or remain dormant (inactive) - it is dependent upon the condition of our hearts. If we continue to allow these unresolved feelings and emotions of unforgiveness, hurt, and bitterness to remain, Offenses will take root and grow.

1. **Discuss all 3 strategies. What is the desired outcome of each strategy?**
  2. **What is an Offense? Where do offenses originate from?**
  3. **How do they take root and grow?**
- 

## **BREAKING UP FALLOW GROUND**

Once these ungodly seeds grow, form roots, and anchor a foundation in our hearts; thistles and thorns will begin to sprout up and produce. If not removed, our hearts will become emotionally and spiritually hardened – producing an environment where worldly lusts and the works of the flesh flourish/thrive, and the Word of God is prevented (choked and suffocated) from being productive and fruitful in our lives.

We all must guard our hearts with all vigilance against such things. We must diligently seek and earnestly pray for God to break up the fallow ground of our hearts and remove all seeds (Offenses), roots (Bitterness, resentment, hatred, meanness), and thorns (worldly lusts that choke and suffocate the Word). Only God can reveal and uncover those secret hidden things in our hearts. But it will take confession, forgiveness, and repentance on our part for this deseeding and weeding out process to begin. Only then will our hearts be in a condition to receive the righteous seed (the Word) and let it take root and bring forth Godly Fruit into perfection.

---

## **HEART SCRIPTURES**

1. We are not to store up negative emotions/feelings in our hearts.
  - ☐ **(Proverbs 14:30 NLT)** A peaceful heart leads to a healthy body; jealousy is like cancer in the bones.
  - ☐ **(Proverbs 15:13 AMPC)** A glad heart makes a cheerful countenance, but by sorrow of heart the spirit is broken.
  - ☐ **(Proverbs 17:22 AMPC)** A happy heart is good medicine and a cheerful mind works healing, but a broken spirit dries up the bones.
  - ☐ **(Luke 6:45 NLT)** A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart.
2. We are warned of OFFENSES.
  - ☐ **(Proverbs 18:19 AMPC)** A brother offended is harder to win over than a fortified city, And contentions [separating families] are like the bars of a castle.

3. We are warned not to store up negative emotions/feelings in our hearts.

❑ **(Ephesians 4 NLT)** (30) And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he has identified you as his own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption. (31) Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. (32) Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

4. We are warned that resentment / unforgiveness will lead us into spiritual bondage (gives an advantage to Satan)

❑ **(Matthew 18:32-35 AMPC)** (32) Then his master called him and said to him, You contemptible and wicked attendant! I forgave and cancelled all that [great] debt of yours because you begged me to. (33) And should you not have had pity and mercy on your fellow attendant, as I had pity and mercy on you? (34) And in wrath his master turned him over to the torturers (the jailers), till he should pay all that he owed. (35) So also My heavenly Father will deal with every one of you if you do not freely forgive your brother from your heart his offenses.

❑ **(Matthew 6:12 AMPC)** And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven (left, remitted, and let go of the debts, and have given up resentment against) our debtors.

❑ **(2 Corinthians 2:10-11 KJV)** (10) To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ; (11) Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."

5. We are warned that resentment, un-forgiveness hinders prayers and prevents forgiveness of sins.

❑ **(Mark 11:24-25 NLT)** (24) I tell you, you can pray for anything, and if you believe that you've received it, it will be yours. (25) But when you are praying, first forgive anyone you are holding a grudge against, so that your Father in heaven will forgive your sins, too."

❑ **(Matthew 6:15 KJV)** But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

❑ **(Mark 11 AMPC)** (25) And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him and let it drop (leave it, let it go), in order that your Father Who is in heaven may also forgive you your [own] failings and shortcomings and let them drop. (26) But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your failings and shortcomings.

6. We are warned that a hardened (calloused) heart will decrease our ability to receive (hear, see, and understand) the things of God and can eventually cause spiritual death.

❑ **(Matthew 13:15 NLT)** For the hearts of these people are hardened, and their ears cannot hear, and they have closed their eyes—so their eyes cannot see, and their ears cannot hear, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot turn to me and let me heal them.

❑ **(Ephesians 4 AMPC)** (18) for their [moral] understanding is darkened and their reasoning is clouded; [they are] alienated and self-banished from the life of God [with no share in it; this is] because of the [willful] ignorance and spiritual blindness that is [deep-seated] within them, because of the hardness and insensitivity of their heart.

# CHRIST'S LOVE WILL HELP YOU LET IT GO!

7. We are told to make our hearts Christ's home so that God's Spirit may empower us, that we may be rooted deep in God's love, and that we may be made strong.

- ❑ **(Ephesians 3:16-18 NLT)** (16) I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. (17) Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. (18) And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is.
- ❑ **(Philippians 4:6-7 NLT)** (6) Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. (7) Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.
- ❑ **(1 Corinthians 13:4-5 AMPC)** (4) Love endures with patience and serenity, love is kind and thoughtful, and is not jealous or envious; love does not brag and is not proud or arrogant. (5) It is not rude; it is not self-seeking, it is not provoked [nor overly sensitive and easily angered]; it does not take into account a wrong endured.
- ❑ **(Mark 11 AMPC)** (25) ...if you have anything against anyone, forgive him and let it drop (leave it, let it go)...

## FORGIVE HIM AND LET IT DROP (LEAVE IT, LET IT GO)!!!