

A CLOSED HEART (*Finding Your Freedom*)

1/4/2024 11:42 pm

What is a "closed heart"?

- A closed heart is a defence mechanism (a wall) we build around our heart to protect ourselves from being hurt.
- BUT these walls produce callousness in our lives, toward God, and toward others, towards the promise of God.
- **Jeremiah 4:3-4**
Plow up the hard ground of your hearts!
Do not waste your good seed among thorns.
O people of Judah and Jerusalem, surrender your pride and power.
Change your hearts before the Lord.
- Like a farmer breaking up hard unplowed ground, you must break this rebellious will (hardened heart) before you can make a new beginning;
- We must clear away all the thorns in our hearts, **if not the seed (the word, the promise of God) is wasted**

What are the thorns in your hearts?

- Past hurts from others
- Root of bitterness, because of other's wrongdoing.
- Past one time or continuous traumatic experiences (physical, mental, verbal, sexual abuse)
- When we got offended often we hold on to the offence instead of releasing the offender.
- **Galatians 6:7** 'Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.'
 - We then cause the same seed of offence (which we planted) to be expressed through us.
- Because of these hurts and traumatic experience, we often made what I called **INNER VOWS**.
- **Inner vows: pacts or promises we make with ourselves based on our judgments.**
The vows are fleshly attempts to preserve ourselves, motivated by our fear.
 - **Bullied when we were poor** — "I swear I will not be bullied again, I will show you I will be rich, I will be richer than any of you!"
 - Self Ambition VS. Passion from God!
 - The danger is they are **Quite similar on the outside**
 - Its like 2 similar cars, but they have **DIFFERENT FUEL** and **DIFFERENT DIRECTION** and **DIFFERENT DESTINATION**.
 - **FUEL** - Instead of LOVE, its Anger, Hate towards a person, instead of Joy its PRIDE, Gratefulness. Guilt.
BAD FUEL WILL ALWAYS IN ENGINE BREAKDOWN (SICKNESS, BITTERNESS).
 - **DIRECTION** - Self Magnification, Self Exaltation,
□ So others can see me Vs God has died for me, I want to exalt HIM and Build His Kingdom.
 - **DESTINATION**
 - ◆ You will work/chase money at the expense of your health, your family, your ministry, without realising it you will become hamster chasing things that will NEVER SATISFY YOU.
 - ◆ You will be empty and broken inside. Bad fuel = Broken Engine.
 - ◇ Approval from man is "Never enough"
 - ◇ If you live by the approval/love of man, you will die by their rejections.
 - ◇ BURNT OUT. LEFT OUT. HURT.
 - ◇ **IT'S TIME TO CHANGE YOUR FUEL!!!**
 - ◇ **THERE IS A FUEL THAT ALWAYS GIVING, ITS CALLED JESUS**
 - ◇ **IT WILL NEVER RUNS OUT.**
 - ◇ **IT WILL NEVER FAIL YOU.**
 - ◇ **IT WILL ALWAYS GIVES YOU POWER, FREEDOM AND SOUND MIND.**
 - **Bullied when we were fat** — "Watch me, I will show them."
 - Instead of building your body to be healthy and be who God wants to be, so we can serve God and others longer stronger.
 - We build our body to please others, get approval from others (joke: what time is this?)
 - **Heart broken by dad** — "I wouldn't be like my dad. Focus all energy not to be like their dad."
 - Instead of becoming who God wants to be, MY SOLE PURPOSE IS TO 'NOT' BE LIKE HIM.
 - That's why a lot of people with no self identity mostly came from broken family.
 - IT'S TIME TO CHANGE THE FUEL.
 - THE BIBLE SAY EVEN IF YOUR MOTHER FORGETS ABOUT YOU, I WILL NEVER FORGET ABOUT YOU.
 - I AM THE CHILD OF THE LIVING GOD.
 - I CAN BE WHO GOD WANTS ME TO BE.
 - I CAN HAVE WHAT GOD WANTS ME TO HAVE!
 - IT'S TIME TO CHANGE YOUR FUEL!!!

It's Time to Open Our Heart Again

1. RECOGNISE IT

- We have to recognise **the bitter-root** and **inner vows** we have made in the past.
- Maybe its so long that you think you've forgiven them.
- But if you look at your present behaviour, present fuel (pride, anger OR joy, gratefulness), present direction (self-magnification vs God-magnification) you will know whether you still have that root/inner vows.
- **Luke 6:27~28** "But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you."
- **Luke 23:34** Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they

2. RELEASE IT

- Confess so you may be healed.
- Forgive and Release the people that may have hurt you.
- **When you release them, you are actually releasing yourself.**
- Forgive them and Ask For Forgiveness for yourselves.
- Why? For attempting to take God's place as judge.

3. RECEIVE THE PROMISE OF A NEW HEART

- Your coach will lead you to forgiveness prayer.
- And your coach will lead you to prayer to receive a NEW HEART.
- **Ezekiel 36:26** "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you. I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh."

- Dear Students,

At this point in the course you may be feeling discomfort, shame or even pain as you revisit the past, but keep pressing through!

God's love is faithfully at work in you, setting the crooked places straight.

Feeling overwhelmed and uncomfortable is a normal part of the process of change.

The first half of this course is designed to uncover the 'junk' in your hearts, so that you can face it — see it plainly and clearly.

The second half of the course is designed to help you (through His grace) break free of that "junk." Those who quit at this point, because it feels too difficult, will miss the most rewarding part.

As you remain faithful to this process of change, you will learn how to begin to rebuild your life in the fresh, new way Christ intended for you!

PRESS THROUGH!! Your freedom is just on the other side!

GROUP EXERCISE / DISCUSSION

- In the posted notes provided please fill in with name/initials/titles of people whom you have made bitterness to (mom, dad, brother, church leader, initials is okay).
- Give them 8-10 mins to fill.
 1. Choose one of the above titles/initials for group discussion. Explain why you judged this person.
 2. What inner vow (plan of protection) did you set in place?
 3. How has this vow caused you to have a calloused heart with people? With God?

LEAD THEM INTO PRAYER OF:

- **FORGIVING PEOPLE WHO HAVE HURT YOU.**
- **ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS FOR TRYING TO REPLACE GOD'S PLACE TO JUDGE**
- **GIVE ME A NEW HEART, LORD.**