
Chapter ten

*The condition of
my heart*

You probably know the infamous “Parable of the Sower”. The sower sows the seed, which Jesus explains is the word of God. It is sown into four different types of soil: the hard soil of the footpath, the shallow soil with underlying rock, the soil overtaken by thorns and weeds, and the fertile soil. The only place where the seed is fruitful is in the fertile soil. The seed of God’s word contains all the power we could ever need to live an overcoming life. However, the fruitfulness of the seed is determined by the condition of our heart (the soil).

The third type of soil is the one that God really highlighted in my own life during my recent healing journey. Mark 4:18-19 (NLT) says: ¹⁸ *The seed that fell among the thorns represents others who hear God’s word,¹⁹ but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things, so **no fruit is produced.***

Think about a weedy garden. If you allow weeds to grow without pulling them out, they will literally overtake your plants. The weeds will steal the nutrients from the plants, and cause them to fail to thrive, or even die.

In the midst of a crisis of life (in my case, the diagnosis of cancer), the enemy will try to so occupy your heart through distractions that the seed of God's word is starved of nutrients to produce the fruit of healing and health in your life. The diagnosis, the prognosis, the sickness, the symptoms, the pain, the treatment plan, the time spent figuring out what to do, the decision making, the fear, the anxiety, and even the financial implications—can take over the real estate of your heart, crowding out the message of Jesus the healer and His finished work that completely provided for your healing and health!

Right after Jesus shared the Parable of the Sower, before He explained it to His disciples, He shared this prophetic word from Isaiah.

¹⁴ *This fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah that says,
'When you hear what I say,
you will not understand.
When you see what I do,
you will not comprehend.*

¹⁵ *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.'*

Matthew 13:14-15 NLT

How distraught our Lord must have been! He saw the condition of the hearts of so many, hardened in such a way that even the powerful seed of the word of truth would not benefit them! The last line of this prophetic word says: *and they cannot turn to me and let me heal them.* In order to receive the healing that Jesus paid for, our hearts must be fertile soil for the seed of God's promises to grow!

When our heart is spoken of in Scripture, it is another name for our soul; our mind, our will, and our emotions. The condition of our soul

is determined by what we focus our attention on. Are your thoughts and the meditations of your heart, your decisions, and your emotions in alignment with the promises of God? Or, with the problem you are in the midst of?

Is your heart hardened towards Jesus, and the healing that He purchased for you, simply because your attention has been more focused upon the problem than upon the promise? That can change! You can reverse the condition of your heart to such a degree that one word from God will nullify hundreds of words from the enemy.

Abraham is called our father of faith. The key to Abraham's strong faith was his discipline over his own thoughts! He was strong in faith because of what he considered, and what he did NOT consider!

To "consider" means to take into account, to ponder, to study, to examine, to deliberate upon, or to meditate upon. Let's take a look at what Abraham chose to consider, and what he chose to NOT consider!

*Abraham,¹⁸ who, contrary to hope, in hope believed, so that he became the father of many nations, according to what was spoken, "So shall your descendants be."¹⁹ And not being weak in faith, **he did not consider** his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb.²⁰ He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,²¹ and being **fully convinced** that what He had promised He was also able to perform. (Romans 4:18-21 NKJV)*

Take note:

- When there was absolutely 0% hope in the natural for Abraham to become a father, Abraham believed anyway. The biblical word "hope" means to wait with joyful and confident expectancy.
- Abraham refused to consider the gravity of the problem—his own impotence, and his wife's lifelong barrenness along with already having gone through menopause.
- He praised God anyway!

- He was fully convinced of the promises and faithfulness of God.

How does this relate to you?

Whatever things you consider, you become sensitive to.

Whatever things you consider not, you become hardened to.

Remember, your “heart” is synonymous with your soul—your mind, your will, and your emotions.

When I was diagnosed with cancer in September of 2020, I made a choice. I chose to pour myself into my relationship with my Healer, His finished work, and the promises in the word of God. When my body was in pain, I ran to God. When I was fighting fear, I ran to God. When my mind tried to fixate on the “what-ifs”, I ran to God. When I had a sleepless night, I ran to God. When I had a doctor’s appointment or treatment, I ran to God.

Sometimes I turned on praise and worship music and actively and fervently praised my God. Sometimes I meditated on promises that God had given to me personally from His word. Sometimes I read the Bible. Sometimes I prayed and journaled. I considered God; His promises and His faithfulness. And I was ALWAYS strengthened in the midst!

I made the active and absolute choice to NOT consider the details or the magnitude of the problem. I did NO research on the cancer diagnosis, the suggested treatment plan, the chemotherapy and immunotherapy medications, or any possible side effects. I asked my doctor very few questions. Before each oncology appointment, Kent and I discussed any questions that we might want to ask, and we often discarded those questions realizing they weren’t important in the big picture. We sought direction from the Holy Spirit when making decisions, and then allowed peace to lead us. When the distractions of pain or symptoms were screaming loud, I ran into the secret place and let my Father’s sheltering wings cover me until the symptom or fear subsided. I guarded my heart carefully by what I did NOT feed it!

I followed the Holy Spirit's direction about who to share the medical diagnosis and treatment plan with, and when to share. I started those conversations by clearly stating my belief in Jesus and His healing grace! I shared medical details very sparingly and in a very positive light. I rarely even shared the kind of cancer I was diagnosed with, because I didn't want others to do research and possibly speak negatively about me or the medical diagnosis or plan.

What was the result of where I focused my attention, and where I didn't? I became more and more sensitive to my Father's heart, His voice, His love, His goodness, His faithfulness, and the power of His word. I grew in my conviction of faith over fear, healing over cancer, and life over death. And I grew "hardened" (desensitized, calloused) to the enemy's plan. I actually laughed at the stupid devil's ploy to steal, kill and destroy from me, a child of God! I rarely even thought of cancer.

But I DID think in great detail about cancer being disintegrated, and my bone marrow, blood, bones, soft tissue, lymph nodes and immune system being completely revitalized and my youth renewed like the eagle's. I DID think about God protecting me from any toxic effects of chemo, and about how He had released angelic bodyguards to surround and uphold me. I DID remember how God had healed me in the past.

I paid close attention to the manifestation of my healing of cancer, day by day by day. I remembered the pain I was in that kept me awake at night, and prevented me from laying in any position except on my side with a pillow between my knees. I remembered the need to have a heating pad and ice bag with me everywhere I went, and taking two extra strength Tylenol throughout the day and night for months. I remembered the pain in my lower back when I walked, when I tried to exercise, when I stood to cook or to teach. But that pain gradually decelerated until it was completely gone—defeated! Now I can sleep in any position. Now I have no more need for Tylenol or pain medication. Now, the heating pad is in the back of the linen closet,

unused. Now I can stand to cook, and to teach without pain. Now I exercise daily; pain-free and strong.

My focus is on my Healer and my healing ... NOT on cancer! All glory to my God!!!