

MARRIAGE REVEALED
MINISTRIES INC.



THE
VOLATILE
HEART

*Uncovering the hard heart, the true
reasons behind adultery and divorce*

SHEILA HOLLINGER

The Volatile Heart

INTRODUCTION

HARDNESS OF HEART

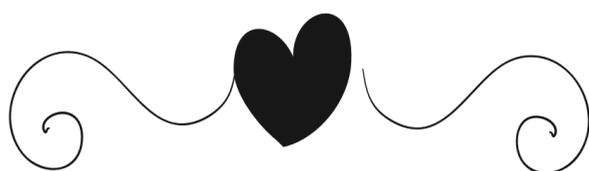
THE ADULTEROUS HEART

THE MID-LIFE SPIRITUAL CRISIS

THE BEHAVIOR OF A HARD HEART

FOR YOU, THE STANDER

WORD STUDY AND SCRIPTURES





Introduction

A Promise of Restoration and Healing

Come and let us return [in repentance] to the Lord, For He has torn us, but He will heal us; He has wounded us, but He will bandage us. After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up that we may live before Him. So let us know and become personally acquainted with Him; let us press on to know and understand fully the [greatness of the] Lord [to honor, heed, and deeply cherish Him]. His appearing is prepared and is as certain as the dawn, And He will come to us [in salvation] like the [heavy] rain, Like the spring rain watering the earth.” Hosea 6:1-3 (AMP)

*Why did I choose to name this book *The Volatile Heart*? Volatile is not found in scripture like the hard heart is. But when you look at the definition of volatile, you will understand how well that term defines what we, as Standers are standing up against.*

The definition of Volatile: liable to change rapidly and unpredictably, especially for the worse.

My hope for this book is to bring YOU hope through the understanding of what a hard heart looks like, why it has turned hard, and how there is HOPE for that hard heart to turn to flesh and love you again.

It's not easy standing for someone with a hard heart, but through understanding, patience, and a whole lot of God's love, it can be done.

*God bless you on your journey of Standing,
Sheila*



Hardness of Heart

What happens to a spouse's heart that allows them to suddenly walk away from God, spouse, marriage, and family?

“He saith unto them, Moses because of the HARDNESS OF HEART suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.” Matthew 19:8 KJV

First, let's define the word Jesus talks about in Matthew 19

hardness: sklérokardia – *hardness of heart because of a lack of moisture (lubricant); an obstinate, hard heart which lacks the oil of the Holy Spirit and hence implies rebellion – i.e someone refusing to be receptive (obedient) to God's inworking of faith. (Strongs Concordance)*

We understand from the definition Strongs Concordance gives us that a heart goes hard because the presence of the Holy Spirit is an oil that keeps the heart moist. When He withdraws Himself from the heart, the moisture leaves, and therefore the heart hardens.

What if your spouse was an unbeliever? How could they have the Holy Spirit? Could it be that when an unbelieving spouse marries a believing spouse that part of the sanctification which takes place ensures the children will be clean as talked about in 1 Corinthians and Malachi?

“That man who is an unbeliever is sanctified by the wife who believes, and that woman who is not a believer is sanctified by the husband who believes, otherwise their children are defiled, but now they are pure.” 1 Corinthians 7:14 Aramaic Bible

Has not the LORD made them one, having a portion of the Spirit? And why one? Because He seeks godly offspring. Malachi 2:15 Berean Study Bible



It was a ritual when someone was sanctified, to anoint them with oil to be set apart and made holy!

By this point, we have all learned that it was a hard heart that caused the separation/divorce. But what caused the hard heart?

God tells us in Malachi 2:16 (ESV), "For the man who "DOES NOT LOVE [emphasis added] (8130: sane)" his wife but divorces her...covers his garment with violence" Or in the NIV, "The man who "HATES [emphasis added] (8130: sane)" and divorces his wife...does violence to the one he should protect,"

"Does not love" and "hate" are interchangeable. Strong's Bible Concordance #8130: sane' (saw-nay) is used in both versions and means enemy or foe, to detest, hate, hate intensely, turn against, or to be unloved.

This hatred that we are going to discuss is not a hatred of you, as a person. It's more than that, for some lost beloveds, this hatred goes much deeper and has nothing to do with you at all.

It's a hatred at life, what they have lost, not been able to achieve. A hatred of wrongs that were done, which left them wounded, broken, and discontent. For some, a self-hatred, and for most, a hatred towards God for being treated unfairly, or not being able to reach Him. And for many, a hatred that comes from feeling rejected, unworthy, fatherless, orphaned, and not walking in their identity and true purpose as a child of God.

All this hatred left unhealed and festering, will lead to a turning away in rebellion as that hatred gets directed at the spouse they created a covenant with through God.

It is this hatred that causes a hard heart. And that hatred is what we are going to discuss, to help you better understand your lost beloved and how to pray and intercede for them.

"I don't love you anymore." or "I love you, but I am not in love with you." is what Standers hear, it's not what the Word says though. The Word says because of hatred, the spouse's heart hardens toward the union that was created and the cleaving of two becoming ONE to single family.



This is nothing a Stander wants to hear, but “hated” is the word most often used by Standers to describe how their once loving spouse now seems to feel towards them. They can’t look them in the eye, talk to them without disgust, blame, or contempt. All of a sudden, every problem they ever had in their life seems to be your fault, and things you never knew bothered them have suddenly become the very reason they are using as to why they can’t love you anymore.

During this time, the Stander is thrown into a turmoil of not understanding, because NONE of this makes sense. How a person could be one way, and suddenly, overnight have a complete and total heart change. How can this happen?

That enemy of yours, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion [fiercely hungry], seeking someone to devour. 1 Peter 5:8

I want you to have hope as I explain what this “hatred” is and where the root cause comes from.

This hatred is nothing more than a cover-up; a fruit of their decision to turn their back on God and enter into an agreement with the enemy. This agreement then covers their heart with a hard and violent garment, and that is the fruit a Stander then receives. It’s TEMPORARY! It’s reversible!

Your lost beloved has to surrender their life, or those parts of their life they were in a rebellion over, heal from places that caused and justified the rebellion, and turn their life over to Jesus in Godly sorrow. Repent, and this cover of violence, hardness, and hatred will be lifted and love will be restored!

Let’s go back to the beginning.

“The LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. 15 Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union?” Malachi 2:14-15 ESV



When I read this I get excited to see that when God joins a husband and wife, HE becomes a PART OF THIS union! And this helps me understand why so many lost beloveds, at the time they walk away from their marriage, ALSO walk away from God and truth. Darkness seems to completely and suddenly overtake them, changing who they are from a loving, loyal, honest, faithful spouse, to the complete opposite.

Once a person chooses to put away/walk away from their spouse and marriage, something happens.

“For the man who does not love his wife but divorces her, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with VIOLENCE (wrong) [emphasis added], says the LORD of hosts” Malachi 2:16

The NIV says, "So guard your HEART; [emphasis added] do not be unfaithful to your wife." Guard it from what? Becoming hard, covered in violence because hatred has come, crept in, and taken over. It's this hatred that needs to be addressed.

Let's go back to what Jesus says about the man who puts away(makes her depart from him) his wife in Matthew 19. He says his heart is hard. This word hard is the EXACT word that Jesus uses when he meets Saul on the Road to Damascus and addresses the hard place that Saul finds himself in as he rebels against God.

‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’ Acts 26:14

If you would like to read more about [Kicking against the goads](#), we have an article on the website.

Strong's defines that word HARD 4642. Skléros as VIOLENT, harsh, stern; properly, hard (because dried out); (figuratively) stiff, stubborn (unyielding), describing people who "won't budge" (bend, submit), or what is unyieldingly harsh.

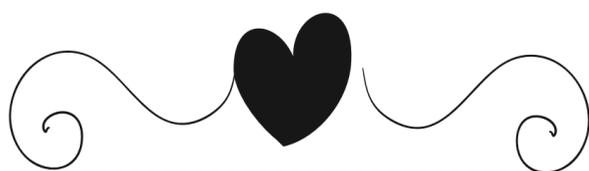
Cover themselves, hides, overwhelms, and conceals...words we often use to describe our spouse who is lost in a web of darkness, not acting like themselves, deceived, and tricked.



This covering of wrong came about due to each one's choice to follow after sin. To not guard their heart and to, instead, make the choice to be unfaithful.

The Brenton Septuagint Translation says "ungodliness shall cover thy thoughts."

So, to conclude Chapter 1, we see what happens to a person's heart when they make the decision to put away their spouse. I am going to address why this happens, what leads up to this point, the fruits of this decision, and lastly how to pray for your spouse's heart to turn back to the Lord.





The Adulterous Heart

One of the hardest concepts for a new Stander to grasp is this is not about your marriage or your relationship with your spouse as much as you think it is.

It's about HIS relationship FIRST with the both of you.

While you are seeking to be restored, God is seeking that very same exact thing. And guess what? God is not going to be okay with being second best. Until God gets your full compliance and understanding on this, you will most likely remain in this season of discovery until you fully get it. This is about where you and your spouse are going to spend eternity. About your souls and where you will live after this life here comes to an end.

The old testament word for adultery is, *nā'ap*, and this ONE word is used to describe both the physical act of sexual unfaithfulness in a marriage, as well as spiritual unfaithfulness to God when one departs to seek out selfish ambition and idolatry, because of a “stubborn and evil heart.”

‘It is because your fathers have forsaken Me, declares the LORD, and followed other gods, and served and worshiped them. They abandoned Me and did not keep My instruction. And you have done more evil than your fathers. See how each of you was following the stubbornness of his evil heart, instead of obeying Me. Jeremiah 16:11-12 BSB

The literal usages of *nā'ap* enhance the figurative-spiritual uses as they share a deep connection and feed off each other. Each works together in unison to pollute, destroy, and bring death to both the physical one-flesh union of a husband and wife, which represents the spiritual union and oneness with God.

God's commandment -do not commit adultery-encompasses both the physical and the spiritual, because, to do the one, you have to do the other.



Matthew 5:27

You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.'

If you look at the deeper meaning, the primitive root of “to commit adultery” figuratively means, to apostatize –and Wikipedia says:

Apostasy in Christianity is the rejection of Christianity by someone who formerly was a Christian.

The term apostasy comes from the Greek word apostasia (“ἀποστασία”) meaning defection, departure, revolt, or rebellion.

It has been described as “a willful falling away from, or rebellion against, Christianity.

An adulterous heart is already present long before the physical act happens, but this unfaithfulness started with the LORD first! Think about the life they lived prior to this, were they faithful and committed to the Lord? Were they guarding their hearts as in Malachi 2:16? And were YOU?

When I think about my life before the storm, I can see I was just as guilty and the storm was not just because of my husband’s adulterous heart. We both had one. While I chose to turn and repent and seek God, he was “carried captive” (See Ezekiel 6:9 below). There are consequences to having an adulterous heart when God calls you “Mine.”

I was able to understand better God’s heart and intent toward us through the following scriptures. I pray they speak deeply to you.



“Son of man, make known to Jerusalem her abominations and say, “Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem: Your origin and your birth are from the land of the Canaanites; your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite.

And as for your birth, on the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed with water for cleansing; you were not rubbed with salt or even wrapped in cloths.

No eye looked with pity on you to do any of these things for you, to have compassion on you. Rather you were thrown out into the open field, for you were abhorred on the day you were born.

When I passed by you and saw you squirming in your blood, I said to you while you were in your blood, ‘Live!’ Yes, I said to you while you were in your blood, ‘Live!’

I made you numerous like plants of the field. Then you grew up, became tall and reached the age for fine ornaments; your breasts were formed and your hair had grown. Yet you were naked and bare.

Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness.

I also swore to you and entered into a covenant with you so that you became MINE,” declares the Lord GOD.”

Ezekiel 16:2-8 NASB



Is this not beautiful? I cried when I read this, it touched my heart. He finds the orphans, the abandoned, adopts them, loves those He calls "MINE."

Loves us so much, He will do whatever it takes to break that adulterous heart to ensure we spend eternity with Him. Whether they have never believed in Him, or backslid, MINE is MINE! Jesus said not one of His would be lost! (John 18:9)

"However, I will leave a remnant, for you will have those who escaped the sword among the nations when you are scattered among the countries. Then those of you who escape will remember Me among the nations to which they will be carried captive, how I have been hurt by their adulterous hearts which turned away from Me, and by their eyes which played the harlot after their idols; and they will loathe themselves in their own sight for the evils which they have committed, for all their abominations. Then they will know that I am the LORD; I have not said in vain that I would inflict this disaster on them." Ezekiel 6:8-10 NASB

An adulterous heart is the fruit; the result of a HARD heart. It's the heart that Jesus talks about in Mark 10:5 and Matthew 19:8 when the Pharisees mean to trick Him with their question about divorce. He says, "Because of your HARD HEART..." It was applied to that which lacks moisture, and so is rough and disagreeable to the touch, and hence came to denote "harsh, stern, hard." A heart that is hard, dried out and stubborn is a heart that becomes adulterous.

WHY DO SO MANY COMMIT ADULTERY?

In James 4, he addresses a group of adulterers in this passage and explains their motives beautifully. It's a great scripture to spend some time getting to know and seeking understanding.



1 What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you? 2 You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. 3 And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure. 4 You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again: If you want to be a friend of the world, you make yourself an enemy of God. James 4:1-4 NLT

James is addressing immature, self-seeking, adults, with stubborn hearts. We all understand that children are selfish, led by feelings and desires, fearing pain, and hating to be told “no.” The immature hate not getting what they want and seek to appease the flesh above all else.

The root reasons behind adultery are discontentment, dissatisfaction, boredom with life, regret, and immaturity. Many come to a place in life where they must grow up, their spirits have not been walking in kingdom purpose, the soul has not discovered its adoption and identity, and life has become very confusing as the soul starts to rebel against the life it's been living apart from God.

When the spirit starts to groan and rebel against being apart from God, the soul will begin to feel very out of sorts with life. Not realizing it's trying to connect to God and discover real intimacy, it will turn to the solutions it knows. People and sinful pleasures. We see many who do a complete 180 and abandon themselves over to a sinful life, turning to drugs, alcohol, partying wasteful spending and reckless escapades.

The lost spouse who feels disconnected from their spouse, life, family, and even ministry share, *“I am not happy and haven't been for a while.”* They don't realize the disconnect is because they are not walking in true sonship with God. They may still be orphaned and searching for their identity through adoption. We often hear this called a spiritual or “mid-life” crisis, which results in a hard heart.



Unfortunately, this normal mid-life awakening has now become an acceptable reason to pursue “happiness” by leaving their life behind; creating a new life, new relationship, new circle of friends and family, even a new church in an attempt to discover who they truly are.

As they take this journey, it’s filled with a process as they grow, mature, discover, and connect or reconnect with God. How long this takes depends on the person’s level of pride and resentment. It also greatly depends on how much healing and deliverance is needed which creates pride and rebellion. Many must journey through much healing from a broken childhood before they can even start the maturing process.

Whatever the journey, many spouses find what they were looking for and come to a place of awareness and regret. Many wake up and come to their senses. They then must try to reconcile who they were, with whom they have now become.

The Stander has also gone through a spiritually maturing process. The two may then be drawn to reconciliation and falling back in love, with both learning how to reconnect on a deeper, more mature level.

Adultery, both physical and spiritual, is not a permanent death sentence. While it’s NOT the preferred way for God’s children to learn to come to maturity, it seems to be a popular way with man to follow after the enemy and run away from responsibility as they turn themselves wholly over to the enemy.

We can testify joyfully, that many come to godly sorrow and repentance, fully becoming restored to God, marriage, and family.

I have included a word Study with Scriptures at the end of this book with more information about the hard heart.





The Mid-life Spiritual Crisis

What the world calls a midlife crisis, we here at Marriage Revealed Ministries Inc. call a spiritual identity crisis. And this crisis can happen during any part of an adult's life.

It doesn't matter how old your spouse is, how long you were married, if you have kids, or if there was adultery or not. It doesn't matter if your spouse is an atheist or a preacher who knows the Word of God inside and out. It's about the health, condition, and maturity of the heart/soul/spirit of a person. It's about whether the person is fully living in surrender, or self-serving through pride.

This is a very deep subject and one that an entire book could be written about. I am going to try to tackle the basics in just one short chapter.

First, everyone has a soul; your soul is YOU, your passion, desire, carnal nature. It's your heart, mind, and will and all the feelings and emotions that they provide. It's where you fall in love, rebel, and sin. It's where you make choices, where unbelief, fear, worry, and doubts are produced.

Souls can be knit and tied to other people which is how we create very strong bonds with others. The soul is what gets lost, confused, and becomes easily snared as it seeks out the lusts of the flesh.

The soul is your ship to steer and it's yours to give as you decide to willingly give and surrender your "life" over to God. And that is what God is after, souls. For this reason, God has blueprinted into us safety measures to get us ALL home because it's His heart and will that none of us should ever perish and be eternally separated from Him.

He has also planted eternity [a sense of divine purpose] in the human heart [a mysterious longing which nothing under the sun can satisfy, except God] Ecc 3:11 Amp



Your spirit is a bit different. It's what needs to be reborn and come alive. It's where God speaks to us, through our spirits. Where we become ONE with Him when we surrender our life to Him. When we are filled with His Spirit, it's how we are led and "walk in the Spirit."

But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with Him in spirit. 1 Corinthians 6:17 BSB

The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Romans 8:16 NLT

Your spirit lays waiting for the birth. It also produces feelings and emotions that are in agreement and alignment with God. You may not "hear" but be led through your spirit through feelings or emotions. This is where the measure of faith lives. The measure of faith ALL MAN IS GIVEN (Romans 12:3). Your spirit is the one that is always in conflict with your soul and flesh, it's where conviction from the Lord comes through.

At some point in a person's life, usually, as they grow older, the spirit will start to groan in protest when it's not in one accord with its Kingdom purpose. Just as a man or woman is designed to be ONE flesh, and the soul groans with a longing to be unified, married, loved, create a family, so is the spirit within a person created for fellowship, identity, and adoption, to be ONE with God.

Not only that, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. Romans 8:23 ESV

I highly recommend reading and studying all of Romans 8 to gain a better understanding of how our inner man protests when we are not walking in God's will and purpose for us.



But most don't understand this longing, discontent, and restlessness, and will confuse it with a soul longing. They will seek to fill the spirit's void by filling the soul. This is where many come to a crossroads, and sadly chose the path that brings devastation to the family. Many things will interfere and hinder, block the right path to chose.

This confusion is part of God's perfect design. Created to help reveal His sons and daughters.

Meanwhile, creation is confused, but not because it wants to be confused. God made it this way in the hope that creation would be set free from decay and would share in the glorious freedom of his children. Romans 8:20-21

If a person grew up with religion instead of a relationship with Jesus, was hurt by the church, they will turn angrily away from God. This is why we see many believers suddenly walking completely away from their position in the church and even walking away from God altogether.

We see men, who lived under the contentious, dominant woman, stifled in knowing their position and place, go into deep rebellion. Women who were deeply hurt, rejected, unloved become the rejector and start searching for love in all the wrong relationships.

We see both men and women who are troubled in temptations and knowing identity who enter into same-sex relationships and gender confusion. At some point in a person's life, the spirit that is not in a right, true relationship with God will start to wake up and protest. This can happen to believers who are "serving" but self-serving.

When Jesus says, **"Depart from Me, I never knew you," Matt 7:23** He is talking to people who are serving; doing things in His name, but not in the will of the Father, walking in a relationship that serves themselves because they have no real understanding of Who He is, or no desire to get to know Him.

Our spirit is created to protest, to cry out and groan and trouble our soul when it's not on the path to eternal life, or when it doesn't know the Shepard's voice. Even though it brings a very devastating storm, it is a blessing.



The perfect plan would be for a person to hear the cry of the spirit and understand its longing for God and take that path. But some don't, they rebel due to past or current wounds, offense, or plain and simple selfishness. Wanting to be happy and overcome many regrets. This is the exact person the enemy who roams about is looking for. The person that is ripe for takeover because they have become vulnerable to forsaking all just to stop the unrest and discontent that plagues them.

IDENTITY CRISIS

The person will look at life, job, family, spouse, even God, and may become angry and bitter. Not realizing where the problem lies, they will blame the spouse, marriage, job, family. Feeling unhappy and discontent, they will yield and turn themselves entirely over to the flesh. And God permits it. He allows them this season, which can be LONG (3-7 years), to "Seek but not find" rest for the longing, while the spirit keeps protesting and trying to grow up. It wants to be birthed or to grow. They are lost in WHO they are, and to WHOM they belong.

Our spirits are trying to save the soul!

That looks horrible to us. We see selfishness and rebellion. We see our spouse acting like a child, irresponsible, and becoming someone opposite of what the spirit is trying to do. But it's necessary. God has a way of getting them to come to the end of trying in the soul.

Standers, again, we can't interfere with what God is trying to do. We can't stop the awaking and the saving of their souls. If they come home still unsaved, that spirit is NOT going to remain quiet just because they have come back. A person's spirit is crying out, *"I am not with my Creator; I am not walking in my Kingdom purpose. I don't know my identity."* And it will raise a HUGE uproar. This causes people to become radical, desperate; even depressed, and suicidal if they keep denying and rebelling against God. The rebellion and stubbornness are due to pride, wounded pride, and an unwillingness to forgive and yield. A man that would rather die than yield because they are angry at God.



This is where our prayers are needed. To pray for their hearts to forgive, to yield, and submit. To be humble and allow God in. And to overcome their selfish pride!!!

I can't stress enough how important it is for Standers to understand that God is trying to save souls of both the Stander and the lost spouse. And there are just as many LOST Standers who have infant spirits that God is trying to grow. We all need to stop fighting the storm that has come to save the soul and learn to trust that it has come to do a job. Every one of us needs to learn how to trust God. If the storm is still raging, then the work is not done!

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power for the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in various trials 7 so that the proven character of your faith—more precious than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 8 Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; and though you do not see Him now, you believe in Him and rejoice with an inexpressible and glorious joy, 9 now that you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

1 Peter 1 BSB





The Behavior of a Hard Heart

If you have read this far, hopefully, you understand the what and why. Now we explore how the hardened heart behaves.

Once a lost beloved has chosen the path of putting away, forsaking all or part of God and their spouse, they must live with this decision. They have to deal with some things:

1. God's still soft voice of conviction.
2. The enemy's LOUD voice, influence, plans to bring condemnation, guilt, and self-hatred/loathing.
3. Their OWN voice. (They take on all three "voices" and have a hard time in their blindness discerning truth from lies.)
4. Advice, manipulation, and "truth" from other people, including the very persuasive voice of the one with which they are involved in adultery.
5. The "voice" of the flesh which can't be ignored. When we are experiencing the pleasure and fruit of temptation, this takes on a very strong and powerful voice. Almost like an addiction. The flesh is SELF, self-pity, soul ties, bitterness, anger, and withholding forgiveness. Nothing seems to be louder than the selfish voice of the flesh.

Unbelievers will usually always go with the voice that is the loudest, believing it to be total truth and adopting it as their belief. Anything that comes against their choices in life will be met with a vengeance; those that don't support them will be considered against them, an enemy. Anyone or anything that brings guilt or condemnation upon them, including still being married, will be considered as something to destroy or run from. This is why some spouses divorce, and stop contacting their own children. They can't handle the guilt from the enemy, or the gentle conviction from the Holy Spirit.

Deflection-

Anyone who is defending their choice to sin needs to put up walls to protect what they are doing. They encase themselves in a bubble where only those that agree with them enter. But the misery is still there, and the enemy has a remedy...to keep them focused and



angry at YOU and to deflect all their focus and attention on anything they can grab a hold of as an offense you caused them. As long as they can keep being angry at you for something you did 12 years ago, 2 days ago, and the “I will be praying for you,” text you just sent, they will NEVER have to look at themselves and accept the truth and revelation of their actions. This PREVENTS REPENTANCE!

The enemy will bring to memory real things that you did wrong when you did not respect them, were controlling them, and when you deny that you were wrong, the enemy will help your spouse feel vindicated and right in making the decision to put you away. The enemy is right there to point out every little and big mistake and make mountains out of molehills. And while he is making you look the enemy, he is helping the ‘enemy’ look good!

Teaching the OP to flatter, build ego, be sensitive and respectful. They are very persuasive in telling your spouse they deserve to be happy and are doing nothing wrong. They will even use scripture twisted up to show them “truth.” The enemy knows how to play all sides of the fence, and he does it well.

As Standers, coming under deflection is painful, and we must not let the enemy bring condemnation to us through it. We must also NOT dismiss everything that was said. Many times, what the spouse is sharing has some truth to it, even if it’s exaggerated, or twisted. I have found the best way to handle deflection is to let the air out of it. When they come at you with it, they are looking for a fight. Don’t defend yourself. In fact, validate their feelings and what they believe to be truth. *“Yes, I agree, I was controlling. No, I did not respect you as I should have.”*

Never respond with, “But YOU.” You don’t need to defend yourself against lies, exaggeration, or anger. Peaceful silence and just listening helps too. They need to be able to tell you what is bothering them without it being a war zone. Let them! And if what they say is true, then humble yourself and APOLOGIZE!



Many times, my husband came through the door on fire for a fight. Instead, what he got from me was, *“Yes, I understand what you are saying, I did not see what I was doing to you. I am sorry, and I am going to really seek God to help me change.”* In a matter of moments, my humbling myself diffused the situation.

A soft and gentle and thoughtful answer turns away wrath, But harsh and painful and careless words stir up anger. 2The tongue of the wise speaks knowledge that is pleasing and acceptable, But the [babbling] mouth of fools spouts folly. Proverbs 15:1-2 AMP

Now, was everything he accused me of truth? No, but that did not matter, it was HIS truth, HIS perception of how he took it and understood it. And that is what I was honoring, his feelings and his understanding. I was trusting God to handle how he was using what he was against me to be the thing that woke him up. AND I was giving my husband HOPE. He came home with no hope of me hearing, really listening to him. Believing we were never going to change or get better. Yet, through the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, he was not met with resistance, but with a wife who wanted to hear him, understand him more than I wanted to set him straight and defend myself. Through this, he started to question the enemy's lies. *“Was my wife really never going to change because she just gave me some hope that she really hears what I am saying!”*

The more I respected what he was saying and listened to him, the more real truth came out and not the angry twisted versions. We started to have real heart-to-heart talks, where I was able to explain myself to help him understand because his walls were down. The key is knowing when to do this. Because it's very hard to not defend ourselves, especially to outright lies. We need the Holy Spirit's fruit to help us. SELF-control, patience, gentleness. We need His wisdom and perspective. We must be willing to die to our needs of defending ourselves. Die to the need to be RIGHT. Die to self-righteousness that hides as “truth.” We all need a good dose of humility and washing the feet of our spouse, even when they are not living as we expect them to. Jesus, our Savior, the Son of God, humbled Himself to wash the feet of man, out of His unconditional love. We must be willing to do the same for our spouse.





For you, the Stander

We have talked about your lost beloved and hopefully, by now, some of the agonizing questions you have, have begun to be answered. This book would not be complete unless I addressed the struggles and battles you are going to as you struggle to accept what I have shared with you as truth.

I will warn you that what I shared with you, while even though it was God that revealed this truth to me, it was something that I had to learn, relearn and learn again and again. While my brain would hear this, my heart just could not accept it was the real reason my spouse was doing this. I wanted to believe with the logic, pride, self-centeredness that I had come to know and rely on my whole life.

My logic was so ingrained from the word and what I had come to know that it was very hard to trust in this totally new concept of a hard heart, spiritual crisis and that God could really undo all the damage that was done. From what I was seeing, the hatred, the rebellion, the new love and enjoyment of this new life he was in, seemed absolutely impossible that God would be able to change my husband. Add in the fact that I acknowledge that I was not innocent and very much had a role to play in my husband's wounds and turmoil, and I struggled and battled daily with my own fears, worry doubts and unbelief.

Let's talk about this unbelief and how it can bring great damage to your Stand.

There are a few things we can have strongholds of unbelief in. The first, is that through our trust and belief in our spouses when we tend to believe what they are doing, saying, feeling, thinking more than Who God is and what He is capable of, this can create a stronghold of unbelief that our spouses will's are stronger than God's desire to see your marriage restored.

When you see them happy and confuse this with a blessing from God, that can interfere with believing God wants your marriage restored.



For some, you may feel that through your own sins and actions you are disqualified from even going to God and asking if He will help you restore your marriage. Your belief that you deserve this will create a stronghold of unbelief that your marriage is worthy to be restored. This is a lie and one that will be overcome with time, growth, forgiveness, and maturity that comes as the truth takes a deep root and produces its transformation in you.

Another unbelief is that God is not the loving, caring God that everyone claims Him to be. The children of God never made it to the promised land because of unbelief. God WANTED them to enter, gave them the land, showed them the path, guarded and protected them. Provided for them. All He asked was they BELIEVE Him with a posture of trust and with good attitude. But they didn't. They didn't believe.

But exactly what was it they did not believe? This is extremely important to grasp.

15 As it is said, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." 16 For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? 17 And with whom was He provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? 19 So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief. Hebrews 3:15-19

They walked with God, saw His miracles, experienced His supernatural provisions, power, and deliverance. They had a pillar of fire and a cloud that led and guarded them. Manna that fed them, shoes that never wore out. They walked through the parted sea and saw food fall from heaven. Oh, they believed there was a God! They did not have unbelief in His ability, His power, His Authority.



They had the kind of unbelief that brought on rebellion, disobedience and created hard hearts. It was unbelief that caused them to grumble, complain, and murmur against Him and cause Moses fear because the people were turning against him. It was the kind of unbelief that made them want to return back to being slaves.

Unbelief is not what many think. They walked with God, saw His miracles, experienced His supernatural provisions, power, and deliverance. They had a pillar of fire and a cloud that led and guarded them. Manna that fed them, shoes that never wore out. They walked through the parted sea and saw food fall from heaven. Oh, they believed there was a God! They did not have unbelief in His ability, His power, His Authority.

It's an unbelief against the character and nature of God, that He is a loving, good God. The people believed in God, BUT because they were hungry, tired and stuck wandering, they did not believe He was good. Did not believe in what He was doing, trust in Who He was. All they could see and believe in was what they were feeling and experiencing. That was bad, so they believed His intentions were bad. They believed a good Father, would not let them suffer, so they were so upset with Him and how He was handing their life, they complained against Him to the point of wanting to kill Moses!

They were blind to see they were the cause of their own misery. What should have been a quick test of 11 days, turned into a torment of 40 years because they were trapped in the lies where it's easier to believe through the filters of rejection, unworthiness, and shame, rather than fight it and speak the truth. They would rather agree and partner with the lie of what they saw and felt, rather than CHOOSE to believe in WHO HE IS!

Through your journey, you will come up against many tests and trials that attack what you believe in. Is it what you see? What you have been taught? Or what you are now being asked to do? Trust in God, Who you may not fully know and understand how He works and operates, how He accomplishes His purpose. And trust in a purpose and plan that you have not fully come to understand or comprehend?



All this takes time and rests upon your growth. In order for all this too makes sense, time is needed for you to grow in Christ. For His word to transform you so you CAN comprehend what it is He is trying to teach you. And that maturity has to battle the flesh, who is also trying to keep ahold of what it has come to know and rely on as truth. This is why you can't give up and throw in the towel. God has a perfect plan for your life. One that involves the pain and suffering that comes when we are in a season of growth and maturing. But it is worth it.

A final word:

*Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.
Eph 6:10*





The following, is a word study for HARD and HEART, including the Scriptures in which this word "HARD" is found. There are just a few which describe this unique type of hardness. I did not want to pick through and determine which ones applied and which to exclude, so I gave you all of them. I pray the Holy Spirit speaks to you about which ones pertain to your spouse.

++++++WORD STUDY++++++

Let's revisit this again: Strong's defines the word HARD (4642. Skléros) as hard, violent, harsh, stern. properly, hard (because dried out); (figuratively) stiff, stubborn (unyielding) describing people who "won't budge" (bend, submit), or what is unyieldingly harsh. Without the moisture from oil. Oil represents the Holy Spirit. Void of the softening oil of God.

Strong's 2588 kardia, HEART is the center and seat of spiritual life, the soul or mind, as it is the fountain and seat of the thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affections, purposes, endeavors, of the understanding, the faculty and seat of the intelligence of the will and character of the soul so far as it is affected and stirred in a bad way or good, or of the soul as the seat of the sensibilities, affections, emotions, desires, appetites, passions of the middle or central or inmost part of anything, even though inanimate.

++++++SCRIPTURES++++++

This word HARD, HARDNESS, 4641 and 4641 is found ONLY in these scriptures below. A man's heart can be any combination of these scriptures."

Afterward, He appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table; and He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen." Mark 16:14 NASB,"



*"So circumcise your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer."
Deuteronomy 10:16 NASB,"*

Circumcise yourselves to the LORD and remove the foreskins of your heart, men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, or else My wrath will go forth like fire and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds." Jeremiah 4:4 NASB,

Blessed is the one who fears the LORD always, but whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity. Proverbs 28:14 ESV,

"He that has a crooked, wayward, perverse, corrupt, sinful, evil, heart findeth no good; And he that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief." Proverbs 17:20 KJV

"But the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, for they are not willing to listen to Me: because all the house of Israel have a hard forehead and a stubborn heart. Behold, I have made your face as hard as their faces, and your forehead as hard as their foreheads. Like emery harder than flint have I made your forehead. Fear them not, nor be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house. Moreover, he said to me, "Son of man, all my words that I shall speak to you receive in your heart, and hear with your ears. And go to the exiles, to your people, and speak to them and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,' whether they hear or refuse to hear." Ezekiel 3:7-11 ESV

"Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed.'" Matthew 25:24 New Heart English Bible



"In John chapter 6, vs. 60, the disciples are challenged by the words of Jesus concerning communion. It states,

"Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?" This statement is in reference to the following: "Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him." John 6:53-57, 66 NIV"

And he [Saul] said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. Acts 9:5 KJV

And consider ships: Though very large and driven by fierce (hard, violent rough) winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs." James 3:4 Christian Standard Bible

Behold, the Lord is coming with myriads of His holy ones to execute judgment on everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of every ungodly act of wickedness and every (hard) harsh word spoken against Him by ungodly sinners. These men are discontented grumblers, following after their own lusts; their mouths spew arrogance; they flatter others for their own advantage..." Jude 1:14 Berean Study Bible



In closing, I want to share a prayer

Dear Father God,

I pray for Standers to be touched by the truth of Your Word and released from any and all burdens they carry that is not from You. I pray they learn how to rest and be patient allowing the time needed for all things to come to pass to accomplish Your perfect will. May You uproot all impatience and desire to speed things along and give them the strength to endure with longsuffering. May the fruit of the spirit abound in them as they take on the task of loving their spouse, interceding on their behalf, and growing and maturing in their own walk. Help them run the race with a good heart, and not grow weary while doing good so they reap a good harvest in due season. Bless them, Father, keep them from undo pain, unforgiveness, or allowing bitterness to take hold. May they come to fully know and understand the love and desire You have for them.

In Jesus name, Amen

God bless you, Your spouse, your marriage, and your Stand.

Standing with you,

Mrs. Sheila Hollinger





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