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1-24-2023  
A HEART OF OFFENSE

I was teaching children in Sunday School about how God wants us to have a heart that receives what he has to say. I found some stones in my yard and asked them to put them in the water to see how much water they would absorb. Of course, the stones did not absorb any water because stones cannot receive water into themselves. Stones are used to build walls and keep water out. It taught the children to always keep their hearts open to God and not be hard-hearted. It was a good example for them and for us also.

In Mark 4 Jesus was teaching about the four types of ground. One of the grounds in 4:16-17 was the stony ground. It says, ***“16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; 17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word’s sake, immediately they are offended.”***

You will notice there was no root ***“in themselves.”*** This is because their heart, which represents the ground, was stony. Seed cannot penetrate a stony ground or a stony heart. Because there was no root when afflictions (trouble, anguish, pressure, persecution for the word’s sake) came the seed died. It could not take root. Then the person is offended. They often blame others for their condition.

A hard stony heart can only change through repentance. This will cause that heart to be softened, so once again seed can take root and grow into fruit. It is a dangerous thing to have a hard heart. Satan uses this hardness to bring offenses into your life to control you. Without ridding ourselves of offenses one becomes fruitless.

Have you found yourself in this condition? Are there offenses you have not dealt with? Then today is the day to get rid of those offenses and repent. If you do not, your life will never be all that God wants it to be.