

INSIGHTS

BY DR.
DENNIS
BURKE

THE HEARING HEART

**HOW DOES THE ENEMY SUCCEED IN
DERAILING A POWERHOUSE PERSON? HOW CAN
IT HAPPEN THAT SOMEONE FULL OF THE LOVE OF
GOD LOSES HIS JOY AND CONFIDENCE IN JESUS?**

It can happen to just about anyone — at least, to anyone who is not maintaining a very watchful eye. Just when you believe you have everything moving in a good direction, a flood of trouble seems to hit *hard* from every side — and suddenly you're "down for the count"!

So many times, it isn't even the big hits that take a person out of the fight. It can be seemingly small things that steadily pick at and pilfer the person's strength or confidence until he is ultimately robbed of God's best.

Jesus used a very powerful parable to tell us exactly how it can happen. Mark 4 holds both the parable and Jesus' own commentary of its meaning. It is His unparalleled teaching of the sower and the seed. In this teaching, Jesus described four different soils — all with the same seed sown. The seed was a picture of the Word being sown into a person's life. The soil represented the condition of a person's heart and

how effective the Word-Seed sown would be.

There are four basic soils the Word can be sown into:

1. **THE PATHWAY**, with hardened soil from being walked on. As a result, the Word-seed didn't even get into the soil.
2. **THE SHALLOW GROUND**, where the thin layer of soil on top of rocks gave the Word-seed no place to take root and grow. Anything that brought the heat would make the fragile beginnings of growth wilt and die.
3. **THE GROUND THAT STARTED TO GROW THORNS** as well as the Word-seed. The overcrowding in that soil choked out the growth and fruit that was being produced.
4. **THE GOOD SOIL** that produced varying degrees of healthy growth and fruit.





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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO "GUARD YOUR HEART?"

Thought life, perceptions, emotions, and willpower: these are all part of your inner life that must be maintained.

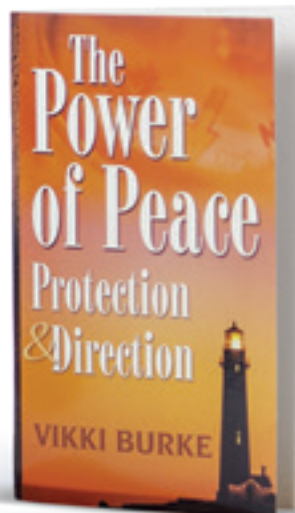
Each of these pictures provides very clear and telling insights. But it is the soil that also grew thorns that I want to focus on here. Notice how Jesus described this person from Mark 4:18-19 (AMPC):

And the ones sown among the thorns are others who hear the Word; 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.

HOW TO

KICK STRESS TO THE CURB & MAKE THE RIGHT DECISIONS:

GET GOD'S PEACE.



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The key words here are *cares, anxieties, distractions, deceitfulness of riches, and desire for other things*. These are the attacks the enemy uses on the soul of the believer to creep in and choke the Word. And that's the devil's ultimate aim: If he can choke the Word in believers' lives, the Word becomes fruitless.

One of the deeply destructive diseases of the soul — *cares and anxiety* — can creep into the life of anyone who allows this thief in to distort or choke his or her ability to receive. Just as a person's natural hearing can diminish for various reasons, so can cares and anxiety cause that person's ability to hear spiritually diminish. It becomes difficult to receive encouraging words or to interpret things happening around with any spiritual clarity.

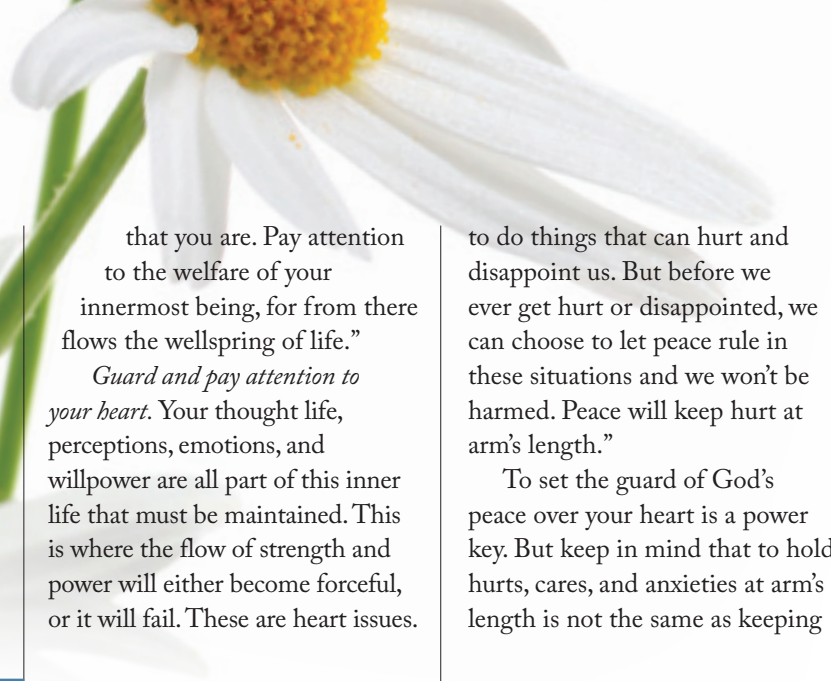
The anxious soul can become so occupied with the problems and pressures in life that the person's mind is dominated with thoughts that run out of control. The sinking feeling of losing control gains strength. Jesus referred to this thief as "the

cares and anxieties of the world," and its end result is always an *overcrowded heart*.

It is this overcrowded heart that seems to plague so many in God's family. It's such a common condition, even for those who have walked with God for years and remain in love with Jesus. The culprits that can encroach on the inner life of a person cover a wide range, but they all produce the same end result: Too many things occupy the space in the heart designed to grow the fruit of God's plans and purpose for their lives.

The heart devoted to Jesus has the Word growing and bearing fruit. Yet whether it is a young believer or a seasoned saint, the danger remains the same. Too much soil of the heart can become filled up with the weeds of cares, anxieties, or other distractions.

This soil of the heart is vital to everything God wants to grow in us, and we have a lot of input regarding what kind of soil it will be. Proverbs 4:23 (TPT) tells us, "So above all, guard the affections of your heart, for they affect all



UPCOMING MEETINGS

that you are. Pay attention to the welfare of your innermost being, for from there flows the wellspring of life.”

Guard and pay attention to your heart. Your thought life, perceptions, emotions, and willpower are all part of this inner life that must be maintained. This is where the flow of strength and power will either become forceful, or it will fail. These are heart issues.

to do things that can hurt and disappoint us. But before we ever get hurt or disappointed, we can choose to let peace rule in these situations and we won't be harmed. Peace will keep hurt at arm's length.”

To set the guard of God's peace over your heart is a power key. But keep in mind that to hold hurts, cares, and anxieties at arm's length is not the same as keeping

The anxious soul can become so occupied with problems that

THE PERSON'S MIND IS DOMINATED

WITH THOUGHTS THAT RUN OUT OF CONTROL.



To put a guard over your heart is to remain God-like and resist the cares and anxieties that try to strike and find a landing place. It is to keep seeing from God's perspective, to keep hearing His Word within, and to maintain your inner life so the power of His divine life can flow freely.

Place the protection of God's peace at the gateway of your heart. Vikki said it so well in her book, *The Power of Peace*: “The fact is that as long as we live on the earth, other people are going

people at arm's length. You can continue to live the love life with people and maintain your peace. That is the power of divine life and divine love at work. The guarded heart is also the tender heart. To be tenderhearted is to be easily moved to a response of love. And the heart that is tender toward people is also tender toward God.

Of course, the Holy Spirit says it best:

continued >>

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garment. Never be without it. Let the peace of Christ keep you in tune with each other, in step with each other. None of this going off and doing your own thing. And cultivate thankfulness (Colossians 3:12-15 MSG).

It may be time for a new wardrobe. Wear it with style.

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