SYMPTOMS RELATED TO SPIRITUAL HEART FAILURE

Extensive clinical and statistical studies have identified several factors, which increase the possibility of developing coronary heart disease leading to death. The greater the level of each risk factor, the greater the impact in your overall health and wellness. Similarly, the Word of God discusses several factors, which impact your victorious life found in Christ Jesus. Therefore, just as it is important to recognize the physical symptoms which lead to a heart attack, more so, it is important to recognize the symptoms of the world, the flesh and sin which lead to spiritual death.

An irregular heart beat and shortness of breath are two physical symptoms of a heart attack. When there is an irregular beat in your heart, it disrupts the rhythm and flow of how the blood distributes oxygen to all the body’s organs. When the body does not get enough of the oxygen rich blood it needs, the common symptom is shortness of breath. Spiritually, when there is a disruption in your walk with the Lord, your heart is easily swayed by the influence of the world. The rhythm and flow in your relationship with the Lord is disrupted. You no longer spend quality time, daily, in prayer and meditation of God’s Word; your attendance at church and fellowship with other believers has become sporadic. The world’s influence has led you to become its friend and an enemy of God, (James 4:4); further, you lack the life sustaining source of the Holy Spirit. You no longer have the spiritual strength perhaps, to function as you have had in the past, it has become more difficult to walk with the Lord and be obedient to His word; therefore, causing you to faint under the pressure of trials and life circumstances.

The physical symptom of restlessnes is another indicator of a possible heart attack. You are uncomfortable when you lie down, sit or stand; you are unable to find any physical comfort or rest. Spiritually, the same is true in your walk of faith. The inability to be still before the Lord is an indicator that you are restless. You have a challenging time waiting upon Him for guidance or answers to prayer. You start to lean on your own understanding and begin to walk according to your flesh, which is opposed to God (Rom. 8:7); your corrupt nature urges and solicits you to gratify itself; you become enticed after being led astray. Spiritually, this is dangerous, as “those who sow to the flesh shall reap destruction.” (Gal. 6:8).
Plaque buildup in the coronary arteries is another symptom identified as Cholesterol. It causes blockage of the blood flow to the heart. Likewise, continual and unrepentant sin robs you of fellowship with God; it separates you from Him. “But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that he will not hear.” (Isaiah 59:2). We see this in the account of Adam and Eve. Eve was tempted by the serpent to disobey God’s command; she was enticed by her selfish desire; "When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.” (Gen. 3:6). At that moment, sin entered the world and erected a barrier between man and God, hence, the service of sin would pay wages of eternal death. Ezekiel in the 20th verse of the 18th chapter tells us, “The soul who sins shall die.” The truth of this is that the soul that continues in sin shall die an eternal death.

For the believer who is already saved, who continues to sin and yet is unrepentant about his sin, is at risk of becoming a slave to sin (John 8:34) and will reap its benefits. “But because you are stubborn and refuse to turn from your sin, you are storing up terrible punishment for yourself. For a day of anger is coming, when God's righteous judgment will be revealed” (Rom. 2:5). Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, we cannot “say we are in fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness. We lie and do not practice the truth.” (1 John 1: 6).

It is so important to not only learn to identify the symptoms of spiritual heart disease but also, to understand the risks associated with each symptom; over time, if not addressed, your risk of developing a spiritual life threatening heart condition is forthcoming. To learn more, browse next week’s topic on “Conditions of the Spiritual Heart.”