



Ladies of Grace
Bible Studies for Women

A Woman & Her Walk With God Series

Encouraging Women to Walk With God on the Brighter Side of Life

A Woman & The Sin
Issues of Her heart

Last week we began talking about A Woman & Her Emotional Health. And as we began this study, we learned that our emotional wellness is a natural by-product of our being strong spiritually. Why is this? Because our emotions are generated from the feelings that overflow from our hearts, and if our hearts are not governed by the scriptural principles of the Bible, then they become a place where negative thoughts and feelings gather. And what happens to our emotional stability when negative thoughts and feelings gather in our hearts? It loses its balance, and we become emotionally unstable and unhealthy.

Because I know that no woman in her right mind wants to be emotionally unstable, I am going to spend the next four weeks teaching you what the Bible says about dealing with the 'issues of life' that seem to often overwhelm us.

Last week we learned a very important verse for women. Some of us should make it our theme verse and write it down and post it in a place where we will be able to remind ourselves of it every day. Here is the verse:

“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”
Proverbs 4:23

What does it mean to “keep thy heart with all diligence”? It means ‘above all else, guard your thoughts, will and affections,’ because from them flow (like a fountain) how you will react and feel about everything else. The Bible tells us in Matthew 12:35, **“A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.”** Our hearts are store houses for whatever ‘treasures’ we have been collecting throughout our days, and today I am going to show you what happens to our emotions when we allow ourselves to collect the evil treasures of the sins we commit, and the sins that others commit around us.

THE EFFECT OF THE SINS WE COMMIT

Over the Thanksgiving holidays, I became very frustrated with one of my daughters over something that I considered to be a very big deal. As I dealt with her about this matter, I spoke to her in a very rude and condemning way. She received my rebuke as an attack on her personal character, and because of this, didn't seem to absorb any of the correction that I was trying to give her. The whole thing turned into an ugly mess, and a few hours later, I ended telling her I was sorry and asking her forgiveness. She said she forgave me, but she still had an attitude. And because deep down in my heart, I still had an attitude too, nothing was really resolved, but more than a few negative things began to fester inside of my heart . . .

1. **ANGER.** Anger began to fester in my heart because my daughter wouldn't receive my correction.
2. **PRIDE.** Pride began to fester in my heart as I saw my daughter as the whole source of the problem we were having.
3. **CONTROL.** Control began to fester as I tried to manipulate the whole dynamics of our relationship.
4. **ANXIETY.** Anxiety began to fester in my heart as I began to worry about how this would affect our future together.
5. **GUILT.** And finally, guilt began to fester in my heart as God began to show me that I was the one that did wrong in this situation.

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After I reached the guilt stage, God began to break my negative heart by giving me the desire “keep it with all diligence” by doing the following:

- ◆ Confessing my sin of being mean and hateful to my daughter (I John 1:9)
- ◆ Asking God to give me His heart and attitude about our whole situation (Psalm 51:10-17)
- ◆ Calling my daughter and genuinely apologizing by showing her what God had shown me about my own sin nature to be prideful and control everything
- ◆ Keeping my word to respect her and trust God to work in her life through my prayers (rather than my anger and harsh words)

What helped me come to this point in my life? A point in a Bible study my husband taught on a Wednesday night about the subject, “How to Deal With Trouble”. On that night, he taught us that God often uses the problems in our lives as a “tool of transformation” in our lives. I began to think about the kind of transformation that had taken place in my life (anger, pride, control, anxiety and guilt) and knew that this was NOT the product of God working His good in my heart.

What kinds of sins have you been struggling with? How have they been affecting your heart? Are you beginning to pollute your heart by the ‘evil treasures’ that you are gathering into it? Is it time for you to clean your heart out by taking those things and dumping them through confession and repentance at the throne of God?

THE EFFECT OF THE SINS THAT OTHERS COMMIT AROUND US

Once upon a time, when I was very little, my father gambled away his whole paycheck on his way home from work. When he got home that night, he told my mom what had happened, and she became very angry. She knew they had bills to pay and little mouths to feed, and she couldn’t believe that he had been so irresponsible. She packed her bags and told my dad that if he didn’t come up with some money by the next day, that she was taking the kids and leaving. The next day my dad came up with the money, and by God’s grace, they stayed married for the next 30 years and he never did that again.

Now, if something like this happened to us, these are a few of the things that would have been going through our hearts:

- ◆ Anger
- ◆ Disappointment
- ◆ Hopelessness
- ◆ Fear
- ◆ Discouragement
- ◆ Shame

And if we allowed these things to fester long enough in our hearts, we would become very emotionally unstable, wouldn’t we? So, what can we biblically do to “keep our hearts with all diligence” during times like these?

1. **Understand that you aren’t responsible for the sins of others.** People don’t sin against you because of anything that you do or don’t do. They sin against you and around you because it is something that they choose to do. Rest in this: it is not about you, it is about them.
2. **Deal with the effects of their sin upon your life (anger, fear, hopelessness) through FAITH and PRAYER.** Your heavenly Father knows the things that you need, and He wants to show Himself real to you: especially during the times when others around you aren’t doing what they are supposed to be doing.
3. **Battle your disappointment and discouragement with TRUTH and FORGIVENESS.** The truth is that people are sinners by nature, and the only thing we can really do with their sin is what Jesus did with it: forgive it. Isaiah 53:6 says, “*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*” The “him” in this verse is our Lord Jesus Christ. Only Jesus can change the heart of the sinner, and when we choose to forgive (rather than return evil for evil), we give Jesus the full opportunity that He needs to do the spiritual work in their lives that He has been ordained by God to do.
4. **And finally, cover your shame with humility.** The truth of the matter is, everything that happens to us and around us is allowed by God for our good and His glory. God knows exactly who WE are, and exactly what WE need to make us everything that He wants US to be.

Next week we will talk about how to deal with the “Sorrow Issues of our Lives.”