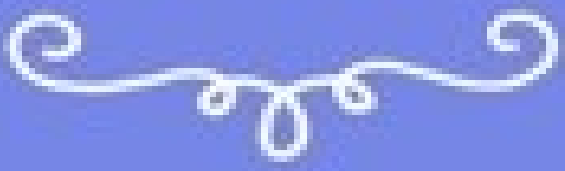
HOW TO UNCLUTTER YOUR HEART



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How To Unclutter Your Heart

I had a special room in my previous house. It was a room most company never saw. It was called an exercise room, but to my knowledge no one ever actually did much exercise in there.

In the beginning, it did have some pieces of exercise equipment in it. And I used them, too. I used them to stack boxes on. I used them to prop things up. (Have you ever noticed how the handlebars of a stationary bike make a perfect place for hanging things?)

Eventually, that room became my official place to put “stuff”—boxes and boxes of stuff.

I couldn’t tell you what all was in there. Occasionally I would go in there looking for something and come across a “treasure” I’d forgotten I even had.

Perhaps you have a room or closet like that in your home. A place where things accumulate—a cluttered place.

Do you know your heart can be such a place? It can. And when the heart of a child of God becomes cluttered, it stops being good soil for the Word. Let me show you what I mean.

The Overcrowded Heart

In Mark 4 Jesus used four types of soil as a picture of the four categories of hearts that are exposed to the Word of God. The first two categories—the pavement-like heart and the stony-ground heart—never even come close to bearing any fruit. Contrast these people to those in Jesus' fourth category—the good-soil believers who bear fruit—30, 60 and a hundredfold. These are the ones who see God's kingdom evident in their lives. They see His heavenly provision of healing, abundance, miracles and power become reality right here on earth.

But what about that third category of believers? It's here I believe we find the majority of Christians today. Let's look at what Jesus said about them. In this group are those who allow "thorns" to choke the Word: "*Other seed [of the same kind] fell among thorn plants, and the thistles grew and pressed together and utterly choked and suffocated it, and it yielded no grain*" (Mark 4:7, *The Amplified Bible, Classic Edition).*

Did you notice the end result? This kind of soil "yielded no grain." Jesus is describing a heart that ultimately produces no fruit. There is no harvest—no transfer of provision and blessing from the heavenly realm to the earthly realm.

A few verses down, Jesus elaborates on this type of heart for His disciples: "*And the ones sown among the thorns are others who hear the Word; then the cares and anxieties of the world and distractions of the age, and the pleasure and delight and false glamour and deceitfulness of riches, and the craving and passionate desire for other things creep in and choke and suffocate the Word, and it becomes fruitless" (Mark 4:18-19, The Amplified Bible, Classic Edition).*

As I've said, the sad truth is most Christians live here in Category 3. They're saved. If you asked them, they'd tell you they love the Lord. Yet they live "fruitless" lives. Why?

According to Jesus it's because, like that "exercise" room in my house, their hearts have become too cluttered.

The Clutter Of Care

An overcrowded heart cannot produce the kingdom of God in the earth. It cannot produce the fruit of healing, prosperity or deliverance God desires to bring into our lives.

As I search the Word and look at my own life through the eyes of the Spirit, I see there are basically three kinds of clutter that tend to accumulate in our hearts.

The first thing Jesus cited in His description of the Category 3 heart was "the cares and anxieties of this world." And with good reason. You can't be worried and walk in faith. You can't be in fear and in faith at the same time.

If you want to cultivate a heart that produces hundredfold harvests, you must come to grips with worry and drive it out of your life.

You wouldn't know it now, but I used to be a world-class worrier. In fact, I came from a long line of worriers. In my family, they thought worrying was a virtue. You were irresponsible if you didn't!

I can still remember the time in my life—earlier in my walk with God—when I discovered that worry wasn't of God, and that I needed to make a decision to walk in faith rather than fear. I learned that I needed to cast my cares upon the Lord (1 Peter 5:7).

Of course, it wasn't easy at first. Worry, to me, was like drink to an alcoholic. In the beginning I was seemingly taking worry-thoughts captive every two minutes. An anxious thought would pop into my mind, and I would rebuke it. A few minutes later I would find myself having another worried thought, and I would take it captive. I would say, "No, I refuse to take the care of that. Jesus, in accordance with Your Word, I roll the care of that over on You, because I know You care for me."

The good news is, if you'll be diligent to fight that battle against worry by keeping the Word in your heart and in your mouth, the time will come when that Word and the knowledge of God's faithfulness is so big on the inside of you, you won't have to fight it anymore.

That "*peace of God, which passeth all understanding*" will be guarding your heart and mind through Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7).

No, you don't *have* to clutter your heart with worry. You don't *have* to let the thorns of anxiety and fear choke the Word out of your life. These aren't, however, the only things that cause your heart to become too cluttered.

The Clutter Of Folly

Another all-too-common reason precious, born-again people don't produce fruit or receive abundant harvests of blessing is also found right there in Jesus' explanation of the people with a Category 3 heart. He talks about "the distractions of this age."

I came across a verse in Proverbs the other day that pretty much characterizes this kind of clutter. I can paraphrase Proverbs 15:14 this way: A fool feeds on folly.

No one likes to be called a fool. In fact those are "fightin' words" back where I came from in Arkansas. But the Word makes it plain—if we spend a lot of time feeding on folly, we're being foolish.

What is folly? The *King James Version* uses the word "foolishness" and the *Strong's Concordance* defines the original Hebrew word as "silliness."

I'm convinced that one of the primary reasons most Christians aren't seeing the kingdom of God manifest in their lives in greater power, is because they are spending too much time feeding on folly.

Where do believers find folly to feed on? It's pouring out of every television set in the land. It fills every movie theater. You'll find it strewn across your radio dial and filling every magazine stand.

Here in the media age of hundreds of cable channels, DVD players and, of course, the Internet, there is an unlimited supply of foolishness on which to feed.

When you spend more time consuming worldly entertainment than the Word of God—when being amused takes a higher place in your priorities than fellowshiping with the Father—your heart begins to become cluttered.

But Gloria, you might be thinking, doesn't God want us to enjoy life?

Of course He does. Jesus told us the very reason the Father sent Him was to empower us to have life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10). He wants us to have fun with our families. He has given us "richly all things to enjoy" (1 Timothy 6:17)! But Jesus—not entertainment—must be first place in our lives.

Spend too much time feeding on the mindless nonsense that pours out of your television set most of the time, and you'll have a heart so cluttered and overcrowded that the seed of God's Word will be choked out.

Jesus called these things "the distractions of this age" and warned that they

will keep you from bearing fruit in God’s kingdom.

The Clutter Of Deception

The third thorny thing Jesus warns us about is what the *King James Version* calls “the deceitfulness of riches.” This, too, is an area in which many Christians allow their hearts to become cluttered, and thus, unfruitful.

Religious people look at this part of the verse and say, “Aha! See there, God doesn’t really want you to prosper.” These are the same people who misquote 1 Timothy 6:10 by saying, “Money is the root of all evil.”

Of course, we know that verse really says, “The *love* of money is the root of all evil.” And the same Jesus who issued this warning is the One who said, “*Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you*” (Luke 6:38, *New King James Version).*

Where wealth is concerned, it always comes down to priorities. As Jesus said in Matthew 6:33: “*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*”

If you’re going after things instead of going after God, you’re not going to experience true, Bible prosperity. God’s laws of abundance have a built-in protection against abuse. They do not work unless you are giving God first place in your life.

Those who are seduced by what *The Amplified Bible, Classic Edition* calls “the pleasure and delight and false glamour and deceitfulness of riches,” will not experience supernatural increase.

There is a certain glamour associated with the kind of counterfeit prosperity the world offers. But it is a false glamour. It never satisfies. It never brings peace. It promises to make you happy, but it never does. That’s why Jesus called it “deceitful.”

This kind of deception will clutter your heart. It will fill it with greed, envy and covetousness. It will ultimately crowd out the seed of God’s Word and cause you to be unfruitful.

We must put God first. He must be our highest desire. When we have Him, we have everything else.

Clearing Out The Clutter

In the passage of Scripture we've been examining, Jesus warns us about the three types of "thorns" or clutter that will choke the Word and keep you from becoming a hundredfold bearer of fruit. Let's look at it one more time: "And the ones sown among the thorns are others who hear the Word; then the cares and anxieties of the world and distractions of the age, and the pleasure and delight and false glamour and deceitfulness of riches, and the craving and passionate desire for other things creep in and choke and suffocate the Word, and it becomes fruitless" (Mark 4:18-19, *The Amplified Bible, Classic Edition).*

He warns us about (1) the cares and anxieties of this world, (2) the distractions of this age and (3) the deceitfulness of riches.

Notice that after these three, the Lord mentions something that I believe sums up all the others. He warns us about "the craving and passionate desire for other things."

All clutter of the heart ultimately springs from putting things before God and His Word. An uncluttered heart that is good soil for the seed of God's Word—a heart that bears fruit—30, 60 and a hundredfold—is a heart in which God, and God alone, is on the throne.

God is raising up a generation of people who have such hearts. He is creating a people who cooperate with Him and bring His will to pass wherever they go. People who have made it a part of their character to demonstrate the kingdom of God wherever they go.

I plan to be part of that generation. I know you want to be part of it, too. And as we dedicate ourselves to God's plans and purposes—as we put Him first place in our lives—we will be.

It all starts with a heart that is good soil for the Word. In other words, an uncluttered heart.

Faith Activities

Speak this truth aloud about the condition of your heart!

I choose to focus on God's Word and put Him first in all that I say and do. I refuse to be pulled away from my abundant life by worries, distractions of mindless nonsense and time spent meeting my own needs. My heart is set on hearing and pleasing God.

Think About It

Measure the activities in your life by the parable of the sower of the Word in Mark 4. What are some areas that need to be “uncluttered”?

Speak the Word

How to deal with your clutter—speak these promises:

When you are tempted to worry:

First John 4:18 says there is no fear in love, and I am loved by God Almighty. Therefore, worry and fear have to leave and not return!

When you find yourself distracted by foolish amusements that prevent you from putting God first place in all areas of your life:

Hebrews 12:2 says I am to look at, or fix my eyes on Jesus and what He has done for me. I will spend my time getting to know Jesus as Savior, Lord and Friend, and delight in fellowship with Him.

When you see yourself going after "things" instead of God:

Matthew 6:33 says I am to seek first the kingdom of God and His right way of doing things and all other things will be added to me. So, I choose to go after God, learn His ways and allow Him to be my source of all things.

Please let us know about your progress in "uncluttering" your heart. Send them to us by visiting kcm.org/testify.

We're Here for You!

Your growth in God's WORD and victory in Jesus are at the very center of our hearts. In every way God has equipped us, we will help you deal with the issues facing you, so you can be the victorious overcomer He has planned for you to be.

The mission of Kenneth Copeland Ministries is about all of us growing and going together. Our prayer is that you will take full advantage of all The LORD has given us to share with you.

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Kenneth and Gloria Copeland