

## WATCH OUT FOR THE HEART ATTACKS Prt 2

Today I want to continue on the matter “Watch out for the heart attacks”. Last week we covered the first major causes of emotional heart attacks, which was:

### **1. Hatred**

As we continue on our journey, lets get back to the story of Joseph:

*Genesis 37:5 One night Joseph had a dream, and when he told his brothers about it, they hated him more than ever.*

*Genesis 37:9 Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me."10 So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?"11 And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind*

### **2. Envy**

- One other issue that blocks our hearts and destroys relationships is envy
- It is a feeling of discontented or resentful longing aroused by someone else's possessions, qualities, or well-being. It also refers to grieving over other men's achievement.
- When God has blessed you with something, not everyone is happy for you – others will get consumed with why you got what you got.
- His brothers could not stand the fact that the blue eyed Joseph was going to rule over them – that made them envious.
- There are two types of envy –
  - Malicious envy: this type will lead action tendencies aimed to pull down the envied person from their superior position
  - Benign or non-threatening envy activates action tendencies aimed at improving oneself in order to match.
- Envy destroys our hearts – if you are the one envious

*Proverbs 14:30 ESV*

*A tranquil heart gives life to the flesh, but envy makes the bones rot.*

- The scriptures highlight the dangers of allowing envy to grow inside

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- When Abel's sacrifice was respected by God, and his was not, Cain killed his brother out of envy. (Genesis 4:3-8)
- When Korah was envious of Moses, he was swallowed up by the earth. (Numbers 16)
- When Saul let envy of David enter his heart the end result was that he was killed in battle. (1 Samuel 18)
- Even Jesus was killed by the religious leaders of the day out of envy.
- When you are on the receiving end of envy – this means you possess some desirable traits (looks, wisdom etc).
- What to do when you are envied
  - Stay humble – there is nothing that you have, that you did not receive from God  
*Romans 12:3 Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us.*
  - Do not trust in your enviable ability – you can lose it tomorrow.  
*Psalms 33:17*  
*A horse is a vain hope for salvation; even its great strength cannot save.*
  - Proverbs 21:31*  
*A horse is prepared for the day of battle, but victory is of the LORD.*
  - Isaiah 31:1*  
*What sorrow awaits those who look to Egypt for help, trusting their horses, chariots, and charioteers and depending on the strength of human armies instead of looking to the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.*
- What to do when you are envious of others, you think of
  - The woman who got married younger than you,
  - Your friend whose job is more glamorous than yours,
  - Your sister whose house is bigger than yours,
  - Your neighbor whose marriage is better than yours, whose life is easier than yours,
  - Your church mate whose children are better-behaved than yours, whose popularity is brighter than ours, whose intelligence is greater than ours?

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- When we feel like this, the bible commands us to get rid of envy – yes you have to be aggressive about it

*1 Peter 2:1-3 New International Version (NIV)*

*2 Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. 2 Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, 3 now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.*

- Address the emotion with intention, don't accommodate it

- Get into the word and replace envious thoughts with thoughts of appreciation

*Philippians 4:8 And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.*

- Be thankful to God for what the person has received

*Romans 12:15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.*

- It means be touched by your neighbor's success – we are members of one body

- Search within and see what God has blessed you with – shift the focus from the other to self.

*Ephesians 4:7 However, He has given each one of us a special gift through the generosity of Christ.*

- Right next to envy is this attack called jealousy – it is very much confused with envy but the two are different.
  - Envy occurs when we lack a desired attribute enjoyed by another.
  - Jealousy occurs when something we already possess (usually a special relationship) is threatened by a third person
- Joseph experienced both – his brother were jealous of him

Joseph had a great heart – it was a heart of love and compassion. It was a way of life that flushed out all the plaque that could cause any form of heart.

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*Gen 37:12 Soon after this, Joseph's brothers went to pasture their father's flocks at Shechem. 13 When they had been gone for some time, Jacob said to Joseph, "Your brothers are pasturing the sheep at Shechem. Get ready, and I will send you to them." "I'm ready to go," Joseph replied. 14 "Go and see how your brothers and the flocks are getting along," Jacob said. "Then come back and bring me a report." So Jacob sent him on his way, and Joseph traveled to Shechem from their home in the valley of Hebron.*

- When his father asked him to go and look out for his brothers, this was an opportunity for him to have a go at them.
- Going to Shechem was not going to be a stroll in the park, the distance between Shechem and Hebron was approximately 80km. Walking at 10minutes a km, that would have taken him a good 13hrs
- Joseph was only 17 and the journey between Hebron and Shechem was a treacherous one.
- It tells me a number of things:
  - Joseph had unconditional love for his brothers, irrespective of how they treated him. God will send you to serve the very people that have hurt you before.
  - Joseph was selfless – he placed himself in harm's way for the welfare of his brothers. This was sacrificial love in action.
  - Joseph was obedient – if you are to overcome matters of the heart, it requires you to fully obey the word. Matters of the heart require a heart that is fully yielded to God.

*Genesis 37:15 When he arrived there, a man from the area noticed him wandering around the countryside. "What are you looking for?" he asked. 16 "I'm looking for my brothers," Joseph replied. "Do you know where they are pasturing their sheep?" 17 "Yes," the man told him. "They have moved on from here, but I heard them say, 'Let's go on to Dothan.'" So Joseph followed his brothers to Dothan and found them there.*

- His measure of love, selflessness and obedience was evidenced by him going through to Dothan – this was another 24 km from Shechem. This is an additional 4 hrs – this makes it a total of 17hrs.

*Genesis 37:18 When Joseph's brothers saw him coming, they recognized him in the distance. As he approached, they made plans to kill him. 19 "Here comes the dreamer!" they said. 20 "Come on, let's kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns. We can tell our father, 'A wild animal has eaten him.' Then we'll see what becomes of his dreams!"*

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- No matter how good your heart is, there will always be evil hearted people – they will plot against you regardless of your good deeds towards them.
- When you love people, do not expect to receive the same treatment.

### **3. Unmet expectations**

- Unmet expectations are one of the heart killers you will experience in this life.
- In order to keep your heart healthy, you will need to manage expectations carefully
- So many times we confuse people with God – Do not expect people to do for you what only God can do.
- The expectation was for the brothers to rejoice at the site of Joseph, to marvel at his bravery of having walked a whooping 104km trip to look for them.
- When you do stuff for people, put your expectation of a reward on God – if they thank you it's a bonus, if they don't at least you did not put your hope of recognition on them.'
  - Unmet expectations ruin relationships
  - Unmet expectations can wound your heart
  - Unmet expectations can lead to offence
  - Unmet expectations can harden your heart
- I am not even encouraging people to be ungrateful – all I am saying is that don't pin your hope on that.

### **How to deal with expectations**

a) You deal with unmet expectations by serving people as unto God

*Colossians 3:23 Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. 24 Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ.*

Prefer recognition from God and not from man

*Luke 6:26 Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.*

b) The key to limiting suffering? Reframe expectations of yourself and others

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- Instead of expecting your family and friends to read your mind, to know what you are thinking, and to know what you need from them, ask yourself whether it is a realistic expectation.
- c) What can you reasonably expect from someone
  - Take into account people's ability
  - Consider people's track record
  - Consider
- d) Measure people by intention and not by action
  - Give people the benefit of the doubt
  - It can also be called extending the arm of grace
- e) Don't Stop Expecting the Best in Yourself and Others