

The Plague of the Heart

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I. Introduction: “plague” (1 Kings 8:38)

- A. The kind that strikes nature.
- B. The kind that strikes human beings.
- C. The kind that strikes the heart.
 - 1. The most important thing to be dealt with today since Adam’s sin.
 - 2. The devil can never hurt anyone unless something that belonged to the devil was inside the his or her heart.
 - 3. The devil is frightful and destructive today because people do possess in their hearts something that the devil can claim.

II. Sin is not something to be pitied - it is not accidental.

- A. We are not innocent victims.
- B. We are accountable to God for our bent towards our own desire being sin.
 - 1. God would not send anyone to hell for having cancer just as God would not hold someone responsible for being born in sin.
 - 2. We are sent to hell because we choose sin and love it.

III. The plague of the heart is destructive.

- A. Sin is not a thing that is incarnated; we cannot pull it out.
 - 1. Sin is a choice, an affinity of the heart.
 - 2. No one can get to the problem of our heart because we are the master of our own hearts.
- B. People do not know that sin is there - it spreads.
- C. Hardly anyone will admit that they have sin en masse.
 - 1. Anyone will admit that they have sin.
 - 2. Hardly anyone - even the deacon - will admit that he or she has a plague spot.
 - a. It carries shame.

b. It carries fear.

3. No one likes to hear about it.

a. Example: Tozer preaches on sin and someone is concerned that no one will respond to the altar call.

D. We have made Jesus into a joy bringer and have forgotten that he came to save each individually from the plague of his own heart.

IV. The works of Christ in response to the plague.

A. The cleansing of the forgiving love of God.

1. God's love washes us clean.

B. Restoration of moral innocence.

1. Even though you know you've sinned, you know that you have moral innocence restored to you.

V. Examples of people with the plague spot who were "generally good;" no one suspects the coiled serpent.

A. Cain had a plague spot in his heart and he didn't know it; he offered flowers to God instead of blood and his sacrifice was not pleasing to God.

B. Achan had the plague spot; Joshua was responsible for cleansing the camp of its presence.

C. Modern example: fifteen year old killer: "I guess I lost my head."

D. Ananias had the plague spot; greed caught him when he was not ready and destroyed him.

E. Modern example: the murderer, the raper, the killer.

VI. You don't have to do the most outwardly evil things to have the plague in your hearts.

A. You don't have to be an Ananias to have the plague in your heart.

B. You don't have to be Herod to be like Herod.

VII. Know the plague of your own heart.

A. Types.

1. The modern justification of lust.

2. The contemporary threat as pride.

3. Hidden grudges.

4. Self Love.

5. Temper.

6. Envy and jealousy.

B. God heals the plague through blood, fire, and suffering.

1. The blood of Jesus.

2. The fire of the Holy Spirit.

a. Restoring the word “purgation.”

b. The Holy Spirit can restore you if you are willing.

c. Quit hiding the sin behind ministry intentions.

3. Deep suffering to expose other sins.

C. Admit that you have a plague in your own heart - you will be judged alone.

Application Questions

1. How does the speaker explain that being born into sin because of Adam does not make us accountable for Adam’s sin? What does he say that we are accountable for?

2. What evidence is there that the plague spot is in your life? In light of the speaker’s message, what is the proper response to this evidence?

3. How does the speaker say we can solve the problem of “the plague?” What specific actions can you take to make this a reality in your own life? Be specific.
