

**Hardness of Heart**  
**Part 7**  
**Hardness of Heart in Respect to Affections**  
**Jesus – Our Example of How to Keep our Heart Free From Bitterness**

**Isaiah 53:1–6 (NKJV)**

**Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.**

**He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.**

**Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.**

**But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.**

**All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.**

- *Jesus experienced all the circumstances that could have led Him to becoming bitter.*
- *“He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.” – Jesus’ natural appearance was not impressive. He didn’t appear majestic or have the hugeness of being the Son of God so that people would be delighted in His appearance or treasure Him.*
- *He didn’t have the huge muscles of Samson or the comeliness of David or the beautiful hair of Absalom but His appearance was that of an average man.*

**Philippians 2:5–8 (NASB95)**

**Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,**

**who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,**

- *Although Jesus Christ was the Son of God, when He came to this earth as a man He chose to appear like an ordinary man.*

**but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.**

**Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.**

- *Jesus emptied Himself of any physical appearance that would dazzle people but instead He appeared not only as an ordinary man but He even humbled Himself to appear weak and frail as He hung on the cross.*
- *If Jesus had come in all His majesty all the people including the leaders and the Romans would have been overwhelmed by His glory.*
- *However, in such a state no one would have even dared to speak a word against Him, let alone crucify Him.*
- *He would have been exalted but He would not have become the Lamb of God, our sin offering, and all mankind would have been doomed to eternal damnation as sinners.*

- *However, if one wonders what it would have been like if Jesus came in His glory the first time all we need to do is see what happens when He comes in His glory the second time.*

#### **Revelation 19:11–16 (NKJV)**

<sup>11</sup>Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

<sup>12</sup>His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself.

<sup>13</sup>He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

<sup>14</sup>And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

<sup>15</sup>Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

<sup>16</sup>And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

“He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.” – *Now we can get a glimpse of why Christ came in such a humble form.*

- *Jesus also came in such a humble and weak appearance because it tested the hearts of men.*
- *What was the thing that drew people to Jesus?*

#### **John 6:44 (NKJV)**

<sup>44</sup>No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

- *There were no physical attributes that would draw people to Jesus, but it was solely based on His relationship with the Father.*

#### **John 14:9–10 (NKJV)**

<sup>9</sup>Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

<sup>10</sup>Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.

- *Jesus Christ’s intimate relationship with the Father is what drew people to Him.*
- *When we have that intimacy with the Father then Christ in us will draw people to Himself.*

#### **1 Corinthians 1:26–29 (NKJV)**

<sup>26</sup>For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.

<sup>27</sup>But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty;

<sup>28</sup>and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are,

<sup>29</sup>that no flesh should glory in His presence.

- *We get the idea that we need to appear strong and wise to be the testimony of the grace of God but instead God uses us in the midst of our weaknesses.*
- *God has chosen the weak, the despised and foolish things of this world to bring to nothing the pride of mankind.*
- *Some how we become disappointed and offended when we sometimes appear to the world as weak or foolish.*

## 2 Corinthians 4:5–10 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup>For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake.

<sup>6</sup>For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

<sup>7</sup>But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

<sup>8</sup>We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; <sup>9</sup>persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed—

<sup>10</sup>always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

- *“For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord” – It is not about us and how we appear but it is about Jesus.*
- *“who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” – What the world needs to see is not a person acting like he is holy but the holy light of Christ shining out of our hearts to this dark world.*
- *“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels” – The Treasure is Jesus Christ in us.*
- *“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels” – We are described as “earthen vessels” which refers to our earthly bodies. As long as we are alive on this earth we will experience the fragilities of being in these bodies which are made of the dust of the earth.*
- *“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.” – God keeps us in these frail bodies so that all will know that it is by the grace of God that we live victorious lives.*
- *Once we stop abiding in Christ we immediately revert back to being a complaining miserable selfish lustful people.*
- *We must not focus on our earthly vessels but the Treasure that we contain which is Christ in us, the hope of glory.(Colossians 1:27)*
- *“We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;” – God allows many things into our lives that make us aware of our weaknesses so that we can draw upon the treasure of Christ within us.*

## 2 Corinthians 7:5–7 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup>For indeed, when we came to Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears.

<sup>6</sup>Nevertheless God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus,

and not only by his coming, but also by the consolation with which he was comforted in you, when he told us of your earnest desire, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.

- “our bodies had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears”- *Here we see that even Paul experienced his own frailty but it actually enabled him to draw on the grace of God even more.*
- *There may be times where fear or depression or anger may try to take hold of us but as we become aware of our earthen vessels we draw upon that great limitless treasure within us which is Jesus Christ.*
- *When we have difficult experiences whether internally or externally we may be tempted to become bitter toward God but we need to just surrender to Him with praise and thanksgiving.*
- *When we experience our weaknesses and human frailties don't become disappointed or bitter but allow the Son of God to be exalted through us.*
- *The people became offended at Jesus because He appeared weak and we can become offended with Jesus when we appear weak.*

### 2 Corinthians 12:9–10 (NKJV)

<sup>9</sup>And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

<sup>10</sup>Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

- “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” – *This is one of the keys that the Lord showed Paul so that his life would bring forth the 100 fold increase.*
- “Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” – *Paul's response to this revelation showed that his motivation was not that people be attracted to him but to Jesus Christ.*
- “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” - *If we can learn this attitude, it will transform our response to life's trials. It is not about trying to look good but about glorifying Christ.*

### Back to Isaiah 53

<sup>3</sup>He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

- *This describes the perfect storm that could have resulted in bitterness.*
- *Jesus wasn't the man voted by His High School class as the most likely to succeed.*

### Hebrews 4:15 (NKJV)

<sup>15</sup>For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

- *Jesus experienced all the rejection and hostility of this world but kept pure and sweet.*
- *Jesus was not insulated from the cruelty of this life and neither will we be.*
- *Just as Christ kept sweet and pure, He can also keep us.*

- *How did Christ keep sweet in spite of all the rejection, sorrow and grief that enveloped Him?*
- *Jesus sorrow was not rooted in his own personal losses but because He saw the devastating condition and suffer of mankind due of sin. It was the sorrow and grief that the Creator felt toward His creation that burdened Jesus' heart.*
- *How did Jesus stay soft and tender in the midst of such a hostile environment?*

**Isaiah 53:2 (NKJV)**

**For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him.**

- *“Grow up before Him” – The first thing is that Jesus was growing up before His Father. His growth was always upward and toward the Father.*
- *Jesus was never seeking the approval of man but seeking to please His Father in Heaven.*
- *When we seek the approval of man it will lead to disappointments and co-dependant relationships because we are seeking something that only God can fully supply.*
- *“as a tender plant” – The Hebrew word is יִנְיָק (yô·nēq) and it means tender shoot and can also mean a infant, suckling, i.e. a nursing infant. This speaks about Jesus continually being totally dependent upon His Father.*

**John 5:19 (NKJV)**

**Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.**

- *When we are totally dependent upon Jesus and abiding in Him and having His words abiding in us we will be protected from bitterness, anger and frustration.*

**John 15:9 (NKJV)**

**“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.**

- *Jesus was so filled with the Father's love for Him that when all the vileness of the world came against Him and beat Him and crucified Him all that came out were words of love and forgiveness.*

**John 15:12 (NKJV)**

**This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.**

- *The only way we can truly love others with God's love is to abide in Christ's love for us.*
- *“And as a root out of dry ground” - The root is the part of the plant that both anchors and nourishes the plant and provides firmness and permanence from both the storms that try to topple it and the drought that tries to wither it.*
- *We see two actions that kept Jesus soft and pure in the midst of a world that was filled with sin, violence, injustice and bitterness.*
- *Tender plant - A constant reaching up to the Father and abiding in His Father.*
- *Root - A deepening of His relationship in the Truth of the Word of God.*
- *If we have bitterness in our hearts ultimately we are bitter toward God.*

- *Once we grasp God's love, kindness and faithfulness toward us, we are protected from bitterness.*
- *We see a spiritual paradox in Christ being described as a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief because He is also described as the One who is anointed with gladness more than anyone else.*

#### **Hebrews 1:9 (NKJV)**

**“You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.”**

- *If we try to block out the pain we will also block out the joy.*
- *Not only does Hardness of Heart dull our hearts to sorrow but also to joy.*

#### **Psalm 126:5–6 (NKJV)**

**“Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy.**

**“He who continually goes forth weeping, Bearing seed for sowing, Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, Bringing his sheaves with him.**

- *We may sow in tears as we allow God to take us through painful experiences.*
- *We may sow in tears as we face our own failures and give it over to God in repentance.*
- *We may sow in tears as we experience betrayal or rejection but choose to bless those that have hurt us.*
- *We may sow in tears as we pray for those that are suffering*
- *We may sow in tears as we pray for those that are resisting God and making destructive choices.*
- *But doubtlessly we will come again rejoicing bringing in a great harvest unto the Lord.*
- *For those that have experienced Christ's comfort during painful times we can give thanks for those experiences.*
- *For those that are struggling with bitterness, anger, resentment or unthankfulness we can come before the Lord now and just open our hearts and be honest with Him and tell Him we want to change and ask Him to empower us by His grace and love to change.*