**CLEANSING THE HEART (excerpt from healing starts now)**

.. . Even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees ... (Luke 3:9).

**The Parable of the Patio**

When we originally moved into our home, we had a screened patio area in the back. Unfortunately, we could not fully enjoy it without special preparation. The screens did not keep out the dirt, rain, heat, humidity, or cold. I would love to sit out there in the winter, but I found it was too cold. My grandson liked to play out there in the summer, but it was too hot. The patio was big enough to handle 30 people, but the outdoor table had to be thoroughly scrubbed before our guests could enjoy a meal. We had a lovely room we couldn't use. We could not enjoy our beautiful backyard anytime we felt like.

We made a quality decision to change the environment of our patio. We invited workers into our home to tear down the screens, power wash the floor, and install airtight windows. After renovation, we now have a four-season room with air-conditioning and heat. The windows keep out the dirt, dust, humidity, rain, and snow. Now we can easily walk into the area anytime we choose and enjoy a clean, beautiful environment to entertain, talk, read, pray, or study.

The old patio can represent your life. The screens are tiny doors into your life that allow dirt and debris to enter. It is time to remove those screens, clean out the junk, and put up barriers to secure the doors and walls. Inviting God to supernaturally houseclean your heart is what my healing school is all about.

Jesus said that the heart is the source of uncleanness:

*.. . What comes out of a man is what makes him "unclean." For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man "unclean" (Mark 7:20-23 NIV).*

When you come for ministry, you are inviting a change or a renovation in your life. When we minister healing to you, we are the workers who remove the screens, clean out the dirt, and secure the windows of your heart, mind, and body. Installing the protection of solid walls and healthy air keeps out the sin, trauma, word curses, generational curses, or other strongholds. We "power spray" your heart with the wind of the Holy Spirit, of whom Jesus

said, *" ... when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (*John 16:8). We wash you down with *" .. . the washing of water by the word"* (Eph. 5:26) so that you become *" ... a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that* [you] *should be holy and without blemish"* (Eph. 5:27).

Once the Word of God is spoken over you, it continues to release His precious promises

into your life:

*My son, do not forget my law, but let your heart keep my commands; for length of days*

*and long Life and peace they will add to you* (Proverbs 3:1-2).

**Sin Can Be an Open Door for Sickness**

Before praying for or receiving healing, look for areas where sickness may have entered your life. Sin-disobedience, rebellion, bitterness, anger, unforgiveness, sexual sin, addiction, alcoholism, etc.- opens the door for the enemy to enter your life and ravage your body or

mind with disease. Once a sin is identified, confessed, brought to the cross, and repented of,

the sickness often leaves without prayer for healing. When the root cause is destroyed, the tree can't survive.

Jesus demonstrated this principle in Luke 5:17-26. While He was teaching, *" ... the power of*

*the Lord was present to heal them"* (Luke 5:17). When friends set a paralyzed man at Jesus' feet, He did not immediately pray for the man's healing. First He said, *"Man, your sins are forgiven you"* (Luke 5:20b). Then He addressed the man's physical infirmity. He said, *'Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house"* (Luke 5:24b).

Keep your heart pure before God, and you will be healed and retain your healing. Proverbs

4:23 states, *"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life."*

Bringing every sin to Him closes those doors through which the enemy could previously attack you. That sin no longer has power over you. This initial step is not a matter of condemnation, but of self-examination.

**The Importance of Repentance**

God has commanded you to *"choose life,"* not death (Deut. 30:19). A very important key to

choosing life is your repentance from sin. *" .. . God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to* ,, *Life"* (Acts 11:18). God does not want you, His precious child, trapped in the clutches of sin. He wants you healed and set free to enjoy the wonderful life He has created for you. Many are trapped by the subtle tentacles of sin. Despite a desire to be free from sin and disease, some don't want to be confronted or deal with their sin. Sin must be evicted from your life. Recognize it, repent of it, and kick it out.

Once you learn these principles, you will also reveal His truth to others who want to be free. You may be the person God wants to use to reach your neighbor down the street or your co-worker. Expect God to use you. Your words may be the only ones someone will listen to. Who will explain the freedom that comes with repentance of sins if you don't? Who will explain how to get free and healed if you don't? The apostle Paul asks the same question:

*How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!"*

(Romans 10:14-15)

Prayers for purity are very important. David asked God to cleanse him not only from known sins, but also from hidden faults:

*Who can understand his errors? Cleanse me from secret faults. Keep back Your servant*

*also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless,*

*and I shall be innocent of great transgression* (Psalm 19:12-13).

David's attitude pleased God. He called David *"a man after My own heart"* (Acts 13:22).

Jesus is coming back for a Church without spot or wrinkle. It is time to cleanse the house of God. Since He lives within you, you are His house. Your responsibility is to keep yourself clean and pure. Even if you have a good relationship with God, pray:

***Pray this prayer:***

***Father, I have sinned. I don't want to sin anymore and I repent. Take this sin of \_\_\_ from me and put it on the cross, never to be held against me. Father, I ask Jesus to come into my life, not just as my Savior, but also as my Lord. Through Your Holy Spirit, guide me into all that You have for me, in Jesus' name.***