

“How Are You Dealing with Your Heart Attack?”

Psalm 147:3 says: The LORD *heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.*

How are you dealing with your heart attack? Your response to this question might be either: “I’ve never had a heart attack so there’s nothing to deal with!” or “I eat right, get regular exercise, watch my cholesterol, salt and fat intake and have regular check-ups with the doctor!” Usually when we hear the phrase “heart attack” we think immediately about a malfunction of our heart or some part of our heart which causes severe pain and sometimes death. I guess this is one way that we can understand the word *brokenhearted*—having a heart that is physically “broken” in some way.

However, the word *brokenhearted* usually refers to a feeling—an emotional pain which can affect you physically. This is because we have generally thought of the heart not only as the organ in the body which pumps the blood through our system to keep us alive but also as the “seat” of our emotions. We view the heart as that part of our being from which flows love, devotion, compassion and caring, as well as hate, anger, restlessness and even sin.

This picture of the heart as the “seat” of our devotion and feelings is

also used by God in the Scriptures. For instance, we are commanded in Deuteronomy 6:5 to *love the LORD our God with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our might*. In other words, our **total** commitment and devotion should be to the LORD **with our whole being**.

When people talk about someone doing a good job or being conscientious about something you might hear them say, “They really put their heart into it!” When we talk about the heart it is not only emotion or feeling but more importantly **commitment, devotion and conviction**. Colossians 3:23-24 commands us to do everything from such devotion and faithfulness to the Lord Jesus Christ as we fulfill our various vocations in life. It says: *Whatever you do, **work heartily**, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. **You are serving the Lord Christ***.

Thus, the heart has quite a lot of influence on our being and actions. It is spoken of in Scripture as:

- Causing people to give a portion of their money as an offering to the LORD. In Exodus 25:2 the LORD told Moses: *From every man **whose heart moves him** you shall receive the contribution for Me.*
- Being able to store knowledge. Proverbs 3:3 says: *Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you . . . **write them on the tablet of your heart***.

- Being happy or sad. Proverbs 14:13 says: *Even in laughter **the heart may ache**.* Proverbs 17:22 says: ***A joyful heart** is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.*
- Having eyes. In Ephesians 1:18 Paul prays for us, asking that we may have ***the eyes of our hearts enlightened**, that we may know what is the hope to which He has called us, what are the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints.*

Just take a look at the word “heart” in any Bible concordance and you will find hundreds of ways that the heart is used to describe our relationship to the LORD and one another!

However, the heart is also spoken of in a negative sense in the Scriptures. Consider these words:

- Genesis 6:5 → *The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention **of the thoughts of his heart** was only evil continually.*
- Matthew 15:19 → *For **out of the heart** come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander . . . and the list could have went on and on.*

Unbelief is attributed to the fact that a person has a “hard” heart or a “calloused” heart, describing a person who doesn’t want to give his

devotion and commitment to the LORD **with his whole being**.

Your heart is under attack all the time. Satan is constantly placing temptations in your path in an effort to draw your heart's devotion away from the LORD in sin, false belief and despair. Paul expressed this concern about the Christians in Corinth: *I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray **from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ***. (cf. 2 Corinthians 11:3) When you have someone's heart you have their whole being. Therefore, satan is in the business of "heart attacks" as he attacks Christ in you since Jesus *dwells in your hearts through faith*. (cf. Ephesians 3:17)

So, the question is valid for every Christian: How do you deal with your heart attacks? By standing firm in your faith in Jesus. (cf. Ephesians 6:10-18; 1 Peter 5:8-9) 1 John 3:8 says, *the reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil*. You deal with your "heart attacks" properly as you cling to the victory which Jesus has won for you through His life, death and resurrection. 1 John 4:4 reassures you that *you are from God and have overcome those "heart attacks", for He Who is in you (that is, Jesus) is greater than he who is in the world (that is, the devil)*.

As you remain in a close relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ by reading and trusting His Word, by receiving His presence and forgiveness in the Lord Supper, by communicating with Him in prayer, by worshiping together around His forgiveness and promises, then you will

be able to deal with the “heart attacks” properly, constantly discovering the reassurance that they’ve already been dealt with through the victorious life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ! Because of your connection to Jesus, beginning with your baptism, the prophecy from Ezekiel 36:25-27 has been fulfilled in you where the LORD says: *I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and . . . I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit in you and move you to follow My decrees and be careful to keep My laws.* (NIV) Amen.