

February 2, 2025

The Bait of Satan

Satan comes to steal, kill and destroy. **His primary target is our heart.** If he can get a foothold in our heart, it changes how we view the world around us. We see through the **eyes of our heart** (understanding), so if our heart is hardened from being **offended**, our understanding is distorted and we are easily deceived. We can be born again and have a hardened heart from Satan's influence.

Once our heart is hardened, our right conduct and thought have been poisoned. We will be robbed of Kingdom Living (abundant life in Jesus), losing our righteousness, peace and joy. In our heart (understanding), righteousness will be replaced with shame, guilt and doubt. Peace with anxiety, and joy with depression and pessimism.

We will be surrounded with numbness, confusion, anxiety, leading to depression, and a loss of energy. This will leave us angry and frustrated. Satan may not be able to steal our salvation, but he can steal and destroy our Kingdom Living, our Christ character.

Matt 11:2-6 *And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples 3 and said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" 4 Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: 5 The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. 6 **And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.**"*

Matt 18:6-7 *"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. 7 Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!"*

Offended Strong's #4625 and 4624, *skandalizo* (skan-dal-id-zoe), a snare or stumbling block in the way which hinders right conduct or thought. The noun to which it is related referred to the **bait-stick of a trap** used to catch animals. It also means an enticement to error or sin.

From *skandalizo* we derive the English word **scandalize**. According to **Webster, scandal means**: discredit brought upon religion by unseemly conduct in a religious person; conduct that causes or encourages a lapse of faith or of religious obedience in another.

When we become offended, we are the one in sin (regardless of what someone did to offend us) and as a result because of this sin of offence in us, we will cause others to stumble in their Christian faith especially newer believers. We are in bondage; we are in a spiritual jail.

"I am not offended, I am hurt." **Hurt**: Merriam Webster; to cause emotional pain or anguish, offend.

A Hardened Heart Hinders Our Faith

Mark 6:52 *For they had not understood about the loaves, because their **heart was hardened.***

Mark 8:17-18 *But Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, "Why do you reason because you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive nor understand? **Is your heart still hardened?** 18 Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember?"*

Acts 19:9 *But when some were **hardened and did not believe**, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.*

Heb 3:12 *Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an **evil heart of unbelief** in departing from the living God; 13 but **exhort** one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you **be hardened** through the deceitfulness of sin.* Being offended is sin that will harden our heart and cause unbelief.

Exhort: #3870 to call near, invite, invoke, beseech, call for, entreat. Synonyms; urge, press, push, encourage, insist. Webster; to give warning or advice; make urgent appeals. Incite by argument or advice.

Stopping the Flow of God's Love

The number one **commandment** from Jesus is to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength and the second is to love our neighbor as ourself (**Mk 12:29-31**). When we become offended, our heart hardens, and it pushes away love. We say, "Oh, I love God, it is people who bug me!"

1 John 4:20-21 *If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? 21 And this **commandment** we have from Him: that he who loves God **must love his brother also.***

Faith Works Through Love

Satan wants to shut down our faith by stopping God's flow of love. So Satan goes after our heart, to take control, to take us captive to do his will.

Gal 5:6 *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but **faith working through love.***

Once God's love is blocked out of our heart, we become stagnant, and gangrene-rottenness sets in. Our heart is being poisoned by bitterness. The flow of God's love is through the flow of the Holy Spirit.

Rom 5:5 *Now hope does not disappoint, because the **love of God has been poured out in our hearts** by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. This is a continual process that brings us life.*

Acts 8:22-23 *Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. 23 For I see that you are **poisoned by bitterness** and bound by iniquity."*

Eph 4:30-32 *And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all **bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking** be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*

Heb 12:14-15 *Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: 15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any **root of bitterness** springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;*

Bitterness Strong's # 4088, pikria (pik-ree'-ah); acidity (especially poison). Also from # 4089 pikros; through the idea of piercing; sharp, bitter, acrid (caustic). **Bitterness** Webster; 1. having a harsh, acrid taste 2. hard to bear; grievous. 3. causing sharp pain. 4. characterized by intense hostility or resentment. 5. experienced at great cost: *a bitter lesson.*

The Eyes of Your Understanding (Heart) Be Enlightened!

Eph 1:15-23 *Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, 16 do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, 18 **the eyes of your understanding being enlightened;** that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. 22 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*